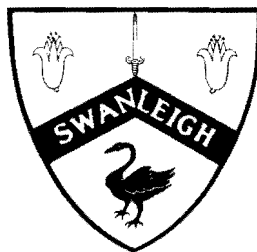


# THE NOISY MANSIONS

The story of Swanleigh  
1868 - 1971



*"There in his noisy mansion ....."*

*O. Goldsmith.*



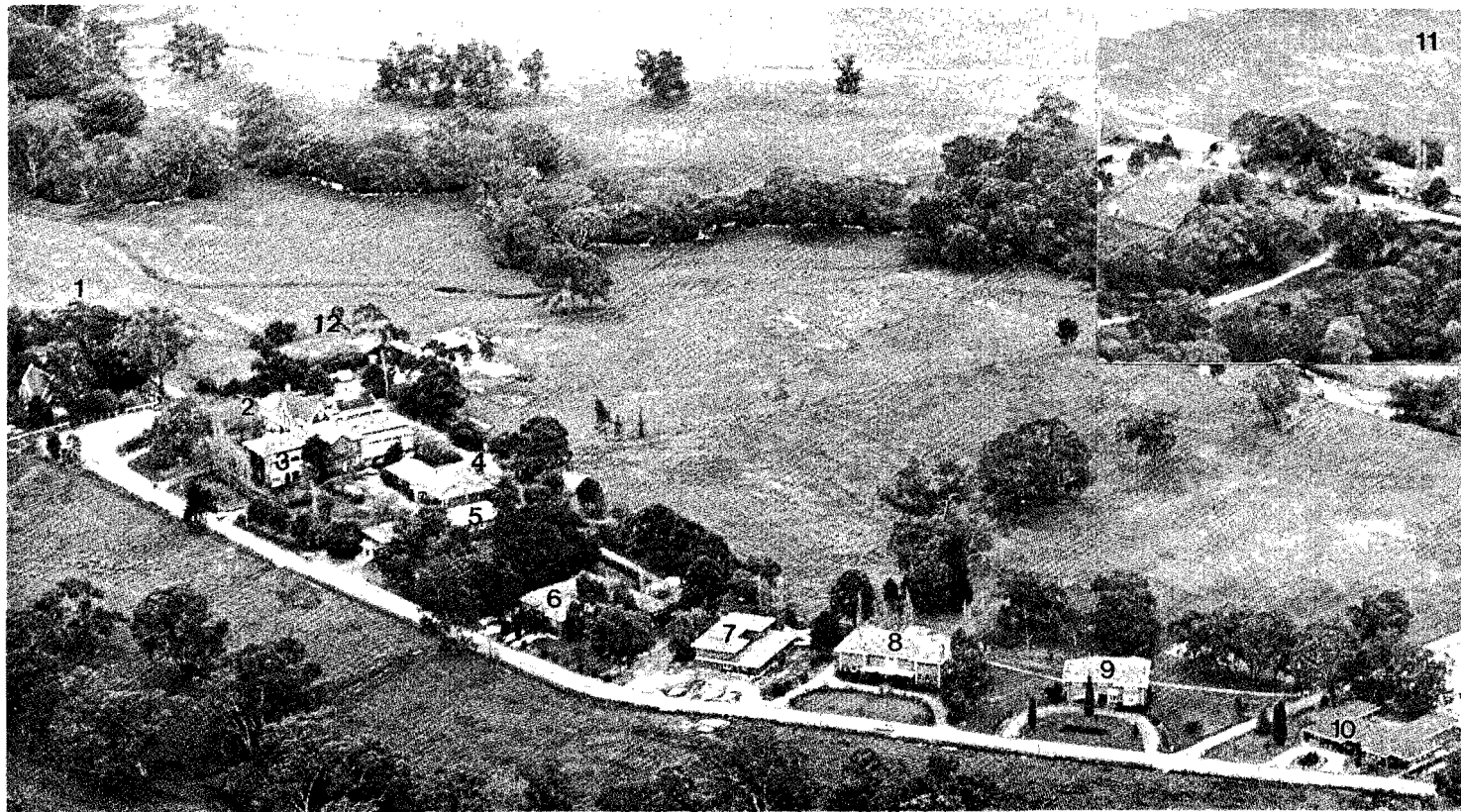
*To Mary*

*by*

*A. ROY PETERKIN, B.E.M., B.A.*

*Director of the Anglican Homes for Children 1942 - 1959*

*Director of Swanleigh 1960 - 1971*



*The "Noisy Mansions" from the air. 1. St. Mary's Church. 2. Brown House. 3. Waylen House. 4. Alfred Guy Block (Kitchen, Dining-room and Store). 5. The Assembly Hall (the Gym). 6. Hudleston. 7. Stanton. 8. Lee Steere. 9. Freeman. 10. Hamilton. 11. Cornwell. 12. The Tech. In foreground - the slope to the Swan River. To the north - Jane Brook.*

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*EPILOGUE - JANUARY 6th 1972*

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# AUTHOR'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

First I wish to thank the members of the Swanleigh Council for publishing my book and underwriting its cost. Especially would I thank the Chairman, Miss Ros. Denny, for her support of the project, and Councillor Miss F.M. Bennett, B.A., M.A.C.E., and the present Director, Mr. Richard Stowell, B.A., Dip.Ed., for their enthusiastic encouragement of its publication. Mr. Ron. Elphick, the Council's Public Relations Consultant, has been extremely helpful in arranging for the business details associated with the book's printing, and for this and his important association with the establishment of modern Swanleigh I am most grateful.

The whole of the typing of the text was done by my sister-in-law, Mrs. Jean Gordon, who was a very enthusiastic advocate of the book's being written and published. For twelve years (1952-64) she was first a member of the old Board of Management, and after 1960, of the Swanleigh Council. Throughout that long period she played an important role in its policy-making, with a special contribution as a member of both its Finance and Parkerville Sub-committees. Her fund-raising efforts were particularly appreciated in the penurious earlier times. She has asked me to include a special mention of the help she received from the late Mr. Ron. Cracknell, a former Archivist of the Anglican Church Office in Perth, in helping her with some research she undertook for me in the writing of this book, and I do so with gratitude to him.

A special word of appreciation is also recorded to Sir Paul Hasluck for writing the foreword. I consider it a great honour to have such a distinguished Australian do this. I am also deeply touched by his personal references to my work in the establishment.

Finally the book is dedicated to my wife, Mary, who throughout our married life has been a constant source of encouragement and assistance to me. Readers will readily realize that what is described in Parts II and III of this book could never have been accomplished by me alone. Thank you, Mary, for your love and support down the years. May God bless!

## SECOND EDITION

The opportunity has been taken to make some minor corrections required in the first edition.



# FOREWORD

*By the Rt. Hon. Sir Paul Hasluck K.G., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O.*

In commending this book to a wide body of readers, I have a triple interest. The book tells another chapter in the history of Western Australia. It describes the growth, the problems and the successes in a significant field of social welfare. Thirdly, it has for me a personal appeal for, in large part it is also the testament of one of my school mates and the record of his achievement as an educator and social reformer.

The Swan Boys' Orphanage, founded in 1868 on land with a river frontage at Middle Swan, was the inheritor and successor of Church of England ministry on that site from the earliest days of the Colony. It also continued the work of the Church in several other institutions. In telling the story of the institution this book contributes to the local history of both Church and State.

More substantially it is a history of changing values, ideas and methods in the range of social problems generally described as child welfare. Throughout a century and a half the need and the response to the need changed in character. The reader can trace these social developments in the transition from the orphanage (1868-1942), to the Swan Homes (1943-1959) and the Swanleigh Hostel (1960-1972).

The author was Director of Anglican Homes for Children from 1942 to 1959 and Director of Swanleigh from 1960 to 1971 — a dedication of thirty years to humanitarian service following an earlier career in the parallel field of education. The second half of the book is in a large part autobiographical, and the man who reveals himself in this account of the work he did is not only estimable but also a congenial character. He writes plainly and pleasantly of the ups and downs of life as a social reformer.

In later life, when old schoolfellows start asking each other what happened to this or that classmate, the statement is sometimes made: "He has done very well". That often means that he has done well for himself, either by becoming wealthy or gaining personal fame of one kind or other. My old schoolmate Roy Peterkin has the higher distinction that he did very well for others. There must be hundreds, perhaps thousands, of boys and girls whose lives became happier and more useful because of what he did. He tells about his work modestly with a fresh human touch.

May 1986.

# INTRODUCTION

In 1829 a new British Colony was founded on the western side of Australia, and land grants along both shores of the Swan River were made to pioneer settlers. A few years later one of these sold his grant at Middle Swan to the W.A. Missionary Society\* which had been founded in London in 1835 by Mr. F.C. Irwin, with the object of bringing clergymen to the Colony to minister to the settlers and the aboriginals. The first missionary to arrive was Dr. Louis Giustiniani who in 1836 built a house on high land near the river at Middle Swan, and from there he commenced his ministrations. But his zeal for the cause of the natives outran his discretion, so much so that he fell into disrepute with the settlers. At the end of 1837 the Society dismissed him, replacing him with the Revd. William Mitchell who arrived in 1838. He enlarged and improved Giustiniani's house, commenced a school in his rectory, cleared and farmed some of his land, and he built a small octagonal mud-brick church close to his home.

Forty years went by. The mud-brick church fell into decay, and in 1869 was replaced by the nave and sanctuary of what is today St. Mary's Church, Middle Swan. Then in 1876, quite near this church, a two-storied red-brick building of unusual architecture was erected. Compared with other homes in the district, the new structure looked almost a mansion - but only in external appearance. It was not furnished like a mansion, nor were its residents the sort of people one would expect to find living in one. Instead it was more like Oliver Goldsmith's description of the village school - a "noisy mansion". For most of its inhabitants were boys. Later there would be other buildings to accommodate more boys, and some would be built for girls - noisy mansions, too. This book is the story of those noisy mansions, and of the children who lived in them - the Swanleighans.

Swanleigh began as a charitable foundation - an orphanage. It opened in Perth in 1868, with an enrolment of less than a dozen destitute children, all of whom with one exception were girls. During the first year, a boys' section was added, but in 1876 a separate orphanage was built for them at Middle Swan. With the passing of years the numbers in each of the institutions grew steadily until there was a combined enrolment of about two hundred. In 1942, as a war precaution, the girls were transferred from the city to the Swan, where they were accommodated in a section of the boys' establishment. The arrangement proved a satisfactory one in many ways, so much so that it was decided that the girls would not return to Perth, but that a children's village at the Swan should be commenced. In the next twelve years good progress was made with this project, which was named the Swan Homes.\*1

But about the middle of the 1950's, the number of inmates in all children's institutions in Western Australia began to fall. Public opinion increasingly opposed such place-

*\* The W.A. Missionary Society was later re-named the Colonial and Continental Church Society - the "Col. and Con."*

*\*1 Not to be confused with the "Swan Cottage Homes" - a non-denominational home for the aged, established in later years in the suburb of Bentley.*

ment. Eventually this led to the closing of four establishments,\*<sub>2</sub> and the Swan Homes faced a similar prospect. It was then that the Board of Management made the important decision to change the whole character of its institution, converting it from a charity to a hostel for country children who had to live away from home if they were to attend High School. But at the same time the status of the institution's children was to be raised to that of hostel students, and no difference in living conditions was to be made between the two classes. Moreover the Board declared that it would remain true to its foundation by continuing to admit needy girls and boys as heretofore. These, however, would no longer be enrolled as destitute. They would also enter as hostel students.

So, on January 1st, 1960, there came into existence "Swanleigh" - a residential establishment unique in Australia. Right from its inception, it was a success. Within five years it was the largest school hostel in the Commonwealth, its paying-boarders coming from all parts of the State other than the Metropolitan and Suburban districts of Perth - this latter by an arrangement between Swanleigh and the Education Department. From Wyndham in the north to Esperance in the south, from Rottnest Island in the west to tiny settlements along the Trans-Australian Railway in the far interior, the students came. In a very few years the combined enrolment increased to well over three hundred, and there were many more names on the waiting lists for future entry. But always the needy applicant was given precedence over the fee-paying boarder for any vacancy. For that was the Board's trust.\*<sub>3</sub>

In outline that is the history of Swanleigh's first hundred years. But the sudden "rags to riches" success that it achieved at the end of its first century was in marked contrast with its humble commencement and its struggle for survival that characterized so much of that long period.

\*<sub>2</sub> Burnbrae (Byford), Benmore (Middle Swan), the Rev. Tom Allen Memorial Home (Werribee), Padbury Boys' Farm School (Stoneville).

\*<sub>3</sub> But see also Part 3, Chapter 6, page 229

**PART (I)**

# **The Orphanage 1868 - 1942**

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# 1. The Foundation

Prior to 1868 there were no children's institutions in Perth. Any girls or boys declared to be destitute were placed in the Colony's workhouse. But among the citizens of those days there were murmurings of protest against this practice. The workhouse was primarily for indigent adults, some of whom, it was felt, were likely to exert a very undesirable influence on the young. But where else could these children be sent? Up to that time the only child welfare institution in the Colony was "Annesfield" in far-away Albany. That had been established for aboriginal and half-caste children: and though at times a few whites had been enrolled, it was considered quite unsuitable for the girls and boys who were being accommodated in the Perth workhouse.

It is interesting to note that the Annesfield institution had a link with the early Swan District. It was started in 1852 by the Albany Government Resident and his wife — Mr. and Mrs. Camfield. Prior to her marriage, Mrs. Camfield was a Miss Anne Breeze, who had accompanied the Revd. William Mitchell and his wife as a governess to their children, when he came from England to be the second missionary and then the first rector of the Swan Parish. While living there she became very interested in teaching native children, a number of whom were encouraged by Mitchell to come to lessons in the schoolroom which he had attached to his Rectory. Years later, when Governor Fitzgerald set aside sixty acres of land at Albany to be a native reserve, and then transferred to it the children from a small school for natives in Fremantle, Mrs. Camfield eagerly entered into the task of their education. The early success of this project was due in no small measure to her enthusiasm. She maintained this splendid service for about twenty years, but by the end of that time she had grown old and she decided to retire. Because a successor to superintend the Annesfield institution could not then be found, it had to close and the Bishop transferred its children to Perth. A little later they were again shifted — this time to a Mission School established at Middle Swan in 1888 on land that had once formed part of Mitchell's glebe.

Among the Roman Catholic population in the Colony, there was a strong conviction that needy children of their faith ought to be living in an establishment conducted by their own church. Early in 1868, this desire was fulfilled when the State's first orphanage for white children was opened by the Sisters of Mercy. This had the effect of stirring up the Protestants towards the idea of founding a similar institution for children of their own denominations. In the "Inquirer" of April 29th, 1868, it is reported that Archdeacon Brown, in his sermon in the Cathedral the previous Sunday morning, had dwelt strongly on the necessity for combined and lively action in the movement (to establish an orphanage for Protestants). and while giving credit to the Sisters of Mercy for their laudable conduct in commencing the first institution of its kind in the Colony, pressed his exhortations on the Protestant community generally to exert themselves in providing a similar means of relief for the distressed orphans of their own churches. To which the "Inquirer" adds the following comment: "And we trust that the Venerable Gentleman's remarks will have the desired effect".

The Archdeacon's sermon undoubtedly helped to spur his congregation into action. But the event which really did most to bring about the founding of an orphanage for Protestants was one which had taken place a little earlier, in a region quite remote from

Perth. This was the massacre of some members of a police exploratory party in 1864 at a native well called "Boola-Boola", situated at La Grange Bay south of Broome. Three policemen named Panter, Harding and Goldwyer were asleep near the well when they were set upon by aborigines, who speared them and made off with their possessions. When for some time no news of the explorers was received, it was decided to send out a search party to try to locate them. This expedition was led by a Mr. Maitland Brown. He came upon the bodies, and reverently brought these back to Perth where they were given a public funeral through the streets of the Capital to the cemetery at East Perth. All shops and buildings were closed for the day as a mark of respect. It was the largest funeral yet held in the Colony. Later a monument to the memory of the explorers was erected on the Esplanade at Fremantle. It still stands to this day, and on it is the following inscription:

"A fellow bush-wanderer's tribute to the memory of Panter, Harding and Goldwyer, earliest explorers after Grey and Gregory of this Terra Incognita, attacked at night by treacherous natives and murdered at Boola-Boola near La Grange Bay on 13th November, 1864. Also an appreciation token of remembrance of Maitland Brown, one of the pioneer pastoralists and premier politician of this State. Intrepid leader of the Government search and punitive party. His remains, together with the remains of the ill-fated three, recovered at great risk and danger from the wilds, repose under a public monument in the East Perth cemetery.

LEST WE FORGET"

But what had this murderous assault to do with the founding of the orphanage? The answer is that because of the death of Sergeant Goldwyer, his wife and children were left destitute. He had lost his life doing his duty and there was much sympathy for his bereaved family. Archdeacon Brown called a meeting of citizens outside the Cathedral to raise funds to help them, and £100 was collected. From that time Brown was very active in promoting the idea of founding an orphanage for needy children such as the Goldwyers, and for those already in the workhouse. In the "Inquirer" of March 25th, 1868, there is the following news item:

"We are glad to hear that it is in the contemplation of some members of St. George's Church to establish an orphanage in Perth.... To provide for the indigent youth of both sexes and attend to their forlorn condition must be a good work by whomsoever undertaken, and well deserves the recognition and assistance of all classes of the community".

In order to establish the institution, funds were necessary. In the May 1868 issue of the "Church of England Magazine", reference is made to the probable opening in June of a Protestant orphanage for nine or ten little girls. The article pleads for a sum of £215, in order to supplement the expected annual grant of £1-3-4 for each child - less than a penny a day! The June issue of the same magazine refers to subscriptions "pouring in", not only from people in Perth, but also from outer settlements - Albany, Busselton, Fremantle, Champion Bay (Geraldton), Newcastle (Toodyay), Northam, Bunbury, Guildford and Swan. There was an anonymous gift of £150, and another of £50 and two of £25. His Royal Highness the then Duke of Edinburgh, hearing of the appeal, gave £40. Bazaars were arranged and there was a sale of needlework. As will be seen from the Orphanage Balance Sheet of May 31st, 1869 (see page 13) the public support prior to the opening and during the first year of its existence totalled £ 918 - an almost incredible amount when one considers the economic state of the Colony in the sixties.

Further evidence of the interest of the community in the project is furnished by a letter in the "Inquirer" May 6th, 1868 signed "A Magistrate". The tenor of this was that undoubtedly there was a necessity for additional care and provision for orphans. While he intended to support this, he believed that such an establishment ought to have been discussed more exhaustively before it was commenced. It could not be financially supported satisfactorily, and the Government would have to assist in the relief of pauperism by increasing the poor rate. He continues: "The present system is only relieving people of a burden they ought to be shouldering. The Government is glad to stave off the evil day by the efforts of good men and women. But the fact is that it is a burden which ought equally to be shared. The sooner the Government interferes and takes a comprehensive view of the whole pauper question the better for the new institution and its annual subscribers". But the day when the Government was going to take a very active share in the work of caring for needy children was a long way off. So long as the voluntary organisations were prepared to do so, it was relieved of most of the financial and other responsibilities involved.

It is but fair to add that the Government support in that first year was much better than a penny per child per day. It totalled £115, which was about one-fifth of the cost. In the second year this was increased to £245 - one third of the cost. These amounts represent 8d. per day per child. By 1942 the Government subsidy for State wards had only risen to a shilling a day!

About the time of the commencement a Management Committee was set up, and the Archdeacon was appointed Manager. As Bishop Hale was overseas from June 24th 1867, to October 27th, 1868, the actual opening arrangements were carried out by Brown. The Committee purchased "two comfortable cottages" near the Causeway, close to the site where a substantial Orphanage building was later to be built. The two cottages were thrown into one containing eight rooms, with a good kitchen and a storeroom detached from each other and the dwelling house. Surrounding the buildings was a fair amount of cultivable ground, and there was a permanent well of good water. The total cost of the property was about £400.

On June 1st. the anniversary of the founding of the Colony, the Orphanage opened, and seven girls and one boy were enrolled. It had been decided that at first only girls were to be admitted. as their needs were regarded as the more urgent and were more easily provided for than were those of boys. It was hoped that later-on provision would be made for the reception of destitute boys. It is not known how the one boy came to be enrolled with the girls on the opening day. Probably he was a very young brother of one of the girls. A Mrs. Love was appointed Matron, at a salary of £12 per annum (increased in the first year to £25 per annum), with quarters and certain perquisites. During the year. these were taken from her, but she was given an extra £10 per annum as compensation for this loss. A schoolmistress named Miss Beattie was also appointed. Her salary was £18 per annum, but she had no quarters nor perquisites of any kind. At the end of the first year, the Committee gave her a gratuity of £5. No other staff were engaged.

Before opening the institution, the Committee drew up a set of rules, and also a daily ration scale for the children. As these give an interesting insight into the routine of the establishment and some of the ideas of those responsible for its management, they are quoted in full.

# “Rules of the Perth Protestant Orphanage

1. The Institution, to be called “Perth Orphanage”, is to receive at first only girls, of whom, save in very exceptional cases, all shall previously have been entered on the Government Relief list.
2. The age for admission is between two and nine years; for leaving the Orphanage, between twelve and fourteen.
3. In the election of orphans or destitute children, those whose necessities most command compassion, shall be chosen first and without reference to the religious tenets of their parents, or the locality from which they come.
4. The institution to be during the first year under the direction of the Bishop of the Diocese, the Colonial Chaplain, the City Church-wardens and the ex-Churchwardens of the year preceding, who shall be assisted by an Honorary Secretary. The Committee, of whom three shall form a quorum, is to meet for the transaction of business on the first Monday in every month. Upon the first of June in the second and subsequent years, the Secretary shall call a meeting of the Subscribers to the Orphanage, and, a report having been presented of the working of the Institution during the preceding year, the meeting shall be empowered to elect from among the Annual Subscribers of not less than £2-2-0, six gentlemen (of whom four must be resident in Perth), the same to be proposed and seconded in one lot, who shall during the year of their election, jointly with the Bishop and the Colonial Chaplain have the direction of the Orphanage. Failing such election, the Churchwardens and ex-Churchwardens, as before specified, shall continue in office.
5. The Committee shall be assisted in the management of the House by lady visitors, who will so arrange their visits that two ladies shall together visit the House twice a week, contributing by their kindly advice and direction, to the comfort, economy, regularity and general efficiency of the household arrangements. These ladies meeting together at the close of each month shall suggest to the Directing Committee all alterations in the system that they may deem desirable, and any further outlay or retrenchment that they may think expedient.
6. The Committee is to be in like manner assisted in the education of the children by lady visitors, whose province it will be by their periodical attendance during school hours, to cheer the teacher with their presence and sympathy in her somewhat monotonous duties, and to communicate from time to time any improvements that they might think advisable for the Committee to introduce. All books and school apparatus are to be ordered through the Committee.
7. The Matron is to be engaged at a fixed salary, to be paid monthly and she is to receive quarters rent free, firing, and the use of the orphanage garden and paddock. The Matron shall have the care and supervision of the children out of school hours. She will weigh all rations delivered daily by contractors, and those issued from the Orphanage Store, making up her accounts weekly.
8. The Teacher who shall receive        per annum, shall, during school hours, have the entire direction and control of the children. They shall receive a good elementary English education, the Holy Scriptures being read daily with them, and the school opening and closing with prayer. The instruction in the afternoon to be as much as possible confined to plain needlework.
9. The elder children shall rise at 6 a.m. winter and summer; the younger at 6.30. Breakfast at 7.30, summer and winter. School hours, 9 to 11.30 a.m. and 2 to 3.30 p.m. Dinner at 1 o'clock, tea at 6 o'clock, and in winter to bed by 8, summer by 9.



10. Guardians, etc, to be allowed to see the children (but only within the limits of the grounds) on Thursday, between the hours of 3.30 and 5. Visitors from 2 to 5 every Wednesday.
11. The children shall attend the Cathedral Service every Sunday morning, and be instructed in the afternoon of that day at the Orphanage.
12. The children shall be dressed plainly and as economy, under a kindly influence, may suggest; but there shall be no one permanent, distinctive and peculiar dress, such as might offensively mark "the Orphanage Child".
13. Should any Guardian remove a child on unreasonable grounds, the child's clothing will be strictly regarded as the property of the Orphanage.
14. Where any children are received born of parents not conforming to the Church of England, while they will have the same general education, an honorable respect will be observed for the principles of their parents; they will be taught no formularies peculiar to the Church, and in the care of respectable and responsible friends, they will be allowed to attend that place of Worship to which their parents may have been attached, as well as its Sunday School.

#### DAILY RATION SCALE FOR THE ORPHANAGE CHILDREN.

	<u>Sun.</u>	<u>Mon.</u>	<u>Tues.</u>	<u>Wed.</u>	<u>Thurs.</u>	<u>Fri.</u>	<u>Sat.</u>
	oz.	oz.	oz.	oz.	oz.	oz.	oz.
Bread	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
Meat		8		8	8		8
Potatoes		8		8	8		8
Vegetables							
Rice	1 ½		1 ½			1 ½	
Salt	½	½	½	½	½	½	½
Sugar	1 ½	1 ½	1 ½	1 ½	1 ½	1 ½	1 ½
Tea	⅓	⅓	⅓	⅓	⅓	⅓	⅓
Milk		½ pint every day					
Soup							

On the days when soup is issued, puddings which are to be made of sago, rice, suet (with treacle), raisins, currants or summer fruit, are to be given to the children. The soup to be made with rice and vegetables Potatoes are not to be used when other vegetables are supplied."

So in less than four years after the massacre at Boola-Boola, the Orphanage was founded and functioning. This achievement was undoubtedly due to the energy, ability and enthusiasm of the Venerable James Brown, and for the next thirty years he was to play an all-important role in its history. It is, therefore, fitting that this chapter should close with a short summary of his career.

A graduate of Cambridge, Brown was ordained in England where he served several curacies. Then in 1853 he emigrated to the Swan River Colony, where his first appointment was that of Chaplain to convicts. This post he held for two years, after which he was inducted Rector of York. In 1857 the Diocese of Perth was established and Bishop Hale selected Brown to be its first Archdeacon. (Wollaston who had died in 1856 had been an Archdeacon of the Diocese of Adelaide, which from 1847 to 1857 included the whole of Western Australia). In 1862 Brown was appointed Incumbent of the Perth Parish, a position which made him Priest-in-Charge of the Cathedral, but not its Dean. He continued in this office till 1873 when he resigned for health reasons. The next year he was appointed Rector of Swan, and he remained there as Parish Priest until his death in 1895. In 1876 when the Swan Boy's Orphanage was opened at Middle Swan, Brown was also appointed its Manager as an extra-parochial responsibility. He resigned his position of Archdeacon of the Perth Diocese in 1889, and thereafter was known as Canon Brown. At all times he was much loved by the people in his pastoral care, but his abiding interest was in the welfare of the girls and boys in the Orphanages, for the founding of which he had mainly been responsible. A striking memorial to him is the tripartite east window in St. Mary's Church, Middle Swan. It includes three badges symbolising his three spheres of priestly work. On the lower left is the armorial arms of the Diocese of Canterbury - Brown was ordained in England and held curacies there. On the lower right - the arms of the Diocese of Perth - he served in it for forty-two years and was its first Archdeacon. In the lower centre is the Swanleigh badge - he founded the Orphanage that eventually became that establishment. And above the three badges is a pictorial representation of our Lord in the centre, with his disciples and the children. Below this are the words: "Suffer the little children to come unto me". Truly an appropriate memorial for the parishioners of Swan and the members of the Swanleigh Council to combine in erecting to the memory of James Brown.

### THE ORIGINAL SUBSCRIBERS 1868.

The following is a list of the original Subscribers:

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Bowra	Mr.	King	the Misses
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In addition there were a number of anonymous Subscribers.

## 2. THE EARLIEST YEARS.

Prior to its opening in 1868, the proposed institution was sometimes referred to as the "Church of England Orphanage". But to some of the subscribers this was an unsatisfactory name because it suggested that the enrolment was to be restricted to children of Anglican parentage. So the Committee altered the title to that of "Perth Orphanage", and this name was written into the first rule. At the same time it emphasized that there had never been an intention of denominational barrier. Rule 14 guaranteed that children not of the Church of England faith would be given the opportunity to attend the Church and Sunday School of the denomination to which their parents had belonged, always provided that respectable and responsible friends were prepared to accompany them. The June 1868 number of the "Church of England Magazine" also referred to this matter: "There is no thought of the Orphanage serving any party purpose", it said. "Its sole object is to befriend, to save from contamination, and to train young children for an honourable and useful life... and it will give a cordial welcome to all destitute children of the Colony".

But though officially named the "Perth Orphanage", it was commonly known as the "Protestant Orphanage" - this to differentiate it from the establishment started in the same year by the Roman Catholic Sisters of Mercy. And sometimes it received other titles. One such is used in the "Inquirer" of November 4th, 1868, in which is included a detailed report of a meeting of the subscribers to the "Protestant Orphanage Asylum".

For many years the name "Orphanage" with its unhappy connotation was retained in the institution's title. It was a word generally hated by the child residents. "What have I done to be put into an orphanage?" Too often parents used to threaten their misbehaving offspring: "If you're not a good boy I'll send you to the orphanage". The place was a bogey. But in 1942 the establishment became the "Swan Homes". The word "Home" was certainly an improvement on "Orphanage", and became a common title for such institutions in the twentieth century. It even found its way into the music halls, where a popular ditty affirmed that: "He'd be much better off in a Home". But even the names "Children's Home" or "Homes for Children" have an institutional suggestion, so that in later times a single title that carried no suggestion of this was sometimes used. An example is seen in the case of an establishment for child care in the Eastern States which called itself: "Tally-ho". The same sort of thing occurred when late in 1959 "Swan Homes" officially became "SWANLEIGH".

When the Orphanage opened in Perth, it had never been intended that its numbers should be confined to girls. It had hardly commenced when the question of how to provide accommodation for boys began to be considered. As early as July 4th, 1868, the "Herald" newspaper reported that in a few days time the Orphanage would be full. The article then continued: "Another double cottage forming part of the same property would be available were there funds to purchase it. Then the present maximum of eleven children could be increased to thirty". The Committee, however, did not proceed with this proposal. Perhaps it did not consider the building suitable for

boys, or possibly it thought the price too high. Instead it decided to erect a second premises on its land and to separate this new building from that of the Girls' Orphanage by a five-foot high close-picket fence. It also built a schoolroom. The total cost of these projects was £146-9-2.

So it was that on June 1st, 1869 - exactly twelve months after the commencement of the original institution - the Boys' Orphanage was opened. Four boys were enrolled that day, and were placed under the care of a Mr. and Mrs. Barret. The former was to be their teacher and out-of-doors supervisor, while Mrs. Barret was to be matron and perform all domestic duties. They were appointed at a combined salary of £75 per annum.

The original Minute Book of the meetings of the Management Committee and the earliest Annual Reports appear to have been lost. But a glimpse of life in the two Orphanages may be gained from summaries of those reports as printed in the newspapers of that time. We learn that daily school was conducted by Miss Beattie who is favourably commended for her conscientious and painstaking efforts. The Bible was read every day, and religious knowledge was the basic instruction. The elder girls assisted with chores and with the care of younger children. The boy's time was occupied at school or in garden cultivation. Food supplied to inmates is described as simple and plain, but "abundant and nutritious". But there were also "Feast Days" when "plenty of sweets and goodies were served". Ladies visited the cottage regularly to assist with the religious instruction and to supervise the work of the two matrons and so ensure that the domestic management was efficient.

In the first Annual Report, the Committee's objective is summed up by saying that the aim of the Orphanage was to give the girls a happy home, "with training that would fit them by knowledge, industry and integrity to achieve honest independence in after life". This high ideal was modified to a more mundane level in the second Annual Report where, according to the "Inquirer", it is stated that the institution in both its branches was not simply designed as a happy home and a moral refuge for orphaned or destitute children, but as "a nursery for cheerful, hard-working servants". Their institution life was to be "a preparation for their temporal condition hereafter". One suspects that a hymn that would often be chosen to be sung at the institution's worship was "All things bright and beautiful", in which occurs the verse (nowadays usually omitted) -

"The rich man in his castle  
The poor man at his gate  
God made them high or lowly  
And ordered their estate".

One little girl is remembered who always maintained that her favourite hymn was "Orphanage bright and beautiful!").

The idea that the institution girls were being prepared to go to service and the boys to farm work persisted down the years. As late as 1948 in the Annual Report of the Swan Homes, there was included a picture of a group of well-dressed girls with suitcases. Underneath was the caption: "Launching Out - Senior girls leaving the Homes for careers in the city". The Travelling Collector at that time shook his head regretfully. "That picture", he said, "makes my work ten times harder. Farmers' wives say to me - 'Why the city? Why doesn't your Home send them to service with us like it used to? Why should we be asked to support an institution that sends all its girls

to city employment?" But the change from the early policy of "Girls to service, boys to farms" was a long time in coming. Only in rare instances did a boy or girl get a chance for alternative occupation.

The splendid financial response made by the citizens of 1868 towards the founding of the Orphanage has already been mentioned. But in subsequent years this same high standard of public generosity was not maintained, and for most of its first century the establishment had a most difficult task in making ends meet. When Annual Reports were published, they always included an urgent appeal for more support for the institution, and this problem of insufficient finance is constantly referred to in the minutes of meetings of the Board. For instance, in one of the earliest of these it is recorded that the lady visitors' recommendation that a new mangle be purchased for the washhouse had to be deferred because of lack of money. But even in the 1930's, the problem was still ever-present. An application from the cook for a butcher's knife to cut up the meat was rejected because the Board could not afford it. As the years went by, the number of subscribers declined. There were increasing demands on public charity as appeals for new objects were launched. Bishop Riley speaking with a slight touch of bitterness in 1911 said - "Our institutions are very old, and unfortunately when you get old in Australia you are said to be not wanted. This was a country of young people and for young institutions. The new institutions got the most help and the older ones had very hard work to struggle on". When Mr. A.A. Robertson was appointed Travelling Collector in 1923, he found that there were only twelve subscribers!

But back in its earliest years the Orphanage succeeded in finishing with credit balances. Printed copies of the first two financial statements have been found and are reproduced below:

#### PROTESTANT ORPHANAGE BALANCE SHEET

##### RECEIPTS

	£. s. d.
Government (June 1st, 1868-May 31st 1869)	115: 5: 4
Subscriptions and Donations	918: 0: 7
Receipts:	£1,033: 5: 11
Payments:	<u>783: 7: 9</u>

##### PAYMENTS

	£. s. d.
Legal Exes.	10: 0: 0
Purchase of property, etc.	480: 0: 0
Mrs. Love's Salary	12: 0: 0
Miss Beattie's Salary	18: 0: 0
"    "    Gratuity	5: 0: 0
Butcher's Bill	40: 19: 2
Baker's Bill	16: 19: 7
Laundress	17: 8: 0
Printing Circulars, etc.	9: 5: 9
Sundries (inc. repairs, furniture, groceries, etc.	<u>173: 15: 3</u>

Balance in Western

Australian Bank                      £249: 18:2

Payments                      £ 783: 7: 9

Signed: G.L. BROUN

May

31st,

Secretary and Treasurer      1869

# BALANCE SHEET PERTH (P.) ORPHANAGE

(June 1st, 1869-May 31st, 1870)

## RECEIPTS

	£. s. d.
Balance in hand	249:18: 2
Government Subsidy	245:16: 0
Subscriptions and donations	239:17: 3
Sale of Garden Produce	2: 0: 0

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£737:11: 5

## PAYMENTS

	£. s. d.
Salaries	120: 5: 0
New Buildings and Alterations	146: 9: 2
Household Expenses	317:12: 7
Balance: (Fixed Deposit	150: 0: 0
(	
(In W.A. Bank	3: 4: 8

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£737:11: 5

Balance £153: 4: 8

Signed: W. ADKINSON  
Treasurer

Even an amount placed at Fixed Deposit! It would be many years before the institution's Working Account would again be able to show that!

### 3. A NEW ORPHANAGE

During the institution's first two years, the only financial assistance received from the Government was the per capita allowance of 8d. a day to help meet the working expenses. No State aid had been asked for or was given towards purchasing the original property, or for the subsequent erection of the boys' building. However, when a schoolroom was provided as well as a teacher, the Orphanage qualified for a special grant as an "Assisted School", and this amount was added to the annual Government subsidy.

But in 1873 the establishment did receive some help in kind from the State. The "Government Gazette" of that year records that a grant of Crown land, 29 acres in area, and situated near Perth, was made to the committee as "Endowment for Protestant Orphanage" (Reserve 27A). According to the Annual Report for 1873 the purpose of the grant was for the industrial occupation of the boys. By this time there were 39 of them in residence, and there had been disciplinary problems - which is not really suprising when it is remembered that the area of the Orphanage property was only two acres, mostly given over to buildings or cultivation. There could have been little space left for recreational purposes for the two institutions. Obviously a new start for the boys had to be made, and for this more land was needed. So the Committee petitioned the Governor for a grant and he acceded to its request as above.

But soon afterwards two complementary factors were to influence greatly the subsequent history of the Orphanages. The first was that the Government wanted a sizable area of land near the capital for a Botanical Reserve. The second was that the Committee decided that it wanted to establish its new Orphanage for boys in a rural area, so that the lads could be taught farming. So the members approached the Governor with the suggestion that an exchange be made. It would surrender the land grant it had recently received and in return would get another of equal value in a farming area. This was agreed to by both parties. The Government got back its 29 acres and the Orphanage Committee was given 2,000 acres of Crown land adjoining the Missionary Society's land on the northern shore of the Swan River at Middle Swan - to which reference was made in the Introduction (see page 1).

The Annual Report of 1873-74, referred to above, was writted by Archdeacon Brown, and is the earliest original printed document about the Orphanage that we possess. It sets out in some detail the reason for this new development and the steps by which it was achieved. In it Brown states: "One very important matter which has engaged the attention of the Committee during the past year remains to be noticed - the removal of the Boys' Orphanage to the Middle Swan. The Lady Superintendent has more than once officially expressed her inability to supervise both houses efficiently". (Evidently there had been an early change in staffing arrangements, for it will be recalled that originally the boys were to be under the control of a man and his wife). "She has requested the Committee to appoint an overseer over the boys, and she proposes that she will forego part of her salary in accordance with the diminution of the work for which her services were engaged. The Committee have anxiously considered this question, and we have formed the deliberate conviction that it would be to the advantage



of the boys to be separated from the girls, and that a country life would afford a better opening for their moral and industrial training”.

Brown continues: “The Subscribers have a right to enquire what has guided the Committee in their choice of site and upon what plan they propose to work. The Colonial and Continental Church Society holds upon the Middle Swan 800 acres of land in a narrow grant. (It was 10 chains wide and 10 miles long and was known as the ‘Ribbon Strip’. It will be recalled that it was originally purchased by the Society to secure the settlement of clergy in the Swan River Colony). Most of this land lies uncultivated and profitless. Upwards of 50 acres upon the river boundary have been enclosed, and about half of this has been highly cultivated. Outside of this an additional 30 acres have been cleared and fenced. With the approval of the Society it is proposed to divide the enclosed land upon the river between the resident Clergyman and the Orphanage, and to give the Orphanage the 30 acres cleared outside, together with all such remainder of the original grant as may profitably be reclaimed. The Clergyman offers his services to superintend the institution, and the Committee believes that under a good working-overseer and an active matron the boys, while saved from some temptations incidental to the neighbourhood of a town, will secure an industrial training more profitable to themselves and to the Colony at large, and will ultimately contribute materially to the support of their own and of the Girl’s Home. There will necessarily be some additional outlay at first, but this cannot fail to be reproductive. Meanwhile the premises now occupied in Perth can readily and advantageously be let”.

The proposal met with widespread approval, not only from the Subscribers but among the general public. A sub-leader in the “Perth Gazette” was very enthusiastic. After congratulating those who had so generously brought the Orphanage into existence on the success so far achieved, it pointed out that the institution had now outgrown its houseroom. It went on to say that the Mission Grant, with the Middle Swan Church and the Clergyman’s house upon it, and with a frontage to the river and some good land, made the locality admirably suited for the purpose of a public institution, and that such use of it had been frequently suggested.

The Perth Committee was to be in control of both institutions. Archdeacon Brown had already been inducted as Rector of Swan, and had moved to the Rectory. Says the “Gazette”: “The whole institution owes its origin to the Archdeacon’s exertions, and he has watched over it up to the present time with almost parental care. We may be quite sure that his interest in it will not be chilled or diminished by the fact of his finding one department of it put immediately under his own wing”. It was to remain in his charge till his death in 1895.

To build an orphanage at Middle Swan, thirteen miles from Perth - quite a distance in those days - to furnish it and to meet the expenses of the transfer was a costly undertaking. But the plan having been accepted by the Subscribers, the Committee, with Brown well to the fore, set out to raise the money. Appeals and approaches were made throughout the Colony and met with a good response. The Archdeacon’s principal donor was Sir Luke Leake, whose daughter had become Bishop Hale’s second wife. He gave a very generous sum. The building plan provided for a brick structure capable of accommodating fifty boys. Underground was to be a storeroom and a kitchen; on the ground floor there would be a dining room and a school room; on the first floor a large dormitory and three small staff rooms; in the ceiled attic two more large dormitories. The cost was estimated at £1,000, but some outer buildings including an overseer’s cottage, a farm shed, stockyards, etc. would necessitate a further £ 800. The erection

was not let to a single contractor, but was carried out under the direction of a prominent Perth architect, Mr. Jewell, who supervised the sub-contracting masons, carpenters and other tradesmen. That this building, erected over a century ago, is still in excellent condition and daily usage at Swanleigh, is a great tribute to the original builder, to the workmen, and to regular maintenance programmes carried out down the years. Very appropriately it has been named Brown House and is the first of the "Noisy Mansions".

After sixteen months the institution was ready for occupation. Brown then made yet another appeal, this time for gifts in kind. In the "Inquirer" of March 26th, 1876, he asks for donations of cows, sheep, pigs, a stout cob or pony for a light cart, a few young trees of an ornamental kind to plant about the house, some young fruit trees and some garden seeds.

By June that year all was ready to receive the boy residents from Adelaide Terrace. The "W.A. Almanac" lists among the events of June, 1876: "The boys in Perth Protestant Orphanage transferred to a new Orphanage at Middle Swan, and were placed under the direction of Archdeacon Brown". So the boys' establishment was off to a new start. Through the generosity of its manager, it had a half share of his cleared and enclosed glebe upon the river frontage. It also had, as virgin land, the remainder of the "Ribbon Strip" and its own two thousand acres of endowment, both of which it could use for future farm development or for sale. Its boys were accommodated in a substantial brick structure, and there was an overseer's cottage, farm buildings and stock. The Chaplain-Manager resided on the site, his Rectory being only about a hundred yards away from the main building. A project that in a modified form still flourishes to this day had been launched very largely by the vision and energy of one man.

As well as carrying out his pastoral duties in his new Parish and his managerial duties in the new home, Brown also farmed part of his glebe. Hundreds of boys have played in one of his paddocks near old "Elephant's Foot" - the name given with singular appropriateness to the ancient gum tree that stood at the entrance to the property. One day one of the earliest boys was told to go down to the paddock and look for a missing cow. He came back with the startling information - "She's in the Archdeacon, Sir", He meant, of course, that the animal was in his glebe - not in his stomach! But the name stuck. For to this day that paddock is always referred to by the boys as - "The Archy".

## 4. INTO THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

After the founding of the Orphanage in 1868 and its early division into two branches - one remaining in Perth at the original site, the other opening at Middle Swan - there followed a long period of slow development. The Board of Management, which was the title taken by the original Committee, controlled both branches, but otherwise these mostly functioned as separate institutions. Their funds were not pooled, and each establishment presented its own financial statement. Later on, when bequests began to be made to the Orphanages, the beneficiary institution jealously regarded any endowment it received as its own, no portion of which could be used by the other branch. The children in the one Home had practically no association with those in the other, which was a bad arrangement because it meant that a brother and sister rarely saw each other. The two establishments were generally known as the "Anglican Orphanages", but other than donating to them, in equal shares, the proceeds of one Sunday's collection every year, the church took little interest in them. They were not under the control of Synod, and the Diocesan Trustees, who after 1888 held the titles to their land and their endowments, were but "bare" trustees - they held the endowments but were not responsible for how these were spent. The Board was elected by Subscribers - any person who donated a guinea a year (originally it had been two guineas) was a Subscriber - and though those elected were mainly Anglicans, this was not a necessary qualification for membership. The broad policy of the two establishments was decided at annual meetings by those Subscribers who attended them, and not by the church. It was a sloppy constitutional arrangement which virtually left the control of the Orphanages in the hands of a few people, not necessarily churchmen.

After the turn of the century, there was a steady increase in the number of children enrolled in each institution. This was to be expected, because in the last decade of the nineteenth century and in the early years of the twentieth, there was a steep increase in the State's population. In the nineties Western Australia awoke from its drowsy post-pioneering days to become a magnet that drew gold-seekers from the ends of the earth. Many of those who failed to make their fortunes stayed on to work in what became a firmly-established gold-mining industry. Later developments in Western Australia resulted in the expansion of agricultural and pastoral activity, the growth of towns, new secondary industries and much private enterprise, as well as a great increase in the work of government. While all those things gave the State more people and wealth and work, there was also much more indigence than in earlier times. And among the needy were children. Dean Latham, speaking at the Annual Meeting of Subscribers to the Orphanage in 1910, referred to the fact that a large number of the enrolment in both establishments came from the goldfields. Possibly the heavy toll of life in that community caused by the incidence of miners' phthisis (dust on the lung) would have been a contributory factor, for many died of this disease leaving dependants.

The steadily increasing demand for admission to the institutions called for the provision of more accommodation. In Brown House at the Swan about fifty boys could be cared for, while in the two cottages in Perth, the number of girls that could be enrolled was less. Expansion was needed in both places, but it was felt that further accommodation for girls was the more urgent of the two. This the Board set about providing.

When Brown moved to the Swan, the management of the Perth branch was taken over by his successor at the Cathedral, Dean Joseph Gegg. In his time a substantial brick building was erected near the original cottages. After his retirement, the next Dean - the Very Revd. Frederick Goldsmith, later to become the first Bishop of Bunbury - carried on the management, a position he was to hold for the next eighteen years. He brought to his work for the Orphanage a great enthusiasm, with vision and energy. By 1902 the first enlargement of Gegg's building had been completed. But the same year the erection of a new wing was commenced, and this was to provide even better facilities. The next Annual Report records that "the building now contains commodious and well-ventilated dormitories, a bathroom, a dining room for the girls and one for the staff, as well as a kitchen, pantries and a scullery". The total cost of the two extensions was £3,267.

Goldsmith was working to a plan which had been adopted by the Board some years earlier. To finish it would require yet another extension. But payment for the work done so far had not yet been finalised. However, nothing daunted, Goldsmith, supported by the now-enthusiastic Board, decided to press on and get the job done. This idea found ready supporters in two prominent and generous churchmen - Mr. Walter Padbury and the Hon. William Loton. These two had already guaranteed an overdraft at the bank to enable Stage 3 of the building to be completed. They now assured the Board that the overdraft guarantee would continue, thus enabling a contract to be signed to finish the Orphanage.

So the work was put in hand and was completed in 1904. It still stands in Adelaide Terrace, an imposing edifice, architecturally attractive and very well built. But it is no longer one of the "Noisy Mansions", for it now accommodates two Government Departments. When the last section was completed, Mr. James Longmore, the Child Welfare Department's Inspector of Institutions, said of it: "This is now an exceedingly complete institution, and during the last few years has made marvellous strides". He goes on to commend Dean Goldsmith: "The many recent improvements are the results of his unwearying efforts". Like Brown, the Dean was devoted to the welfare of orphans, and even after his consecration as Bishop of Bunbury in 1904, he still continued to be Manager of the Girls' Branch for the next two years.

The Board, however, did not then just sit back. The annual reports disclose that almost every year there were smaller building-improvements added: "A new laundry has been built". "The western wing has been remodelled and enlarged, providing an airier workroom". "..... a wide balcony built to be used as a sleeping place for delicate children" "..... a sick bay", "a playshed", "a drying shed" - all these within the space of a few years. Mention ought also to be made of the earlier building of a beautiful little chapel in which daily worship was conducted.

Until the Perth Orphanage was shifted from the capital to the Swan in 1942, the Cathedral clergy took a very active part in the work of the institution. After Goldsmith resigned as Manager in 1909, this post was filled in succession by Archdeacon Watkins (1909), Dean Latham (1910), Minor Canon (later Dean) Foster (1911), Dean Mercer (1912) and then by Archdeacon Hudleston in 1917. Except for a short period of

four years when the position was temporarily filled by Canon J.W. Armstrong (1929-33), the Archdeacon remained as Manager till his retirement in 1942. He was a saintly man, devoted to his church, and especially to the work of caring for destitute children. His name is remembered in that of one of Swanleigh's noisy mansions - "Hudleston House". (See page 84).

The Very Revd. R.H. Moore was a later Dean who took a great interest in the Orphanage girls. He made it his personal responsibility to prepare them for Confirmation, and for years afterwards he always remembered the birthdays of the girls who had been in his classes. Regularly at Synod he would plead with churchmen to remember the Orphanages when making their wills. On one such occasion he suggested that in every church porch there ought to be a reminder to parishioners that they should do this. He thought that some slogan on a poster would help, though he admitted he couldn't suggest one. Quick as a flash, Archdeacon (now Bishop) Brian Macdonald wrote something on a piece of paper and handed it to the speaker. Then the Dean began to laugh. Addressing Synod he said: "Brian Macdonald has suggested the very thing. His slogan is: "Pay as you go!" And Synod roared its delight.

When in 1882 the first section of the new Orphanage (Gegg's section) had been built, there was no money left in the fund to furnish it. The Board decided it would ask the Bishop (Bishop Parry) if he would approach the Governor and solicit help to finalise the project. So Archdeacon Brown who was the Secretary of the Board wrote the following letter to the Bishop: "We have thought it right to ask no pecuniary aid from the Government towards the erection of the building. But if Your Lordship would represent to His Excellency the nature of what has been done, and the outlay which has been entirely provided by private benefactors, and which is now expended, our request for a small grant (say £30) towards furnishing the building and giving it that air of a bright, comfortable home, which seems so desirable in our endeavour to frame for these children a virtuous and happy future, will not perhaps be regarded by His Excellency as immodest or unreasonable". But when the Bishop approached him the Governor's reply was that he had no funds at his disposal to make a grant in money. So the Board had to find the money some other way, in order to provide most of the furniture to give the institution "the air of a bright comfortable home". This cost not £30 but £130.

But though the Bishop was unsuccessful in getting monetary aid, he did come away from Government House with something. His Excellency increased the subsidy from 8d. to 1/- a day for any girl received into the Home, and he promised that he would ask the Executive Council for a land grant of 8,000 acres as an endowment for the Girls' Home. We can imagine his saying - "Not worth anything now, but could be valuable some day".

So on behalf of the Board Archdeacon Brown made out an official request for the land grant, and the Governor fulfilled his promise. It is recorded in the Government Gazette dated 3.2.1883, and reads:

Crown Lands Office

Perth.

3rd February 1883

His Excellency the Governor has been pleased on the recommendation of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, to set apart as Public Reserve the Land described in the Schedule below for the purpose therein set forth:-

## RESERVES

Recorded No.	Contents A. R. P.	Description of Boundaries	Purpose for which made
587A	8000 acres	Bounded on the West by the East Boundary of Protestant Orphanage Reserve 174A, 126 chains 41 links. On the East 633 chains. North Boundary Swan Location 12 known as Mission Grant.	Endowment for Girls' Home

(Signed) J. Forrest  
Commissioner for Lands

(Note the capital letters in the words "Girls' Home" - not "a girls' Home").

The above Schedule is similar to that which had been granted to the Orphanage Committee on October 25th, 1875, when it first applied for land to set up a new Orphanage for boys. (See page 15). It will be recalled that the land actually granted under Reserve 27A was exchanged for a grant of 2000 acres at Middle Swan (Reserve 173A). Its stated purpose was "Endowment for Protestant Orphanage" (not for any protestant orphanage). When that deed was issued in 1893, it was titled Swan Location 1253.

But when this happened the title had upon it an ecclesiastical trust, i.e. it was stated on the title that the grant was for "ecclesiastical purposes". Similarly when the title to 587A was issued it, too, carried the same ecclesiastical trust. Obviously this was wrong. The original applications for the two land grants had not been applied for by the church nor made for the normal church purposes such as for land on which to build a church or chapel or for a parsonage or a cemetery. None of these things would ever require 2000 acres - let alone 8000 acres! Under the Land Grant Regulations of 1877 Section 133, it is stated: "The Governor shall, on the recommendation of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, make reserves for sites for churches and chapels, WITH NO ONE GRANT EXCEEDING ONE HUNDRED ACRES OF GLEBE ATTACHED". The purpose for which a land grant was made is clearly stated on the original Schedule, and this implies a moral trust on those who receive the grant. Both applications had been made by Archdeacon Brown in his capacity as Secretary to the Orphanage Committee and the Orphanage Board respectively. Had the request been for ecclesiastical purposes, the application would have been made by a layman or clergyman acting in the capacity of Diocesan Secretary. As has previously been stated, the Committee's Minute Book in which would have been recorded the decision to apply for the first of these land grants has unfortunately been lost (though the application itself is in existence, as is also a printed copy of the Annual Report to Subscribers in 1874 in which details of the first Land Grant to the Orphanage Committee (Reserve 27A) are recorded). The Board's authority for an application to be made to the Governor in 1882 for the land grant he had promised the Bishop is, however, recorded in the Minutes of a meeting held late that year, and these do exist. It is also quite clear that in the mind of the then Commissioner, John Forrest, Swan Location 1253 was a grant to the Orphanage Board for the extension of its work, and not one for ecclesiastical purposes.

For on February 15th, 1889, he wrote to Bishop Parry: "With reference to THE ISSUE OF THE CROWN GRANT OF 2000 ACRES FOR PROTESTANT ORPHANAGE" (the capitals are our own) "I regret that owing to the land not having been surveyed, the deed cannot at present issue". Finally, according to a statement received from a former Diocesan Secretary, the Diocesan Trustees have an old Land Register, commenced in 1883, in which the following entry appears (page 363:) "Granted 25.10.1875 Swan Location 1253, 2000 acres in trust for an endowment for Orphanage". In the face of all this cumulative evidence the words "Ecclesiastical Purposes" should not have been used.

John Forrest's association with the Orphanages was a long and very close one. As early as 1873 there appears an entry in Bishop Hale's diary for February of that year "Visited land recently granted to the Orphanage by the canal near the Causeway, with John Forrest and Archdeacon Brown". (This would probably be the site where the Girls' Orphanage was finally built). He would be aware that the Bishop was the Orphanage's sole trustee, Hale having agreed to act as such when he was requested to accept this office by a meeting of Subscribers held on April 25th, 1871. As Commissioner of Lands Forrest would also know that under the 1888 Act establishing the Diocesan Trustees, all property at that time held in trust by the Bishop passed to the Diocesan Trustees, "BUT UPON AND SUBJECT TO ALL TRUSTS AFFECTING THE SAME". (Again the capitals are our own). As Forrest knew all this, why were the deeds issued with an ecclesiastical trust?

Three possible reasons are suggested. First it may have been an oversight in the Titles Office. Grants associated with the church normally did have the words "For ecclesiastical Purposes" on them. Secondly, Forrest may have regarded the work of the Orphanages as "ecclesiastical". Certainly the leading men connected with them were clergymen. But, as was stated earlier, the two institutions though founded, and in the main supported by Anglicans, were not officially recognised establishments of the Church of England. It assumed no responsibility for their policy, their financial stability or their management. These things were all in the hands of the Subscribers. There was also the awkward fact that grants for ecclesiastical purposes were not to exceed one hundred acres. The two grants in question were very much larger, viz. 2000 acres and 8000 acres respectively. Thirdly - and most likely - Forrest believed that the Trustees would be aware of the origin and purpose of the land grants - their Chairman, the Bishop, certainly would, for it was to him that the Governor had promised the second grant. As a loyal son of the Anglican Church the Commissioner would naturally assume that the Trustees would honour such intention.

The point has been laboured because in later times the land became valuable, and the words "Ecclesiastical Purposes" on the deeds of the two grants gave rise to serious controversy between later Trustees and the then Orphanage Board. For when the land was ultimately sub-divided and sold, the Diocesan Trustees paid the proceeds into church revenue, and not to the Orphanages. When the latter protested, the Trustees claimed that the deeds had upon them an ecclesiastical trust and therefore the proceeds were theirs. Legally, of course, they were. It is an accepted principle in law that trustees do not have to look behind the purpose of a trust. What is written on the deeds is what counts. But Diocesan Trustees are also practising churchmen. They are the clerical and lay leaders of the local branch of a great Christian denomination. As individuals they have a moral as well as legal responsibility. When it is crystal clear why and to whom those grants were first made, it is dubious Christian ethics to act as if the grants had been made for a different purpose. However, the Trustees did ultimately act ac-

cording to conscience. They recommended to the Diocesan Council that AS THE ORPHANAGE HAD STRONG MORAL CLAIMS TO THIS LAND (SWAN LOCATION 1253) THE INTEREST ON THE PROCEEDS OF ITS SALE OUGHT TO BE PAID TO THE INSTITUTION. Their recommendation was accepted by the Council, who followed this procedure for years afterwards. This is what one would expect of men holding the high office of lay or clerical trustees, when the historical background of the land grants was made known.

The problem of the increase in the number of girls requiring accommodation in the Perth Orphanage had now been overcome. But what of the situation up at the Swan, where there was a similar demand for more places for boys? It will be recalled that part of the ground floor of Brown House was the original dining room. As the number of boys in residence steadily increased, the conditions became very crowded. The tables were so close together that there was hardly room to move between them. Here indeed was a great need, and the Board decided to consult with one of Perth's leading architects. He produced a most ambitious plan. It envisaged a large new building that included a spacious dining room on the ground floor with a dormitory above it to accommodate forty boys. These two sections formed the north wing of the plan. In the centre of the building was to be a block of rooms that would include an office, a sick-bay, a clothing store and a small library - these all on the ground floor, while above them were to be five staff bedrooms. Then there was to be a south wing balancing the north. In this were to be two smaller dormitories and the remainder of the wing was to be quarters for the Manager, and his family. Both wings were to have upstairs and downstairs verandahs, and the whole was to present a most impressive facade.

By standards of institution architecture in those times it was a dream plan. But to the Board it looked "The Impossible Dream". For how could the erection of such a pretentious building be financed? Regretfully the Board began to plan for something less costly. But then came exciting news. The late Mrs. Waylen, who all her life had been an interested and generous supporter of the Orphanages, left a substantial legacy to Swan Boys' - an amount that would be at least £2,000, but might be even more. Indeed this did prove to be the case, for in her will she left the institution £900, and the residue of her estate. But it proved to be an instance of the "tail wagging the dog". When everything was finally wound up, the residue was worth much more than the specified amount in her will, and the whole bequest totalled £4,033. It was a magnificent gift which enabled the Board to commence the architect's design immediately. The Governor, Sir Frederick Bedford, laid the Foundation Stone of "Waylen House" in 1904, and by the next year the north wing and central sections were erected and occupied. Including the furnishing, the cost was about £3,000. The south wing was not built until 1912, when it was opened by Sir John (later Lord) Forrest.

While paying tribute to the generosity of the late Mrs. Waylen, it is interesting to record that her former husband had been the principal benefactor in the erection of Brown House. For prior to her second marriage, Mrs. Waylen had been Lady Leake, wife of Sir Luke Leake, who had been such a liberal supporter of Archdeacon Brown. After Sir Luke's death, his widow married Dr. Waylen who was honorary surgeon to the Girls' Orphanage in Perth. (See page 29). What a debt of gratitude the establishments owe to his family!

With the passing of years some interesting changes have been made to the interior of Waylen House. The dining-room has become the boys' sitting room, with a full-sized billiard table, a television set, a record-player and comfortable chairs. The two



smaller dormitories have respectively become the Swanleigh library and a study. The staff bedrooms are now bedrooms for small groups of boys or used for other institutional purposes, while downstairs the office accommodation has been expanded. Even the Manager's quarters have been converted to meet other requirements, this being made possible by the erection of a new residence for the Principal (in 1971-72). A two-storied extension has been made to the north wing to provide two additional dormitories. But in frontal appearance today the whole structure is little different from what it was in the original plan. It has a dignity and attractiveness that would enhance the reputation of any institution.

The erection of the first part of the Waylen Project in 1905 satisfied the need for improved dining and sleeping facilities for the boys. But one important requirement seems to have been overlooked. From its earliest days the institution's kitchen had been in the basement of Brown House. But by now it was quite inadequate for the cooking requirements of the increased numbers. So it was decided to build a kitchen closer to the new dining room, the site chosen being that where the locker-bay in the covered area is now situated. As a kitchen it was a considerable improvement on the previous one, but the meals still had to be carried to the new dining room across a space open to the elements - a real breeze-way. This was not a good arrangement, and it is surprising that the Waylen plan did not provide for something better. A narrow covered pathway was built, and this afforded some protection from the weather - which was an improvement, but far from ideal.

It remains to make brief reference to some less pretentious but nevertheless important projects that were undertaken at the Swan Orphanage in these years. In 1907 the institution was linked to the Goldfields Water Supply scheme. Prior to that it had to depend on a large brick underground tank near Brown House that was filled by rain-water catchment from the roof. A good well close to the near corner of the present hockey field was also an important source of water supply for domestic, gardening and stock-watering purposes. Several other wells for farm use were also dug and bricked.

The next year a new laundry was built, adjoining the bathroom. It's equipment included a huge copper, washing troughs, mangles and ironing tables. All work was done by hand, and many years were to elapse before washing machines were installed in a more modern laundry. When eventually this was built, the old room became the sewing room and clothing store, with a locker for each boy. In this way it provided a place where much friendly association between the matron, sewing staff and the boys took place. It was here that so many of them got that mothering and personal interest that was so greatly appreciated by them. Hundreds of them look back with affection and gratitude to ladies such as Mrs. Parry, Mrs. Putland, Mrs. Gillett and others, for the friendliness and help they received from them in that room. In it was exhibited that quality of heart which is the greatest service that staff in any form of residential institution can render - the genuine love for its girls and boys. Nothing in an establishment can ever replace this - not magnificent buildings or splendid facilities or comprehensive programmes or highly qualified or even good-intentioned staff. If the other is absent, the institution fails in its fundamental purpose, which is the provision of a substitute good-home. "If I have not love", says Paul, "I am nothing". And in this all-important matter, no staff can bluff children. They know instinctively.

When electric-light eventually came to Swan, this facility was installed by the Board. Prior to that all illumination was by kerosene lamps. However, from time to time power failures would occur, and then out would come the "hurricanes". Controlling over

a hundred high-spirited boys rendered gleeful by suddenly being plunged into blackness had its problems for staff, as it did later on for house mistresses with nervous excited girls.

There was a time when the electricity authorities were disposed to blame the Orphanage boys for a run of power failures in the district. One of these was found to have been caused by a boy throwing a piece of wire into the air, and it being caught in the power lines. After that any blackout was: "Those Orphanage boys at it again!" Even when on one occasion the Manager tried to assure an irate inspector that at the time the blackout occurred every boy had been accounted for, he was not believed. "It was the boys". But then a report was received of a dead burnt swan beneath the power lines half a mile away, and so the real culprit was discovered. After this had happened several times, and not only at Middle Swan, did electricity officials agree that all the power failures in the area might not have been due to the boys.

The road through the Orphanage to the church was a constant problem. The main road to the north of the State went past "Elephant's Foot" and the olives (a section that is believed to be the oldest existing piece of road in the Swan District), then round the bottom of the slope on top of which the girls' houses have been erected. There it branched, one fork going along the side of the oval where the beautiful gum trees shaded it, and across Jane Brook by an ancient bridge and on to Gingin. The other fork continued past the back of the boys' buildings and then turned left and up to the side of the churchyard. There it reached what was then the main gate, from which a wide path (now largely disused) led to the porch. This road was known as "Church Lane". But there was also a track which left Church Lane and roughly followed the line of the present road up to an eastern entrance to the churchyard where the lych-gate now stands. "Roughly" was the operative word, for it was always in a terrible state, and more so as the Orphanage began to develop. In 1910 the Manager wrote to the Swan Road Board requesting that as the track carried a fair amount of wheeled traffic, it take over its maintenance and improve it. At first this was declined, but eventually the members agreed to do this if the institution would give up sufficient land for there to be a fence-to-fence width of 66 feet. The Orphanage Board was quite agreeable to doing this, and the road was built. But only a year later the minutes of a Board Meeting disclose that "the new road is a failure". So began a sequence of complaints and patching, more complaints and more patching, that went on for the next fifty years, till in 1968 the Swan Shire, with some financial assistance from the Swanleigh Council, completely re-built the road. It is now named "Yule Avenue", in memory of Mrs. Lucy Yule whose grave is the oldest in St. Mary's Churchyard. She was buried in 1838 - only nine years after the Colony had been proclaimed in Perth. Her gravestone which was brought from England is always a source of great historical interest to visitors.

When the Orphanage was founded in Adelaide Terrace, the first building to be provided after the original shelter was a school, and one of the first two appointments made by the Committee was that of a teacher. For a good many years, both in Perth and at Swan, the Orphanage children were taught by men and women employed by the Board for this purpose. In so-doing the institutions were entitled to a Government grant, which necessitated an annual inspection by officials of the Education Department, to ensure that instruction was being given and was efficient. The Inspectors' reports were always read at Annual Meetings of Subscribers. Sometimes these gave praise to the standards achieved in individual subjects, as for instance the 1903 report of Miss J. Nisbett, Inspector of Needlework: "All garments examined were exquisitely sewed.

The subject has evidently received careful attention and the results are highly creditable to the teacher". But for the most part the reports seemed to aim at encouraging the teacher to persevere towards better standards rather than expressing any enthusiasm for the results he or she had achieved.

A correspondent has supplied some details about the first school at the Swan Orphanage. "It was a long narrow one-roomed building, constructed of rammed-earth walls, and it had a shingle roof. Though it had no ceiling, the room was light and airy, because at the north and south ends were numerous glass windows. On Sundays it was used as a Sunday School for all the children of the district as well as for the Orphanage boys, and at that time Miss M.B. Viveash of 'Ashby' assisted Archdeacon Brown with the teaching". This appears to be the earliest record of the children in either institution having any regular contact with outside boys and girls - a practice considered most desirable these days, but unusual in earlier years.

The obtaining of a schoolmaster for Swan Boys' proved to be quite difficult. The salary offered was £30 per annum, supplemented by £15 per annum as issuer of stores and a further £10 per annum for secretarial work. But even these added emoluments were not sufficient to attract applicants. In 1882 a Board minute records: "Unable to get a schoolmaster for Swan Orphanage. It is agreed that the Central Board of Education should be asked to classify it as a Government School". Had that happened the responsibility for providing staff would have passed to the Department. But the request was declined. Eventually the post was filled, but down the years the reports disclose many changes of staff in both institutions. Mention, however, must be made of the fine service of Mr. L. Wilcher, who became headmaster at Swan in 1902, and remained till his death in 1909, by which time he had been appointed Superintendent of the establishment. (The Superintendent was next in seniority to the Manager). The Board's report for 1910 pays tribute to him: "The institution has suffered a great loss in the sad death of Mr. L. Wilcher in December last. From the time he joined the staff he showed the most untiring and devoted zeal for the work. When he took up the office of Superintendent, he threw all his energies into the task of making the Orphanage what it should be - a real home for the boys. The individual care he bestowed on each of the boys gained for him their affection and esteem. His early death has left a gap hard to fill". Mr. J.P. Walton, Chief Inspector of Schools, added his tribute: "For the past seven years he has rendered untiring services to this institution, and his work will long be remembered with thankfulness by all interested in the education supplied by this type of school".

As numbers increased in each institution, additional teaching staff had to be engaged. Some of these do not appear to have been very proficient, for the Board recorded its concern about the standard of teaching in its schools, and it instructed its Managers to ask the Inspector-General if he would allow the Orphanage teachers to go to the Claremont Training College "FOR ONE WEEK", in order that they might acquire thorough methods of imparting instruction". (Nowadays the desirable period of time to train an efficient teacher is at least three years!) We hear nothing more of this suggestion. Evidently Mr. Cecil Andrews, Inspector-General, was unimpressed with the idea.

In 1908 an important change in the education system was made. It was decided that the older girls should attend East Perth State School for their secular education. In the report for that year we read that: "The experiment has so far been completely successful. The children thoroughly enjoy their schooling. The school authorities express them-

selves as pleased with the children; the children make new friends and gain larger experiences, and the increased competition is good for them". In fact the Board was so happy with this new arrangement that it decided to introduce the same system at the Swan, and enrol its older boys at the Middle Swan School. So the girls and boys "crocodile" to their respective schools, but usually in charge of a member of staff so as to ensure that there was no absconding. The teaching of the younger children was continued at the Orphanages for some years longer, but by 1917 all of school age were attending State School. At Perth Orphanage the time came when some of the older girls went to James Street Central School for post-primary education. Provision was also made for the teaching of pre-school infants by engaging a trained kindergartener. After her appointment it was decided that little boys should also benefit in this way, and in future they were all to be admitted to the Perth Girls' Orphanage until they reached school age.

Some highly creditable academic results were obtained by Orphanage boys at the local school. Especially was this the case between the years 1914-1919, when no less than six of them won Secondary School Scholarships, and one, a Modern School Entrance. One headmaster in particular was very competent, though one of his pupils later recalled with a shudder his daily salutation, to his scholars - "Good Morning Children and Orphans!" A word of gratitude must be recorded to Canon P.U. Henn, Headmaster of Guildford Grammar School, and to his School Council, for accepting each of the scholarship winners as a boarder at the school for a fee of only £10 per year, together with the scholarship (£50.) One of these boys later won the Latin and Greek Exhibition in the Leaving Certificate Examination, and eventually he became a lawyer. Another, after graduating at the University, joined the staff of the Grammar School, and at one time became its Acting-Headmaster. A third entered the service of the Education Department and rose to be a District Superintendent. The Girls' Orphanage did not have any Scholarship winners, but two of its girls were accepted by the Education Department as monitors and eventually they became teachers in its service.

At all times the health-care of the children in the Orphanages was regarded by the Board as being of the utmost importance, and the Annual Reports rarely omit a reference of gratitude to doctors, dentists and nurses for their services and interest. When the institution opened in Adelaide Terrace in 1868, the Colonial Surgeon, Dr. Ferguson, attended any cases of sickness free of charge, regarding such visits as part of his duties. But in 1875 the Government decided that, in the absence of proof of any arrangement ever having been made between itself and the Orphanage authorities, the practice of such free attention could no longer be conceded. Accordingly Dr. Waylen, successor to Dr. Ferguson, was instructed to discontinue this service - whereupon he immediately offered his services as honorary surgeon to the establishment, which offer was most gratefully accepted. Down the years there were to be many successors to him who generously rendered service to sick girls and boys in the Orphanages. Names that repeatedly occur in the Annual Reports during this period are those of Doctors Wood, Clement and Thorburn, and also that of Mr. Forster, a dental specialist - these at the Perth Girls' Orphanage - while Swan Boys' received similar attention from Doctors Badock and Ferguson-Stewart. Even in World War II years when there was a great shortage of doctors in the Midland area, Dr. Ben Buttsworth never failed to attend a sick child at Swan when requested to do so. In those days he was often "run off his feet", but his service to them was always cheerful and efficient. His successor as Swanleigh's medical attendant was Dr. Geoff. Hingston, and no matter what hour of the day or night he was called he, too, always attended when staff were worried about

a child's illness. Just to know that such service was available was in itself a tremendous relief to those responsible for the health of the children in residence. For nothing weighs more heavily on dedicated staff than the anxiety aroused by a child in their care being very ill.

There was one time quite early in the century when the health care at Swan Boys' was severely censured by one of the State's newspapers. A boy had died, and charges of neglect were laid against the matron. The judge dismissed the case on the grounds of insufficient evidence, but the Board felt that it should dispense with her services, and acted accordingly. The paper, which for some time previously had been conducting a virulent campaign against the Manager, renewed its attacks on him and was in no small measure responsible for his breakdown in health and his resignation. When he recovered he resumed parochial work, remaining as Rector of Swan till 1923. Later he was made a Canon of the Diocese of Perth - a recognition that he was held in high esteem by his Bishop and fellow clergy.

After almost seventy years it is difficult to determine how much justification there was for the criticism in the newspaper articles. Undoubtedly they did a good deal of harm to the reputation of the institution and those associated with it. On the other hand two independent enquiries conducted at the time exonerated the management of the charges made. The Orphanage Board of Management held its own investigation into these, inviting Mr. Longmore, Inspector of Charitable Institutions, to be present as an observer. He then sent his report to the Under Secretary of the Colonial Secretary's Department, Mr. F.D. North, who in turn conducted an official enquiry at which the Bishop and the Chairman of the Board were present. Its findings were summed up in a letter from Mr. North to the Manager dated 19.5.1911 and written at the direction of the Colonial Secretary:

"Sir,

I have the honour by direction to inform you that as a result of my recent enquiry, I have reported to the Hon. the Colonial Secretary that certain charges preferred in an article in the (newspaper named) are entirely unsubstantiated.

I held an exhaustive examination into the main charges of starvation and the overwhelming weight of evidence completely rebutted the allegation.

With regard to certain minor charges I also found there was no foundation to justify them.

The Minister regrets the inconvenience and annoyance to which no doubt the whole incident has subjected you, and I am desired to state that the high opinion of your management which he had always previously entertained has been strengthened and confirmed as a result of the enquiry.

I have the honour to be Sir,  
Your most obedient Servant

(Sgd.) F.D. NORTH  
UNDER SECRETARY."

It has to be remembered that many people had — and still have — their ideas of life in a children's institution, coloured by what they have read about these establishments in the works of Dickens and other novelists, or by what they have seen in films which so often melodramatically present institutions as places of bleak unhappiness and cruelty. The reality is normally far removed from such conception. It is true that many children in Orphanages have been unhappy. It must be a traumatic experience for children to

have had their home life suddenly shattered and consequently their being placed in an institution because of the death of a parent or a family break-up due to desertion or divorce. Suddenly their security is gone — and nothing causes unhappiness more than insecurity. “The real casualty of easy divorce is the emotional stability of children”, says John Stott in “Obeying Christ in a Changing World”. (Published in 1977 by Fountain Books). Regrettably it is also true that harshness has occurred in institutions — and not only by staff. Children are not always creatures of sweetness and light. They can be beastly cruel to one another, both physically and mentally, taking-out their own unhappiness on their fellows. But it is equally true that many former Orphanage girls and boys recall that they had plenty of very good times while in the institution, and that they enjoyed opportunities and privileges that would never have come their way in their own homes. These children — and there are many of them — feel no antipathy at all towards the establishment and those who cared for them. Their philosophy usually is that, taking the rough with the smooth, “it wasn’t such a bad place”. Too often, however, the public prefer to believe the worst. “I read it in the paper” is for many of them sufficient proof.

In later years there was an incident in which one of the migrant boys at the Swan Homes was involved in an unsavoury episode while he was at the High School. He then absconded, found his way to Fremantle and stowed-away on a ship bound for Melbourne. In due course he was discovered and the press were quickly on the ‘phone for details. When the Manager of the institution asked a reporter if the name of the establishment could be withheld because it might harm its reputation, the reply was: “No chance. Too good a story!” (Incidentally the boy in question was then given the opportunity of a fresh start in a new State, but his subsequent record was so bad that a few years later he was returned to England with his name on that short list of those who are forbidden re-entry into Australia for all time).

Public attitude to institutions sometimes takes a curious turn. When in later years, more financial assistance for capital projects was made available through the good offices of the Lotteries Commission, the Board made a very determined effort to provide better living conditions for the children at Swan. Several new buildings were erected under its “House System”, and on each opening day the public were invited to see for themselves the homes of these girls and boys. Most people came away delighted that underprivileged children were being accommodated at such a good standard. But not everybody. Invariably there was some niggling criticism: “Fancy furnishing the building like that, just for Orphanage children! Why it’s better than the ordinary child gets in a private home!” What the critics did not realize was that furnishings and equipment in the houses needed to be much better than average, because they were going to be subjected to strenuous usage by children for many years to come. It would have been poor economy to furnish them with inferior goods which would soon need replacement.

Dr. Waylen believed that the Girls’ Orphanage in Perth was badly situated. He maintained that the area was damp and inadequately drained, and that this was responsible for the annual outbreaks of diphtheria and the many sore throats which occurred. This drainage proved to be a constant and expensive problem for the Board, and was never completely overcome. Even as late as 1941 when trenches were dug to afford some protection if the Japanese bombers flew over Perth, the remark was made that the girls sheltering in them were at more risk from drowning than from enemy action! The Doctor’s criticism, however, did give rise to a suggestion that for health reasons the Girls’ Orphanage should be re-established at the Swan near the Boys’ Home, but when that move was made, the motivating cause was something quite different.

The Annual Reports from 1914 to 1919 give the impression that life in the institution was not greatly affected by the Great War. Archbishop Riley's plea that the children in Orphanages should not suffer because of it was widely observed, and support was maintained. The response by former Orphanage boys to the call to arms was very creditable, and the Honour Board that is displayed on the walls within the entrance to Waylen House has 125 names on it, including those of 18 old boys who paid the supreme sacrifice. The Archbishop expressed his pride that "when the call came to defend their country the boys of the Orphanage had voluntarily responded so readily".

In 1914 a suggestion came from the Diocesan Trustees that a band might be formed at Swan. If this were done, they would meet the cost of the instruments. The idea was accepted and a bandmaster was appointed, and during the next few years it often played at fetes and entertainments, not only in the metropolitan area, but as far afield as Northam and Wooroloo. But a band is an expensive and time-consuming activity requiring a full-time bandmaster on the staff. After 1924 no reference to its existence appears in the reports and it is presumed to have ceased to exist about that year.

From time to time during this long period of the institution's history there were suggestions discussed at Board meetings which were not immediately adopted, but which did eventually become part of the Orphanage's policy. Reference has already been made to one such matter, viz. that of the Adelaide Terrace establishment's being transferred to the Swan. Another centred around the idea of the institutions entering the field of Child Migration. As early as 1892 the Bishop of Perth received a proposal from the Bishop of Calcutta that his Brother Bishop in Perth should approach the West Australian Government with a request that children of European or Eurasian origin be admitted into the Colony from the sub-continent of India. The Board did discuss the suggestion, but came to the conclusion that it was unlikely that the local authorities would consent to such a scheme. "The accommodation, education and ultimate placement of these children would present too many problems", said a report, which finally dismissed the proposal with the words: "So wide a scheme might be productive of evil results. No one knows where it would finish".

About 1913 Kingsley Fairbridge had opened a Farm School for British child migrants at Pinjarra. Because of war conditions, he experienced some difficulty in recruiting children and arranging for their transport, and it appeared as if his school might have to close. Moreover, at that time, Fairbridge himself was anxious to enlist to defend England's cause. A proposal was made that the school temporarily close and the Orphanage Board take the boys then in residence. It agreed to do so, but when Fairbridge's application to join-up was rejected on health grounds — he was subject to bouts of malaria — he decided to remain and struggle on with the Farm School. Near the end of the war he had a problem in maintaining his numbers sufficiently for the Education Department to supply a teacher; and the Child Welfare Department suggested that a few boys be transferred from Swan to enable him to do so. Archbishop Riley was very indignant at the idea: "Such transfer would not be in the best interest of the boys", he said. The board then renewed its previous offer to take all the boys still enrolled at Fairbridge, but nothing came of this.

There was a new development in 1920 when information was requested of the Board as to the approximate number of war orphans between the ages of nine and eleven it could accommodate. The matter was discussed with the respective Managers of the institutions, after which a reply was forwarded offering places for a hundred girls and boys. But nothing came of this either, and no child migrants were received until after

World War II, when this feature was to become a very important part of the Board's policy.

The question of enlarging the Orphanages was often discussed. In 1910 Bishop Riley (he became Archbishop in 1914) addressing the Annual Meeting of Subscribers said that though the accommodation was continually being increased, there seemed to be a constant need for further building. "Where are we to stop?" he asked, "because we do not know how soon the Government might change its views and alter its present arrangements for child placement. And if that came about we might find we could not afford to keep so many buildings going". Prophetic words! *For it was for that very reason that in 1959 the establishment was changed from a children's home to a Hostel.*

The Bishop returned to this theme in his 1913 address to Subscribers. "Should we spend further money in extending our institutions? At one time the Government readily gave assistance to the Orphanages. But now there seemed to be a disposition for it to substitute placement of children in foster homes". He then went on to speak of his own experience of fostering in England, and while he agreed that home life was the ideal for children, there was always the problem of finding the suitable home. In later times the Child Welfare Department strenuously promoted its fostering policy and ultimately most institutions in the State found that they had accommodation which they had provided to meet earlier needs which now no longer existed. As the number of empty beds increased, some establishments had to close down altogether, while in others new types of residential care were introduced. The prophecy made by the Bishop forty years earlier had been validated.



## 5. NEW AREAS OF SERVICE

The turn of the century saw the founding of two other child-care institutions at Middle Swan, both of which were under the direction of the Orphanage Board, though neither was actually affiliated with Swan Boys'. The first of these opened in 1888 and was a Native and Half-Caste Mission.

It will be remembered that in earlier years Mr. and Mrs. Camfield had conducted a home and school for native children in Albany (see page 4). Here they endeavoured to give the girls and boys a Christian upbringing in an atmosphere approximating to that of an ordinary home — and a very successful experiment it proved. But by 1870 Mrs. Camfield had grown elderly, and she realised that the time had come for her to give up the work to which she had devoted so many difficult but satisfying years. Bishop Hale tried hard to find someone to replace her, but in this he was unsuccessful. He then seriously considered resigning his See and carrying on the Mission himself. The possibility of his doing so filled the Colony with dismay, and a deputation of settlers from various parts of the State urged him not to take such a step. Their wishes prevailed, but he did arrange for the transfer of Mrs. Camfield's charges to a house immediately behind his own home, where he could keep a watchful eye on them. During Bishop Parry's episcopate the children were removed to a new mission at the Swan which was conducted in a building handily placed to Archdeacon Brown's Rectory, for that clergyman had accepted the responsibility for these children as well as for the Orphanage boys. The Mission building has since been named "Corn-well House".

Records of the Mission's progress up to 1902 are difficult to find, but from a report in that year we know that the enrolment was then 48 girls and boys, of which 11 of the older boys resided in the Boys' Orphanage. The total staff of the Mission was two ladies who were sisters. Miss Effie Mackintosh was the Matron and Miss Jeannie Mackintosh was the teacher. Together they conducted the little institution, caring for the children, mothering them and sharing with them the joys and problems of life in their home. They cooked for them, sewed for them, nursed them when they were sick, and taught them their school lessons. Everyone shared in the housework, and in-between times they ran a little farm with a few milking cows, some pigs, poultry, fruit trees and vegetable growing. The report says that some of the girls showed great interest in the farm and worked splendidly.

The report also mentions that much now needed doing to the original building, because whenever there was heavy rain there was a great inrush of water that flooded the dormitories — which must have been a very trying situation for staff and children alike. The next year, however, structural improvements were successfully carried out, and many disabilities were overcome. Later the conditions in the Mission were further improved by a brick addition to the original building that included new staff quarters and a kitchen and dining room. The cost of this improvement was met out of the proceeds of a generous legacy made to the Board by Mr. Archibald McKellar to assist it in carrying on the work in all establishments under its control. A stained-glass window to his memory was placed in the chapel at Adelaide Terrace, but at a later date

it was transferred to the sanctuary of St. Mary's Church at Middle Swan where it stands alongside the memorial window to another generous benefactor, Canon Richard Hamilton.

In 1907 the Misses Mackintosh decided to retire. By now they had grown old in a service that must at times have been heartbreakingly difficult, because so many of their charges came to them neglected and sickly. Despite the devoted attention these then received, and the skill of doctors and the care of nurses, quite a number succumbed to illness and disease which they appeared to pick up so readily. Few of those enrolled knew even a letter of the alphabet when they arrived, for their lives had mostly been spent in the bush or on the streets and outskirts of town. With such a poor health and educational background, the work of nurturing them, educating them and preparing them for useful employment and post-institutional life, called for tremendous devotion to their cause by the two ladies. In view of all this, the success achieved by their girls when these left the Mission was remarkable. "Of twenty-one girls sent out into the world during the last ten years", says the 1909 Report, "two have died, fifteen are doing well and only four have turned out badly". Under the circumstances it was a commendable record.

The resignation of the Misses Mackintosh was followed by several changes of appointment until in 1911 Mr. J. Jones, formerly of the Boys' Orphanage staff, and his wife were appointed. They were in charge for the next ten years and carried on the fine traditions of the Misses Mckintosh. A married couple as overseers was considered necessary because the State Department for Native Welfare had decided that its older boys were now to leave the Orphanage and live at the Mission — a change necessitating not only male supervision, but also building alterations and additions. The Board set about providing the latter, but had hardly commenced doing so when another Department — that of Public Health — inspected the establishment and condemned it as unfit for human habitation. This indeed was serious, for it meant that much of the institution would have to be re-built, and the Board had only £500 in the Mission Reserve Fund! However, using £400 of this, it commenced building a new dormitory for the girls, hoping that in the meantime an appeal would raise enough to re-build the other parts. In the following year the dormitory was completed and everyone was very proud of the addition.

Then disaster struck. First there was a fierce storm which tore down some of the outbuildings and wrought great havoc in the orchard, where many of the best trees were uprooted. Scarcely had the residents recovered from that shock when a second cyclone blew down the newly-erected dormitory, killing one little girl and seriously injuring several others. The scene that tragic night was one of utter confusion. There were heaps of rubble and glass and fallen roofing timber and iron everywhere. The twenty-five beds were a tangled mass of metal, so that it was a miracle that anyone had escaped alive. And mingling with the sounds of the wind and the storm were the cries of the injured and the screams of the terrified children. Mr. and Mrs. Jones and the older boys rushed to the rescue, gently extricating those who were trapped, and endeavouring to comfort all the children as they conducted or carried them to a place of safety. Their work that night was later described by Archbishop Riley as "beyond praise".

The Board lost no time in commencing the re-building of the dormitory. It borrowed £100, and used the balance of its Reserve Fund and whatever it could spare from its receipts, and soon the re-erection was well underway. The final result was a structure

similar in appearance to the former, but this time with well-buttressed walls. No money remained in the Fund, however, to re-build the older parts of the Mission, which though previously condemned, had withstood the cyclone.

But if there had been any funds left for this purpose, it is questionable whether the Board would now have proceeded with the project. For it began to be increasingly evident that unless there was a marked change in the Government's policy, the days of the Mission were numbered. A new establishment for natives had been commenced at Carrolup, and another was planned for Mogumber, and in future all native children were to be sent to these. The Swan Mission lasted a little longer, but with a few leaving each year and no replacements forthcoming, it steadily ceased to be a viable proposition. In earlier years its normal enrolment had been over 40. By 1920 this had reduced to 12. and at the end of that year it closed.

Nearly sixty years later it is difficult to evaluate the Mission's record of service. At all times its numbers were small, so that its contribution to the problem of aboriginal child welfare was not very significant. But it did achieve a comparatively high degree of success in the type of citizen it turned out. Records were kept of the progress of the girls and boys after they left its care, and though there was always a percentage of failures, these were well outnumbered by the successes. The product that resulted from the efforts of the Misses Mckintosh and Mr. and Mrs. Jones generally enjoyed a good public reputation, and many people thought when the time came, that it was a pity that native child-care was being transferred from the church to the State. They doubted whether the standards under the new system would be better than those of the old Native and Half-Caste Mission at the Swan. The problems associated with this work by any organisation - State or Voluntary - are tremendous, being fraught with difficulty both in the recruitment and retention of coloured children, their care and education within the establishment, and finally in their post-institution placement and progress. The basic requirements for any hope of success in this field of service lie in the loving hearts and wisdom of those in positions of responsibility, combined with their persevering determination to promote the welfare of the children. It would seem that those who conducted the Swan Mission had those qualities to a remarkable degree.

The second of the two institutions founded by the Orphanage Board about the turn of the century was a boys' reformatory named "Redhill". This was situated on the Toodyay Road about three miles from Brown House, on land that was part of the grant made in 1875 to the Orphanage Board by the Governor (Reserve 173A and later described as Swan Location 1253 — see page 22). Prior to 1903, this particular block had been partially cleared and used by the Board as a training ground in advanced farming for its older boys, but in that year it was agreed that it be gazetted by the State as a separate institution for the reception of bigger Church of England lads committed by Magistrates for delinquency. Six boys were enrolled and a staff of four appointed. Mr. R.S. Spice was the Superintendent, and his wife was the Matron, and both were to prove a most fortunate choice. The other two were a teacher and a carpenter respectively. The Bishop of Perth was officially the Manager, but the duties attached to that office were carried out by the Manager of Swan Boys', and in succeeding years the name of the clergyman holding that position appears in all reports as Manager of Redhill. Responsibility for the policy of the Reform School rested with the Anglican Orphanage Board.

Good progress was made in that first year. At the time of the Reformatory's foundation, there had been 22 acres under cultivation, but now 10 more acres were cleared

and cropped, and 6 acres were planted with vines and fruit trees. The farm had a few horses, cows, pigs and head of poultry, all of which gave the lads some experience in the care of stock, while under the direction of the carpenter, a substantial cow-shed and piggery and some stockyards were erected. The number of boys on the enrolment was increased to 16, and this necessitated the employment of a lady to assist Mrs. Spice with domestic duties. She was a Miss Parker, who was to remain on the staff for many years.

In addition to farm work, the institution was required to provide instruction for each boy for three hours daily. So a teacher had to be engaged. As had been the case in the early Orphanage years at the Swan, this did not prove an easy post to fill, for when the Board did make an appointment, he rarely stayed very long. And this is understandable when one considers the type of lad he was required to teach. Most of them entered Redhill with little previous schooling — sometimes none at all — and with no enthusiasm for learning or improving themselves. Usually the enrolment included some who were mentally backward, and at one time Dr. Roberta Jull, reporting on the physical and mental condition of the inmates, refers to the fact that five of the boys had intelligence ranging from “Defective” to “below average”. Such types are sometimes violent, and in one Annual Report there is a reference to a teacher having been attacked by a boy of very low intelligence and injured to the extent that he was in hospital for several weeks. After some years with several changes of teacher, Mr. Frank Matthews Th.A., an Anglican lay-reader, was appointed. He was a man deeply motivated in his work by Christian principles, and he remained Redhill’s teacher until the institution closed. The Education Department’s Inspectors consistently commended him for his teaching under very difficult conditions, and for his influence in the classroom.

With the passing of years building improvements were made and the area under cultivation increased. A new schoolroom, dining-room and bathroom were added, and a complete water supply installed, the cost of these projects being met out of the proceeds of the McKeller legacy (see page 32). Several miles of fencing were erected, enabling the institution to swell its receipts by fees paid by local farmers for paddocking their horses. The school also benefited from the production of more food, both for its own use and the balance for sale. The reports refer to extensive apple-tree planting, which later enabled it to sell 500 cases of fruit in one year. Beekeeping, butter-making, vegetable culture and poultry produce all helped to swell the receipts, so that the Board began to hope that in time Redhill might become a self-supporting establishment — a hope which the managing body of institutions often share, but rarely achieve. For while the value of the farm produce does increase the receipts, the institution farming is seldom sufficiently profitable for it to cover the inevitable lag between its total income and its total expenditure. If it undertakes farming, one of its objectives is to provide occupation and training for its boys. While some of these show interest and ability others will have little natural aptitude or keenness, with the result that they work unwillingly and become problems to the staff, who often find it easier to do the work themselves rather than undertake the constant urging of the boys that is so often necessary to get the work finished. But this is not good for the boy, for it breeds indolence and indifference to the quality of his effort, with the result that he becomes lazier and then resentful when made to do a job. Only boys who show interest and aptitude should ever form part of the farm team. Then, too, it happens that sometimes the staff assistants are not very knowledgeable or efficient in matters pertaining to farming — for men who have these qualifications are usually on farms of their own. The Superintendent himself may be quite competent at farming and farm-management, and very keen

to see his boys receive good experience and training. But he cannot be with them all the time, for quite often there will be other managerial duties requiring his attention, in which case he must delegate some of the farm supervision to the staff. On the other hand if he doesn't happen to be a practical farmer with his feet firmly on the ground, the institution's policy can become one of "Adventures in Farming", which may well prove costly. In the case of Redhill, the Board was lucky, for in Mr. Spice it had a competent manager, practical in farming, and with a wife who like himself, was devoted to the welfare of the boys they enrolled. Reports and letters reveal that they were highly regarded by the delinquent lads in their charge and well respected in the community. With such small numbers Mr. Spice was rarely able to afford any farm help, so that he worked with the lads all the time. Together they built up what has been described as a model farm, and when the boys went to employment, their practical knowledge gained at the institution was often highly commended.

About 1918 the Child Welfare Department commenced a policy of placing more and more boys on probation rather than sending them to reformatories. At the beginning of that year, Redhill had an enrolment of 29, but after twelve months, it had dropped to 18, and as the same policy continued the next year, it became evident to the Spices that the institution was coming to an end. In June 1919 they resigned and a new Superintendent and his wife were appointed and continued the work till 1922, when the Department removed the last of its boys. The property then reverted to the Orphanage which used it for some time for the farm training of the older boys who had left school. Then in a disastrous bushfire the buildings were burnt down — a heavy capital loss to the institution — and work was discontinued there. Eventually the land was included in a sub-division sale of almost the whole of Swan Location 1253 by the Diocesan Trustees, and so Redhill Farm passed to private ownership.

In the meantime the reformatory care of delinquents was undertaken by another denomination. But in 1955 the Government again asked the Church of England to undertake this work. Hesitantly it agreed to do so, and the establishment now known as "Hillston" was commenced on the Orphanage land at Stoneville. More about that project will be narrated in Part II (see page 146).

## 6. THE ORPHANAGE CHILD.

So far we have traced the progress of the institution from its foundation in 1868 up till just after the end of World War I. But what of the children themselves in those earlier years? What sort of lives did they lead?

Times were undoubtedly very hard for them, for the establishment had very little money on which to come and go, and every penny counted. Meals were basic, clothing was of the plainest, and much of the domestic and out-of-doors work had to be performed by the children themselves. Discipline was strict and punishment was more common and severe than is usual today. But it must be remembered that this latter was also true of many private homes and most schools. "Spare the rod and spoil the child" was a belief widely held by parents and teachers. It is a good thing that the severity often practised in the past has largely disappeared and that the modern approach to the problem of misbehaviour among pupils at school and children at home is treated with more understanding and humanity. In fact there are a good many who would aver that the pendulum has now swung too far in the opposite direction — from too much corporal punishment to none at all — and that the resultant product is neither happier nor better than that of earlier times. There is an innate security in the mind of a child who knows that if he goes too far or commits certain serious breaches of conduct there will be unpleasant and probably painful consequences for him, and security is the foundation of happiness. Too many rules is a bad thing, but some rules there must be, just as there must be some law and order in the community, otherwise there will be anarchy, and then no one has security. The rule-breaking undisciplined child too often grows into a problem youth and a misfit adult. No one would wish to return to the bad days of harsh punishment. But there is much wisdom in the following poem by Lucretia Penny entitled "On Being behind with One's Reading" and quoted by Mr. R.A.F. Cooks in his interesting work: "Keep Them Out of Prison" (published by Harrolds, London 1958)

*Junior bit the meter man,  
Junior kicked the cook,  
Junior's anti-social now  
(According to the book.)  
Junior smashed the clock and lamp,  
Junior hacked the tree,  
(destructive trends are treated  
In Chapters 2 and 3.)*

*Junior threw his milk at Mom,  
Junior screamed for more,  
(notes on self assertiveness  
Are found in Chapter 4.)  
Junior tossed his shoes and socks  
Out into the rain,  
(negation that, and normal —*

*Disregard the stain.)*

*Junior set Dad's shirt afire,*

*Salted Grandpop's wine.*

*"That's to gain attention"*

*(See Page 89)*

*Grandpop seized a slipper and*

*Yanked Junior across his knee.*

*(Grandpop hasn't read a book*

*Since 1893.)*

Some institution residents of earlier years undoubtedly derive great satisfaction from describing how harsh were the Orphanage conditions in their times. But there are others whose attitude is summed up in the words of one of them: "Certainly times were hard, much harder than nowadays. But they didn't have much money then and they tried to do their best for us. We had our good times too!"

It is not easy to get accounts of life in the earliest years of the establishments, for both were founded over a century ago. Almost all who lived in them prior to 1900 are dead, and indeed there are not many still alive who were in residence as late as 1920. But glimpses of conditions in the institutions may be gained from the Minutes of Board Meetings or from such Annual Reports as have been found. The pictures in the Reports also help us, and we learn from them that one at any rate of the original rules — Rule 12, which stated that there was to be no distinctive clothing that would indicate an Orphanage child — was not observed. Photos taken at Adelaide Terrace in the earliest years of the century show a depressing sameness in the appearance of the girls, with their white pinafores or long black dresses down to their ankles, and their white starched collars. At Swan the boys at play often looked remarkably like the ragged urchins that Dr. Barnardo rescued from the streets of London in the days of Queen Victoria. On outings, however, the children were tidily dressed. On Sundays the girls "crocodiled" to the Cathedral in neat but uninspiring grey uniforms and panama hats. The boys did not often come to the city, but when they did, they wore "straw-deckers, jackets with detachable celluloid Eton collars, trousers well below their knees, boots and long stockings". At all times their hair was very closely cropped.

Some readers may recall seeing later Orphanage boys on "Children's Day" at the Royal Show. At that time they wore dark navy suits with wide sailor collars. They certainly were distinctive but they didn't seem to care, for they were excited and happy. This was for them perhaps the best day of the year and once they were inside the gates they were free, with some money to spend. Like most children they made straight for the sideshows and the wonderful things to be seen there. Viewing the exhibits, collecting sample bags (sometimes free in those days) and watching ring events — these things would come later. Then at the end of the day was the long trip home — train to Midland, to be followed by a three-mile walk back to the Orphanage by the weary but happy boys.

Another eagerly-awaited event in both institutions was the annual holiday change arranged for the children during the Christmas vacation. In the 1903 Report we read that the boys went for a month's camp on the bank of the river at Cottesloe, while the following year the camp was held at Point Walter. The next Report states that "the boys had four weeks at Rottnest, which worked wonders so that they were able to face the winter with greater energy". In 1908 they marched from the Orphanage to a camping site at North Beach. They must have been very tired when they got there for that was

a long way from Middle Swan. Another time they went much further afield and camped at Busselton. So the record goes on. The girls, too, had holidays away from their institution, staying at such resorts as Cottesloe, Rottnest and Rockingham. Later the Board was to purchase a holiday house for them at Como to which they went each year (see page 62). On one occasion it was suggested that the girls and the boys might change institutions for a period, as a holiday break. But the idea found little favour in the eyes of the Manager of the Boys' Orphanage, who objected on the grounds that a case of diphtheria had recently occurred at Perth Girls'. So a compromise was arranged. The boys were taken on a river trip, while the girls were given a tram ride "all the way to Nedlands", for which purpose the Tramway Company very kindly placed a tram at their disposal. Appeals were also made for people to take Orphanage children into their homes for holidays. One report mentions that as a result of one family's adoption of a boy for the vacation period "his whole outlook on life had been altered. Previously he had never had a holiday away from his Orphanage associates or received a letter from anyone".

The Annual Reports also listed day or evening outings organised for the children, and gifts received for them, and these items make pleasant and interesting reading. Early in the century it is reported that the girls had been taken to two magic lantern shows, these to be forerunners of many visits to the cinema as guests of the proprietors. Usually there was a picnic to the Zoo and sometimes a river trip on the "Zephyr". Whenever the circus was in town the management generally invited the orphans, and they sometimes received invitations to stage shows in the Perth theatres. A visit by an entertainment party was not uncommon, and after its items the members often would provide refreshments or supper for the children. With their fellow pupils they participated in the annual "Schools' Demonstration" at the Show Ground — these events were a feature of school life in pre-World War I years. The boys were also usually present at the Eight Hours Day celebrations as special guests of the Trades Hall, where they were most hospitably entertained by the Committee. It is recorded that the first time they went Bishop Riley was very indignant, and sharply reprimanded the Manager. "By whose authority were the boys taken to that?" It would seem that perhaps His Lordship was not a Labour supporter! However things were evidently smoothed over because this became a regular outing. In 1907 we read that "Uncle Tom" of the "Daily News" not only sent a party of his "nephews and nieces" to visit the children every week ("whereby some very good friendships grew up between them") but he also gave them a wonderful party at Christmas time. In earlier years Miss Mary Moore had always arranged a Christmas treat for the children. But when she died in 1907, loved and respected by all for her generosity and her work for orphans, the children might easily have missed this regular Christmas festivity had it not been for "Uncle Tom". His efforts were the forerunners of the tremendous interest in all institutions that was to be taken by the "Daily News". Words cannot adequately express what the generosity of subscribers to that newspaper's "Orphans' Christmas Cheer Fund" meant to the girls and boys living in these establishments in the years following the launching of its first annual appeal in 1911.

Gifts made to the institutions were many and varied. They included toys, clothing, sporting gear, playground equipment, games and books. (The number of copies of "Tom Brown's Schooldays", "What Katy Did" and "Little Women" that were sent to the institutions down the years must have run almost to hundreds!) A good many churches (and not only Anglican) gave their Harvest Festival offerings either to Perth or to Swan. and there were many individual donations of foodstuffs — fruit, groceries, cakes, sweets.



cool drinks, etc. Then there were some less common gifts from interested donors. One sent Bibles, another Confirmation veils. One even sent a free ticket for a child to be admitted to a Convalescent Home if ever the need arose! His Excellency the Governor sent invitation tickets for the boys to attend an "Exhibition of Moving Pictures of the Funeral of the late King Edward VII" that was being shown at Government House.

Father Christmas always visited the Orphanages on the night of December 24th. Next morning from about 4 a.m. onwards would be heard excited shouts and laughter, with the inevitable background of paper trumpets and mouth organs as the stockings and pillow-cases were opened. Later in the day there would follow a sumptuous feast of poultry, Christmas pudding (with numerous threepences) and Christmas cake. In the 1960's one very old man regularly arrived at Swanleigh on Christmas Eve with the intention of spending the next day with the children, in happy recollection of his own boyhood Yuletides in the institution. He couldn't quite understand why there were now no boys in residence at that time of the year, but as he shared Christmas cake and a drink with the Manager and his wife and then got a ride back to Midland Station, he went away quite happy — and came again next year!

All girls and boys of school age were required to share in the ordinary household chores of bed-making, sweeping and polishing floors, table-setting and dishwashing. When they left school it was usual for them to be retained at the institution for a year or so to receive "industrial" training prior to their leaving for employment. In the case of girls, this would be special instruction in laundry-work, cooking and dress-making, in preparation for their going to domestic service. All boys would be given experience in such gardening, farming and stock-raising as was practised at the institution, so that when they went to farms, they were already familiar with some of the work they might be expected to perform. When eventually the children went to service an Agreement was drawn up, in which the employer was required to pay them a specified wage with regular increments. Part of the agreed amount was to be paid to them directly and the remainder had to be sent to the institution to be banked for them in a trust account, none of which could be withdrawn by them before they were twenty-one unless approval had first been received from the Secretary of the Child Welfare Department. Each year the Government Audit Department sent its inspectors to the institution to make an inspection of the Agreements and the bankings to see that these reconciled. Generally the Orphanages had no problems with the employers over wage payments. Quarterly accounts were sent out and the amount due was usually forwarded promptly. One of the Managers of Swan Boys', however, recalled an instance of his having to make repeated requests to one wealthy farmer to send him an amount of 6/8 (68 cents), being the balance due to be banked for one of the institution's boys in his employment — requests that were consistently ignored. The Manager drew the attention of the Audit Inspector to the deficiency, and produced the Agreement and the correspondence file. "He owes it all right", said the Inspector. "I will take out a summons against him if he fails to pay it within one month". The farmer was advised and he paid without further delay. Such an attitude on the part of the employer was very exceptional.

In later years the responsibility for the collection of the amount to be banked was taken from institutions by the Child Welfare Department, whose officers then handled this matter themselves. The change was made because it was found that some establishments were allowing their children to work for supporters for ridiculously low rates of pay. At this time the Audit Department sent a letter to the Anglican Homes explaining the reason for the new procedure, but emphasizing that it had nothing but the highest

praise for the conscientious conduct of the establishment in attending to the welfare of its wards at service. When the time came for these boys and girls to withdraw their savings, many of them had quite useful amounts in their banking accounts.

In addition to banking a portion of their wages, the Manager was expected to visit his wards at service from time to time, to see them and the conditions under which they lived and worked. Generally he found them well cared-for and happy in their new homes and with their job. If there were any complaints by either party, he would do what he could to sort out the problem and try to arrange a fresh start on a better basis. Should he feel that this was not possible, he would take the girl or boy back to the institution and arrange a new placement. After-care work was regarded as very important, for it meant that the child knew that someone was still interested in him and cared about his welfare. Unfortunately because of pressure of duties Managers could not visit as frequently as they would have wished, but when in later years a Travelling Collector was appointed and if he were visiting a district in which one of the institution's wards at service was employed, it became part of his responsibility to go to the home of the girl or boy, interview them and their employer, and then report his findings to the Manager. It is good to be able to add that many of the girls and boys remained with their employers for a long time, and some lasting friendships were formed between them.

To conclude this section on the "Orphanage child" here are two interesting extracts from records which have come down to us from the past. The first is from a report made to the Board at its request in 1889 from Sister Mary Nicolay, a Florence Nightingale nurse then living in Perth. As late as 1916 the writer recalls her regularly attending St. George's Cathedral. In her report she states: "Dormitories, beds and bedding looked clean, and all was neat and in good order. I would like to hear that in time the boys were taught domestic work and also needlework as well as gardening. All the boys in an English industrial school learn to launder, scrub, cook and also to make their own clothes, and very successful and clever they are, and turn out good work. Some boys I trained were never ashamed to own that they can do these things. It would be much more economical to the funds of the school, the lads doing all this work".

The second was written long ago by a local resident of Middle Swan who concluded a letter thus: "For years I attended the Middle Swan State School, a tiny brick building situated on the site of a later pound opposite Whiteman's Brickworks. Twice every day I passed by the Orphanage, and boy-like I saw most of the things that went on there". Earlier in the letter he had written: "The Swan Residents were very liberal towards the Orphanage. Gifts of money, labour, and kind — particularly the latter — were always on a generous scale. The Swan ladies organised and regularly attended sewing meetings at the Orphanage to assist the staff in its work. Miss Mary Moore, whose interests were always associated with the Swan, held annual bazaars at her house in Perth which raised money and clothes for the boys, and these fetes were well supported by people on the Swan.

Grape growers of the district gave large quantities of grapes for the making of jam for the Orphanage. After the main crops had been garnered, "Orphanage" and "Mission days" were organised, at which the boys and the Mission girls had the free run of the vineyards, and enjoyed themselves by liberal feeds of grapes and other fruits. At the same time residents would gather and later help entertain the children at games and afternoon tea.

In those days the whole of the people of the Swan looked upon the Orphanage as peculiarly “their” institution. I think this attitude was largely engendered by their great love of and admiration for Archdeacon Brown who gave years of service to this work. Their regard for him was shared by the youth of the district who would do anything for him.

Yes, life for the Orphanage children was hard, and often they were unhappy, but they did have their good times too!

# 7. BETWEEN TWO WORLD WARS (1922-1942)

When Archdeacon Brown died in 1895 the Diocesan Secretary, Canon D.J. Garland, was appointed Manager of Swan Boys'. But because his office was in Perth the Board decided that it would also appoint a Superintendent, who would live at the Orphanage and direct the routine working of the establishment. This was an arrangement similar to that which had existed in the Girls' Orphanage right from its inception, whereby a clergyman was always the Manager but a resident Matron supervised the daily programme at the institution — a dual control which was to continue there till 1942.

It will be recalled that the first Matron of Perth Girls' was Mrs. Love. In time she was succeeded by other "Lady Superintendents" about whom little or nothing is known. The best remembered of them was Miss J. Phillips who was Matron at the turn of the century. When she resigned in 1906 the report for that year expresses sincere regret at her leaving, and pays a tribute to her fine record of service. She was followed by Miss Jean Birt who held the post till 1913, and then by Miss Lily Cantrell, who prior to her appointment had been a teacher in the Orphanage school. She remained as Matron for the next twenty-two years, and it is believed that hers was the longest record of service (1909-1935) of any member of the staff of the Girls' Orphanage. When she resigned there was a surprise appointment, in that Miss Birt returned to her former position of Matron. But this time she remained for only a very short time, to be succeeded in turn by Miss Mulgrue and then by Miss L. Campbell.

Meanwhile, at Swan Boys' the Superintendent under Canon Garland was a Mr. Ship-ton, shortly to be followed by Mr. J.W. Armstrong and then by Mr. L. Wilcher (see page 26). In 1902 Bishop Riley appointed the newly-inducted Rector of Swan, the Revd. Alfred Burton, to be Manager, replacing Canon Garland. So now Swan Boys' had a Manager and a Superintendent both living on the premises — an arrangement that at times must have been an uncomfortable one for each of them. Mr. Burton was a man of dynamic energy, capable, determined and strict, not very popular but respected. When he resigned in 1911 it was decided to combine the positions of Manager and Superintendent and the Revd. J.W. Armstrong was appointed with the title of "Resident Manager". He was well-qualified to fill the post, for he was the same Mr. Armstrong who had been Superintendent earlier in the century, and so was familiar with the conditions. Since leaving Swan he had undertaken further study, been ordained, and had spent some years in parochial work. He administered the institution during the difficult World War I years, and, like his predecessor, he was also responsible to the Board for the work of the Mission and the Redhill Industrial School. He retired in 1921 and again became a Parish Priest. But his connection with the Orphanages did not end then. Some years later he was appointed Manager of Perth Girls' — a post he held for four years. His was really a remarkable record of service to the institutions, covering in all, seventeen years. First he was Superintendent of Swan Boys', later its Manager, and still later, Manager of Perth Girls'.

In more recent years Swanleigh has followed the practice of commemorating the names of some ladies and gentlemen who, in their time, had each rendered exceptional service to the establishment, either by way of generous benefaction, or by voluntary effort or in an administrative capacity. The recognition has taken the form of naming one of the Orphanage buildings or the sporting "Houses" after them. Thus there is Brown House, Waylen House, Maurice Birch Workshop, Stanton House, Ron Elphick Sports Pavilion, Davern House — to mention some. If this practice is continued in the future two names which might well receive the consideration of the Council for similar recognition are those of Goldsmith and Armstrong, for each in his day made an outstanding contribution to the work of caring for needy children.

Following the retirement of Armstrong the Revd. R.W. Needham was appointed Manager, but he remained for only a very short time after which he was succeeded in 1922 by Mr. Maurice Birch, a young English migrant recently arrived in Western Australia. Prior to that he had served in the British Army in the Great War, and had been severely wounded, leaving him with a leg disability that was to remain with him for the remainder of his life — so much so that at times he had to resort to using crutches. Despite this affliction he proved very energetic, actively participating with the boys both in work and in recreation. His management was to be a long one of twenty years, and the progress made in the institution in that time was remarkable.

Reading his Annual Reports to the Subscribers one can clearly discern his three main objectives:

1. To try to develop individuality in the boys under his care.
2. To improve their living conditions.
3. To encourage and assist them to undertake vocations in which they were interested and showed ability.

Much of the remainder of this chapter will be devoted to describing how Birch attempted to achieve each of these and the degree of success he attained.

In his very first Annual Report he refers to his first objective when he pleaded for people to take an active interest in any boy living at the Orphanage — in one individual boy. In any institution be it a school, army, team, anywhere that human beings live in large numbers in a collective situation, there is always a tendency for the individual to become a unit rather than a person. Even in a private home this sometimes happens. A girl at Swanleigh once said: "I love going home for holidays. Everyone makes such a fuss of you. But when you are home all the time they seem to regard you as just a bit of furniture around the place!" Such a tendency was particularly true of Orphanages, where a constant sameness of dress and programme tended to make the children a faceless group. The boy who could fight or had exceptional sporting ability or was "a bit of a wag" (especially if, at some risk to himself, he sometimes took a rise out of a member of staff) such a boy in time received some prominence. But the lad who had none of these qualifications often became a comparative nonentity, and his wisest policy, if he wished to live a peaceful life, was to conform to popular attitude. It was not an uncommon experience to see that if a new boy arrived who was inclined to show-off in front of the "poor orphan kids", as he sometimes regarded them, he soon met his match. whatever his ability. One member of staff would remark to another: "I see it hasn't taken long for so and so to find his own level". Within a very short time he had come to be regarded as "no wonder boy", as he had tried to paint himself to the others. but — in their language — "just one of the mob".

This anonymity was what Birch set his face against. Every boy has some ability or quality, something which will make him a person and not a nonentity. The problem is to find that thing. An illustration may help. In the forties a boy came to Swan Boys' suffering from a very unpleasant and embarrassing complaint. He was a sensitive lad, and his having been asked to leave one of the leading public schools because of his affliction had been bad for his personality. His distressed parents then approached the institution authority seeking their son's admission to see if he could outgrow his trouble. It was agreed that the experiment should be tried, though some of his other relatives were horrified at the idea of his being placed in an Orphanage. For some time there was no improvement. He was subjected to a good deal of jeering from his fellows and was a very unhappy lad. But one day something happened. In the summer months a daily swim in the river was routine, and swimming was something the boy could do really well. On this occasion a competition was held to see who could swim the furthest under water without coming up to breathe. When the event was over it was found that the boy in question had far out-distanced all others. Here was something he could do better than the biggest boy in the Orphanage — and it had been seen to be done. It was not idle boasting. Later that afternoon the results of the competition were posted on the notice-board, with a special word of congratulation to the winner. From that day he was able to hold his head a little higher — and from that day his ailment began to improve. It was not long before his recovery was complete. His embarrassment over, he quickly developed in prestige and personality, becoming a bright cheerful lad, popular with his fellows, and his schoolwork also improved. The story goes on to a happy ending, for when he reached the post-primary standard his parents were able to board him in a different public school from the one he had previously attended. From it he eventually passed the matriculation examination and went on to the University and became a doctor.

In later years Swanleigh was to find that stage work with concerts, pierrots and drama participation was particularly useful in helping many retiring or inconspicuous students. Not only did they enjoy the fun of the rehearsals and the closer association with many other students, but the applause of the audience at the actual performance and the enthusiastic congratulations of their fellows and their parents was a great thrill, doing much to help them overcome self-consciousness.

Back in 1922 Birch believed that Scouting was the movement which would give him the best opportunity for the cultivation of individuality in his boys. Its objectives of developing self-reliance and character building, while also providing for leadership, team spirit and good-comradeship, appealed to him. Since a scout troop has several patrols, each with its own leader and second, it meant that numbers of boys were being given responsibility, and these, supporting each other, could also be expected to exert a good influence within the institution. So for the next decade scouting became a feature of life at Swan Boys'. During this time Sea-Scout Commissioner Hal McKail visited the Orphanage and formed a seascout patrol within the troop, and as the boys spent much of their holiday time on the river this additional training in watermanship proved a decided advantage. Little boys at the institution also became involved in scouting when the troop commenced a Wolf-Pack.

Apart from its intrinsic value in the development of personality, scouting at Swan had at least three other results worthy of mention. The first was that Birch found his disciplinary problems were eased by the Scouts' Court of Honour. As scouting became more popular more boys joined, and any cases of misbehaviour by the members could be brought before the Troop's Court consisting of the senior patrol leaders. If a scout

were found guilty certain penalties (usually additional jobs) could be inflicted. In such cases decisions had to be watched, as boys tend to be rather more severe on their fellows than does higher authority. But it was good training in responsibility both for the law-breaker and for members of the Court.

Secondly, scouting enabled the members to associate with other troops in camps, visits and competitions. In this way the boys got more outings and made many more external contacts than they otherwise would have done. The reports tell of the members engaging in debates against teams from other troops, and of scouts visiting Swan for scouting and sporting activities. The Swan Troop attended a number of big rallies held in Perth during those years, especially the one in honour of the visit of the World Chief-Scout, Sir Robert Baden-Powell. Wearing the scout uniform the boys were, in outward appearance, the same as all other scouts. No one could discern any different background.

A third result of the introduction of scouting was that it led to a close association with Guildford Toc H. Some of the members of that Branch had been given the job of assisting the Orphanage staff with its scout work, and to do this they had to make regular visits to the institution. In this way they became very interested in all its activities and its boys. One day a group of them suggested to Mr. Birch the idea of the formation of a service club among the lads. Membership would be voluntary, and while, in the main it would be conducted by Toc H members, more responsible senior boys would also be included among the office-bearers. The meetings would be varied in nature and would be introduced with a short impressive ritual similar to Toc H's own "Ceremony of the Lamp".

Birch was much impressed with the proposal. He felt that a select club, to which a boy would have to be approved by adults as well as by his fellows before he could join, had merit and would provide opportunities for improving the standard of life within the institution. On July 24th, 1927, he called an inaugural meeting of Toc H representatives to discuss the project and work out the details. Among those who attended that meeting were Mr. Jack Watts, later State Secretary of Toc H, and still later, after ordination, eventually to be made a Canon of St. George's Cathedral; Mr. Harry Carrick who was later to be closely associated with building work at the Orphanage; the Rev. C. King, Rector of Guildford and Toc H Padre of the local Branch; and Mr. Charlie Harris, well-known in mining circles, and who from that time always received the title of "Father" Harris — for with Jack Watts he was the co-founder of this new movement. These with Mr. Birch launched the little society at that meeting, and so was commenced "Corn Tars", which was to be such an important feature of life in the institution for the next fifteen years.

Its name was derived from that of Jack Cornwell, the boy hero of the Battle of Jutland 1916. At the time young Cornwell was only sixteen years of age and was serving on "H.M.S. Chester" as Ship's-boy. During the engagement he was mortally wounded, but he remained steadfastly at his post alongside the gun where he had been stationed, with enemy shells blazing around him, and his gun crew all killed or wounded surrounding him. There he stayed awaiting orders till the battle was over. Then he collapsed and died. Of his valour Vice-Admiral Sir David Beatty wrote: "I regret that he has since died but I recommend his case for special recognition, in justice to his memory, and as an acknowledgement of the high example set by him". He was posthumously awarded the V.C. In this way did a boy with the lowest classification in the British Navy win the highest award that can be won in battle, and he the youngest ever

to win that coveted decoration. The Captain of the "Chester" had written: "Jack Cornwell's devotion to duty was an example to us all". The founders of Corn Tars felt that in an institution where there were many lads of lowly origin this ship's-boy might well be selected to be the inspiration of the members. Later the Orphanage Board named the House where many of the Corn Tars lived — "Corn-well House".

The founders of Corn Tars decided that any boy joining would be required to pledge himself to serve his fellows, especially anyone in trouble, and to be of good character. He would wear the badge with which he would be invested when he was accepted — a five-pointed star in which each vertex represented one of five qualities of life, viz. Honour and Loyalty, Helpful Brotherliness, Courteous Kindness, Obedience, Purity. If a boy were desirous of joining, his name was entered in the Application Book. There followed a period of probation in which he was given jobs of service to do each week. During this period he was known as a "Cabin Boy". After a time, though still on probation, he might qualify for promotion to the rank of "Ordinary Seaman". When he had thoroughly proved himself he was invested as a full member, and he became an "Able-bodied Seaman". At meetings the presiding officer was always addressed as "Captain" — often a member of Toc H, but in some years an outstanding boy was appointed. The "Purser" attended to the secretarial duties and kept the records. Jobs were allocated by the "Bosun", and the highest officer of all was the "Pilot", who was always a Toc H member. He was the friend and adviser of all "on board", and was responsible for the "Crew's" knowledge of the ideals of the movement. The Toc H Padre was also often present.

One feature of Corn Tars requires special emphasis. That is that the Society provided the boy-members with a link with adult men living beyond the confines of the institution. For whenever a boy applied to join a Toc H sponsor was appointed. This meant that the lad had an adult (and often the sponsor's family) personally interested in him. Now he had a friend where previously there may have been no one in the world who cared about him beyond the staff of the institution. One can imagine the eagerness with which such a lad would look forward to the weekly Corn Tar night. Nor were visitors confined to sponsors and Toc H members. From time to time Guest Nights were arranged, and many invitations to them were accepted. Even the State Governor came on one occasion! Such meetings were good for the lads, for not only did they meet many new people who professed great interest in them, but they were required to entertain their guests, and this was good training.

The organisation continued to flourish right up to 1942, when petrol-rationing made it difficult for sponsors and visitors to attend meetings. Some of the Toc H members were away with the forces or in the Home Guard or in manpowered occupations involving night duties. So Corn Tars gradually came to an end, and by the time the war was over almost all the former boy-members had left Swan and the Society had completely disappeared from the institution's programme of activities. Scouting also ceased about 1940, but in later years it was to be very much revived.

The establishment of Corn Tars was not the only contribution to the welfare of the boys at Swan made by Toc H. In 1932 and in the two following years it conducted seaside camps, the first two being for Swan Boys' only, and the third for lads from all over the State, but including fifty from the Orphanage. In the first two camps they were assisted by voluntary workers from among the Fremantle wharf employees, who, in 1931, had banded themselves into a group which made the provision of amenities at Swan Boys' its objective. They called themselves the Swan Boys' Orphanage Lum-



pers' Committee, and for the next twenty-nine years their contribution to the welfare and entertainment of the children in the institution was a splendid achievement. At first their interest was solely in the Boys' Home, but after a time they also provided amenities for the girls in the Perth Orphanage.

The formation of the group originated in a decision by several lumpers to take a picnic to the Boys' Orphanage. One of the men, Albert Stanton, had himself been a boy at Swan, and one day he had been talking to his workmates about the hard times he had experienced there in his childhood. A suggestion was made that some of the lumpers, with their families, might go up to the institution and give the lads a pleasant afternoon. The proposal was adopted with enthusiasm. A collection was taken-up from among members of the Union, and several Fremantle business houses were successfully approached for donations and for help with transport. Mr. Birch was contacted and he, too, was enthusiastic about the idea. Eventually the picnic was held in the Orphanage grounds and proved a great success, so that from that time it became an eagerly-awaited annual event. Sometimes there were foot races for the boys, sometimes swimming races. Occasionally there was a cricket match. In one of the latter occurred the oft-repeated story of how lumper Roy O'Byrne lofted the ball to the outfield and scored run after run while the boys desperately searched for the "lost ball". When the lumpers' score had passed that of the boys' the batsmen, unaccustomed to such strenuous exertion, totally collapsed and had to be spirituously revived. The ball was never found, but the rumour grew that it had landed in a spectator-lumper's pocket! At the end of each picnic day everyone would adjourn to the dining-room for High Tea, after which would follow the distribution of prize money. Each boy would receive a shilling, and the winners of races or the outstanding cricketers were given an additional amount.

The annual Boxing Tournaments at Swan which were commenced in 1927 always attracted large crowds of visitors. By the 1930's these events were being conducted under the auspices of the Lumpers' Committee, and this continued till 1959. Each year it gave away considerable sums in trophy-money, and in the war years it was responsible for arranging some thrilling boxing exhibitions by the boys for the entertainment of American sailors based in Fremantle. At these all the lads from the Home were invited and right-royally entertained, for each of the respective American Commanders — Dix, Sadd and Bauer — was very enthusiastic for the welfare of the children at Swan — both girls and boys. They gave instruction that the hospitality at the Base should be extended to them on a most generous scale. And so it was — to be followed at the end of the evening by a most sumptuous feast.

But the most memorable association Orphanage children had with the lumpers was the annual seaside holiday at Coogee Beach. First the members combined their efforts with those of Toc H (see page 46), but then they resolved that they would conduct their own camp. As this would be a much more expensive undertaking than the picnic, the Committee decided that it would raise the necessary money by conducting a weekly dance in or near Fremantle. At first they held it in the Trades Hall, but later other venues were tried, until eventually they became the regular Saturday night tenants of the Fremantle R.S.L. Hall. From the outset most of the dances were a financial success, but occasionally this was not so; and when that happened the members put their hands in their own pockets to make up the loss. For over twenty years the weekly dances continued, and every Saturday night throughout that long period Albert Stanton sat in the ticket-box from 7.30 p.m. to 11.30 p.m. to sell tickets to patrons, while other Committeemen took charge inside the hall. It was a very creditable sustained voluntary effort. The dances not only raised the money to provide the camp and the picnic. They

also enabled the Committee to make generous donations of goods, equipment and trophies both to the Perth and to the Swan institutions. These men also cooked for the boys' camp, spending their annual leave in so-doing. For lads accustomed to the plain fare of the Orphanage the meals the lumpers provided were a great treat. In earlier times Mr. Stanton himself did the cooking, but latterly this was taken over by Mr. Roy O'Byrne (of cricketing fame). Both were assisted in all the Committee's activities by Mr. Jock Stewart who was one of the original picnic organisers. He took a leading role in every function that the Committee organised, and was assistant-cook at the last camp in 1959, held shortly after Mr. Stanton's death. Mr. Stewart gave thirty years of continuous service during most of which he was Committee President. His was also an exceptionally fine record.

The first camps were somewhat rugged affairs, with tents pitched under the trees at Coogee Beach, where there was little protection from the sun, the wind and the flies. But then the Orphanage Board made an important purchase that was to revolutionise the Christmas holiday. Earlier on, in 1922, it had bought a house at Como, near to the river, to provide the girls with a holiday change and plenty of swimming. For the next nine years the girls, together with some of the staff, spent the month of January at that beach, and as one Annual Report puts it — "Though packed like sardines on the verandahs the children at any rate, thoroughly enjoyed themselves, and were much benefited by the change". But Como became an increasingly popular residential suburb, and its beach grew to be very crowded, so that the Board began to feel that its house was no longer as suitably situated as at first. So it commenced to look for another building, preferably at a quiet seaside beach. Came 1931 and it heard that the old delicensed Coogee Hotel was empty and for sale. Members inspected it and found it ideal for their purpose. It stood in nearly four acres of ground, and only a hundred yards from what is perhaps the safest beach in Western Australia. Fremantle was only four miles away. The building was a large brick and stone structure of fourteen rooms, with long verandahs, some outbuildings, a well with fresh water and a pumping plant. In addition there was a small shop for which a tenant paid rent. This served the local community and would be handy for the children's pocket-money spending while they were in residence. Above all the price asked for the whole property including land, building and shop was only £641. Was there ever such a bargain? In a piece of priceless understatement the Board reported to the Subscribers: "We hope this will not be regarded as extravagant expenditure, for it is expected that the sale of the Como property will provide the necessary funds". Extravagant expenditure! Years afterwards just a portion of the land with no buildings on it was sold for \$50,000.

The Board lost no time in buying the property and selling the house at Como. After the staff and boys had carried out some renovations and improvements to the old hotel, the girls spent the whole of the next Christmas holidays there — living in comparative comfort while the boys "roughed it" among the sandhills some distance away. This arrangement continued for some years, but then the Lumpers' Committee approached the Board with the suggestion that the Christmas holiday period at Coogee be divided so that the girls had three weeks and then boys had the same period at the Seaside House. This suggestion was accepted, and until Christmas 1959 this was the practice.

Along with Birch's objective of developing the character and personality of his lads was a keen desire to improve their living conditions. When he first arrived at Swan much of it was very institutional — not too unlike "Oliver Twist". Food was basic and was cooked and served in a primitive fashion. Inspector Bulley of the Child Welfare Department once described a meal of those days in the old dining-room in Waylen

House: "The lads sat on forms at long bare trestle tables, each with an older boy at the head. When the food arrived from the kitchen the senior boy ladled an amount for each lad into an enamel plate, which he then sent skidding along the table to each recipient in turn, doing so with remarkable accuracy born of constant practice". The Inspector thought it was about the crudest sight he had seen in an institution dining-room. Boys were always dressed in the plainest of clothes, usually with patches on patches, and since, for economy reasons, material was mostly purchased by the bolt, there was a depressing sameness in the lads' appearance. Externally both Brown and Waylen Houses were fine buildings, but their interiors were bare and cheerless. Any comfort for the boys was virtually non-existent.

It is easy to be critical. Most institution managers have a genuine desire to try to improve living conditions for the children placed in their care. *But to do this they must have finance.* Better food, equipment, bedding, clothing, furniture, all cost money — and where were they to get it? A manufacturer or shopkeeper can set a price on a product that will enable him to cover his costs and return him a margin of profit. If his costs increase he charges more for his goods. But apart from one or two minor items the administrator of an Orphanage has only two sources of revenue, viz. accommodation fees and public support, and he finds it very difficult to increase either of these. The fees come from one or two sources — either from the Government subsidy for the State wards enrolled or from payments made to the institution by a parent for the private maintenance of his children. Public support consisted in donations, collection in churches, or from organized fund-raising efforts. Later there were also bequests. But of all these by far the most important was the subsidy. About the turn of the century this had been fixed at eight shillings per week per child for all wards under fourteen — nothing if they were older. Despite numerous requests to the Government during the next half century to increase the subsidy, the State consistently refused to do so. In fact in 1936 it REDUCED it to seven shillings per week — back to what it was in 1883 — this despite the fact that its own Royal Commission, set up in 1919 to consider conditions in Children's institutions, had recommended a substantial increase in the Government maintenance paid for its wards. All institutions resented the fact that the subsidy was so low, and in 1941 representatives of all the Homes met to discuss the situation they were facing. It was believed to be the first time that all the major denominations had met together in complete unity. Someone referred to it as the "First Ecumenical Conference". But another reminded those present that this had already taken place when the Revd. Father McMahon (R.C.), Rabbi Freedman, Archbishop Lefanu (C. of E.) and the Revd. Nicholas Richards (Congregational) had met together on the Perth Golf Club course in confrontation. The result proved a great victory for the former pair, but there had been no bitterness. Regrettably the institutions gained no such victory against the Government. A proposal that on a certain day every State ward in institutions be returned to the receiving Home at Mt. Lawley had to be rejected because it was felt that the heads of some denominations would not agree to such a drastic move. In the end nothing came of the meeting beyond greater friendliness between the managers of the institutions. Not until 1947 was the subsidy increased, when Mr. A.R.G. Hawke, then Labour Minister for Child Welfare, raised it from seven shillings (70 cents) a week to nine shillings. (In September 1978 the child subsidy paid by the Government for wards and non-wards in private institutions was \$20.25 a week. How times have changed!)

The fees paid by parents of privately-placed children were, in total, much less than the amount received from the subsidy. Nevertheless theirs was an important contribu-

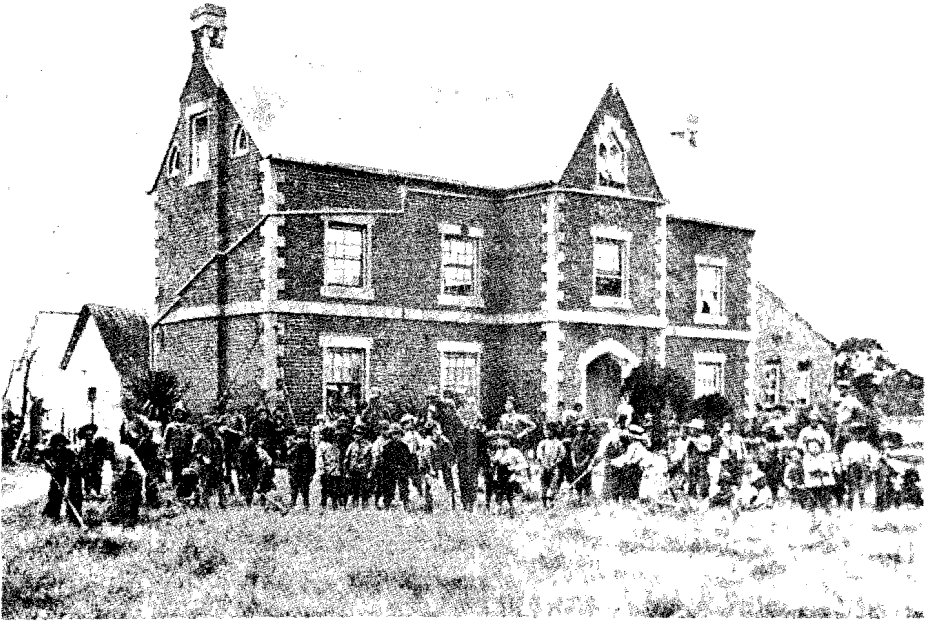
tion to the institution revenue. No fixed charge was made by the Orphanages but rather a fee was negotiated on the basis of ability to pay. Generally it was suggested that the rate be the same as the Government paid for its wards, but if circumstances warranted it there would be a reduction. When the amount was finally decided the parent signed an agreement to pay this sum each week. Some were most conscientious in honouring their obligation, but there were a good many who failed to do so and were soon in arrears. A few made no attempt to pay anything at all. After signing the agreement they said "Good-bye" to their children and walked out of their lives. Witness one such parent who did just that, leaving his three sons in Swan Boys'. They never saw him again. One of these lads gained a Coombe Scholarship and went to Guildford Grammar. The second, after passing his Junior, was sent to the same school at the Board's expense and became a teacher. The third won an Air Force Apprenticeship scholarship and went to its Trade School at Wagga. He is now an officer in the R.A.A.F. In cases such as this, where no one was paying any maintenance for them, children had eventually to be made State wards. By the time that step was taken the accumulated debt due to the institution was considerable and was never recovered.

Sometimes a private-case parent was brought before the Children's Court for failing to pay maintenance. When that occurred the Orphanage could never be sure of what attitude the Magistrate would take. Generally he decided in favour of the institution, but sometimes the amount he ordered a parent to pay each week to reduce his arrears was so small that it would be years before the debt was liquidated. But there were other occasions — fortunately very few — when the Magistrate turned on the Orphanage representative and gave him a real "wiggling" for daring to "bring this man into his court, labouring under all his financial and other difficulties". After this tirade was over and the institution official was safely outside the courtroom he would remark with a wry chuckle: "Now I know what the Psalmist meant when he wrote 'One day in Thy courts is better than a thousand'." Undoubtedly there were cases of genuine hardship among some of the private-case parents, and when this became known, the institution was both sympathetic and generous. But there were other parents well able to pay who defrauded the institution. It is to its credit that despite this no girl or boy was ever turned out because of evasion of payments by a parent. So while the establishment did receive something for State wards, viz. 1/- per day, there were always a number of private cases for whom it received very little or nothing at all.

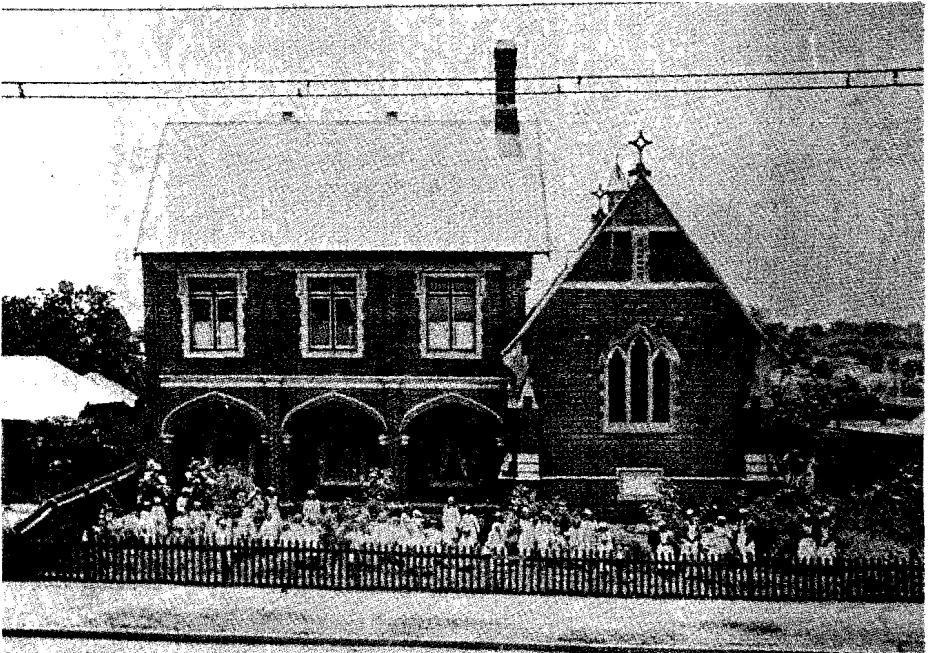
The amount of public support received by the Orphanage varied from year to year. It was always uncertain because people cannot be compelled to give; and of those who did subscribe regularly there was a tendency to send the same amount each year, this despite a slow but steady decrease in the purchasing power of money. When the institution was founded the public support had been generous, but with the passing of time enthusiasm for the cause of destitute children waned. Moreover new appeals began to come before the public, and subscriptions to these diminished the amount formerly received by older charities. Nevertheless up to the end of the earliest years of the twentieth century the two establishments mostly kept out of debt, and their appeals for finance to provide new buildings had really met with remarkable success. For it will be recalled that by the end of 1904 the Adelaide Terrace Orphanage and the Brown and Waylen Houses at Swan had all been erected and paid for, though this had resulted from the generosity of a few rather than that of many. But from then on the annual financial statements gave serious cause for concern. In 1903 the Boys' Orphanage finished with a credit of £48. But it was to be almost the last year that this happened. By 1920 (to take a random year) Swan finished with a debit balance in its Working Account of £150.



*The founder of the establishment, the Venerable James Brown, M.A. First Archdeacon of the Diocese of Perth.*



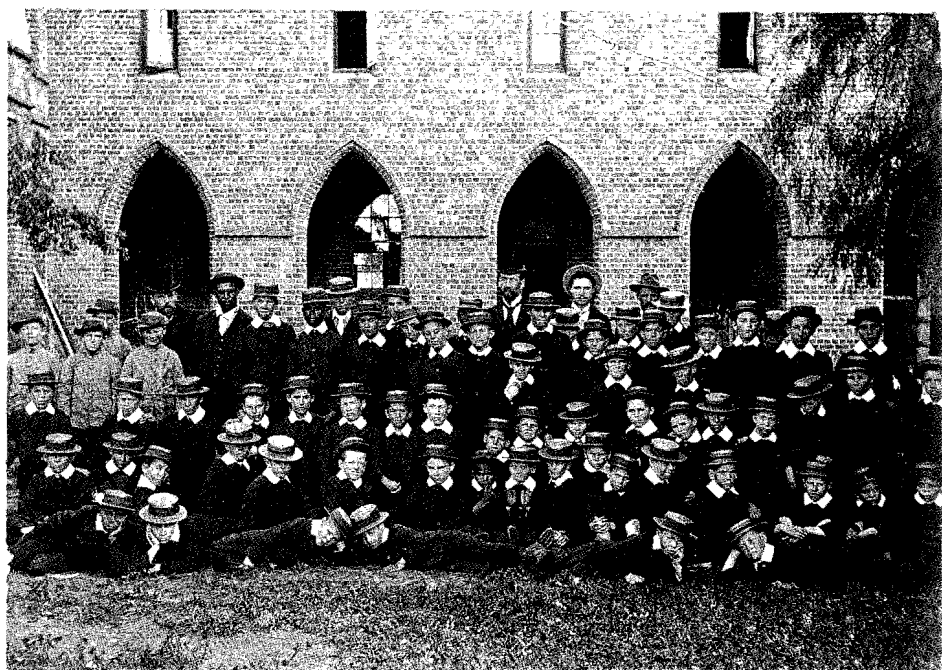
*The first "Noisy Mansion" — Brown House 1876.  
(On cover of the book "Brown House" in 1986).*



*Perth Girls' Orphanage, Adelaide Terrace, Perth in 1880s. It has been suggested that the old cottage on the left was the original orphanage 1868.*



*The Girls of Perth Orphanage, 1898.*



*Swan Boys in Perth for the Royal Visit 1901. Mr (Later Canon) Armstrong in top hat in centre rear.*



In 1924 the financial position was so serious that when Mr. Birch requested that an alarm clock be purchased the Board decided this could not be afforded. One of the members, Mrs. Bird, agreed to ask Levinson's if they would donate one! Twenty years later the deficit had soared to £2,928, but fortunately sufficient bequests had been received during that time to enable the institution to meet the annual excess of expenditure over receipts from that source. But this in turn diminished the endowment capital by the amount of that excess — a loss that was always referred to as the "Overdraft". Apparently it was the Board's perennial hope that at some future time the income might exceed the expenditure, and then some of this used endowment might be re-imbursed. The diminution of this capital was indeed a serious matter, for in the last count it was the institution's security that would enable it to keep its doors open, and the Board could never be sure that more bequests would be forthcoming. The Diocesan Trustees, with whom the Orphanages invested their bequests, admonished the board about its deteriorating capital position. Mr. J.O. Fisher, the Diocesan Secretary and a good friend to the Orphanages, would remind the members: "You can have your cake and eat it. You can't eat your cake and have it". But Archbishop Lefanu took a different point of view. His witty comment on the Board's policy was: "You spend what has been left to you to spend and you call it 'Overdraft'."

In 1923 the Orphanage Board, alarmed at the already increasing annual deficits, and finding it was impossible to obtain more subsidy from the Government or any appreciable rise in its private-case receipts, decided to appoint someone to try to increase its public support. The person selected for the task was a young man recently arrived from England named Alfred Arthur Robertson, and for the next thirty-seven years "Robbie", as he was affectionately known to his friends, worked zealously in the cause of the girls and boys in the Anglican Homes. He travelled all over the South-West of the State and the Goldfields soliciting assistance, making personal calls in shops and houses both in town and country, addressing meetings in local halls, preaching in churches, ever pleading the cause of the children in the Anglican Orphanages. Sometimes he travelled by train, sometimes by bicycle or motor-bike, later in an ancient car. He was rarely refused a donation, though some of the receipts were pitifully small considering the trouble he took to collect them. But some of these visits bore fruit later on, in that donors became annual subscribers, giving more if their circumstances improved. And undoubtedly some of the bequests received by the Orphanages in later years were due to the interest Robbie had earlier aroused in the minds of the benefactors. In an informative little booklet \* which he wrote shortly before his death he reminisces about some of his experiences as he travelled along country roads, bush tracks and across farmers' paddocks, while he covered the State from Perth to Albany, to Kalgoorlie, to Meekatharra, to Geraldton and back to the city. When he commenced his duties he found that there were few persons enrolled as subscribers. By the time he retired at the end of 1959 there were thousands who had learned of the existence and work of the Orphanage from him.

When Robbie died in 1977 many tributes were paid to his memory — and rightly so. As often happens on such occasions some of these were laudatory rather than factual. One such said that without Robbie's personal exertions the present Swanleigh may never have been handed down to us. That was an exaggerated assessment. In his first year Robbie's net contribution to the income of the two Orphanages was £240, to help meet a combined cost of £5,923. In 1950, one of his last years as a travelling collector (the Board then appointed him to the position of Perth Office Manager) his net receipts

\* F.N. See "A History of the Swan Homes". A personal reminiscence by A.A. Robertson.



were £1,404, while the costs of the institution — the Swan Homes — were £23,270. In no one year would his collection have kept the Orphanage doors open for many days. Nor in the realm of policy-formulation did he make any serious contribution to the life of the institution. He was not a full member of the Orphanage Board. When in Perth he was required to make a report at meetings, after which he was expected to retire. No, his contribution to the Orphanages, apart from the money he collected, was in the field of public relations rather than in its counsels. But he loved the institutions and their children, and he entered with enthusiasm into any special activities in which he was asked to assist. He became a great friend of Mr. Birch and his successor, who both found they could discuss their problems and proposals with him, and that whatever they asked him to do, they knew he would give of his very best. For he was thoroughly dependable and sincere in all that he undertook.

No reference to Mr. Robertson would be complete without a mention of his work in the field of migration. Robbie was the Anglican Church's Immigration Officer from 1927 to 1965 — a position he held in addition to his work for the Orphanages. In that time (and latterly with his wife, Eunice) he welcomed thousands of new settlers when they arrived at Fremantle, giving them wise counsel and much personal assistance in their difficult first days in Western Australia. Of special interest to him were parties of children emigrated to the Swan Homes by an arrangement between the Orphanage Board and the Church of England Council for Commonwealth and Empire Settlement in London. (See page 107). In appreciation of his work the Commonwealth Department of Immigration named one of its migrant hostels after him — "Robertson Court" — and he was awarded the decoration of the British Empire Medal. After his retirement the Swanleigh Council elected him a life member, and up to the time of his death he attended its meetings regularly, and took a great interest in the Hostel. He was further honoured by the Council's naming one of the boys' residential houses after him — "Robertson House". He died peacefully at the age of ninety — he who in 1920 had been advised that he had only a year to live if he remained in England. In a moving funeral oration in St. George's Cathedral, Bishop Brian Macdonald concluded with this tribute: "We thank God for Robbie's life and example, for his integrity, his invincible charity, his humility and humour, and for his unfailing spirit of service and helpfulness, which has meant so much to so many for so long".

Earlier we said that if Mr. Birch was to improve standards of living for his boys he had to have more money. In the previous pages we have tried to show how difficult a task it was to get it. But the silver lining — the expression seems peculiarly appropriate — came in the later years of his administration when the amount of income received increased appreciably. In the early 1930's a Lotteries Commission was appointed by the Government to assist hospitals and charities, and this paid to all institutions who were prepared to accept money from this source (some were not, on conscience grounds) a per capita grant of three shillings per week. A few years later Child Endowment was introduced by the Commonwealth Government, and it paid to all institutions for children the grant of five shillings per week (later increased) for each child on the enrolment, that it normally would have paid to the mother. Concurrently with these two new sources of revenue there was the increase in the number of bequests received, which has already been mentioned. Above all, the Lotteries Commission was prepared to make grants to institutions to help them meet the cost of approved capital projects. Large payments were generally made on a £1 for £1 basis, but sometimes a lump sum was donated. With such help available the Board now felt justified in withdrawing some of its endowment capital from the Trustees' "Pool" to help meet the cost of much needed major improvements and additions. In this way the following expenditure was incurred at Swan in Mr. Birch's later years:—

	Lotteries	
	Total Cost (in £ )	Contribution (in £ )
* 1936 New Dining Hall and Kitchen	3,368	1,500
1938 Gymnasium (Assembly Hall)	3,000	1,500
Re-conditioning Brown House	2,842	1,500
New water main and sewerage improvements	745	320
Purchase of Rectory and land from Swan Vestry ("Forrest Cottage")	2,252	—
1939 Re-conditioning Mission Building ("Cornwell") and for technical equipment and material	3,283	1,700
1940 Erection of farm buildings and laundry improvements	1,017	—
1941-42 Erection of "Tech" (Maurice Birch Work- shop) and further technical equipment and material	3,128	1,500
	19,635	8,020

The completion of all these projects in the short space of seven years was a very great achievement. The dining room-kitchen and the gymnasium were architecturally pleasing additions to the establishment as well as having great utility. The building of the former enabled Birch to convert the old dining room, which was on the ground floor of Waylen House, into a large dormitory, and thus making sleeping accommodation throughout the institution less crowded. The provision of the new gym. meant that the unsightly galvanised iron shed which was the recreation room and which stood where the block of staff quarters was later to be erected, could be demolished. The boys now had a large indoor playing area for wet weather, with facilities for gymnastics, boxing, punchball and rope-climbing. The latter was made possible by the work of an old sailor on the Lumpers' Committee, Mr. Jim Belfield, who found great pleasure in making all the ropework for the gym, including the boxing ring. The new building had a change room at its northern end, with a locker for each boy. Here in weekly parades the lads handed in their soiled clothing and received a clean issue.

The purchase of the Rectory enabled Birch to accommodate his smaller boys separately from the older lads — a very desirable re-arrangement. He named the house "Forrest Cottage". It was not a well-built structure, being very deficient in foundations, which fact, and the clayey ground on which it stood, frequently caused its walls and ceilings to crack, so that constant patching was required. But from 1938 to 1968 it served first as a home for little boys, then one for primary girls, and finally in Hostel times, for students and as a girls' sick-bay. Many became sentimentally attached to the old, unpretentious house, for under Miss A. Thirlwell, Miss Alma Harber, Miss Evelyn Straube, Mrs. Eileen Chopin and Mrs. Chris. Smith — each in turn its Housemistress for several years — it always had a "homey" atmosphere. Not a few distinguished visitors remarked after being shown over the whole establishment: "I liked 'Forrest' best". But maintaining the building was financially a running sore. "Don't touch those walls", said the late Mr. H.T. Forbes, one of Perth's leading architects. "If you attempt to alter the house the whole place will collapse". In the end it was decided to demolish the building and replace it with something more substantial. But that story comes later.

\* *Figures from a statement prepared by Mr. J.O. Fisher in 1944, and from the annual audited statements. N.B. Lotteries assistance was also given in the purchase of a truck, a large refrigerator for the new kitchen, etc. etc.*

By the mid-thirties both the Mission and Brown House were in a bad state of disrepair. When at the end of 1920 the former was closed, the buildings were left unoccupied, and soon became derelict. The large room which later became the study and sitting room was even used for a time for the stabling of the Orphanage's horses and cattle. Visitors who so often commented: "What a lovely room!" can hardly credit that for some years it was a stable! After the renovations were completed in 1939, Birch named the building "Corn-well House", and he transferred most of his senior boys there and placed them in charge of a married couple. This enabled these lads to spend much of their time away from the main institution and to experience an approach to home life. The re-conditioning of Brown House provided accommodation for 32 boys, and the dormitories were so arranged that they could be used as isolation wards if an epidemic occurred — as indeed it occasionally did. One section was converted to a sick bay, with a well-equipped surgery adjoining it. Now when a boy was ill he could have quiet nursing with medical facilities handy.

So Birch's dream of improving the living conditions of his boys became a reality, for things were now so very much better than when he arrived in 1922. As we have seen, these improved standards were only made possible by generous bequests and by the financial assistance received from the Lotteries Commission. For the record, the earliest bequest to the Orphanages was an amount of £100 bequeathed in 1897 by Sir William F. Robinson K.C.M.G., a former Governor of Western Australia. By 1932 the total legacies received by the two establishments was £33,734, and fifteen years later this had increased to £41,086. Of this latter sum £8,770 was "Fixed endowment, i.e. only the interest was paid to the institution. The capital could not be touched. The two Orphanages, however, had dipped heavily into the "Free" endowment money to the extent of a good many thousands of £s used either in capital expenditure or in meeting the "Overdraft". But without doing this they could not have remained solvent and functional, let alone meet the costs of any improvements. And after all, as the Archbishop had pointed out — this was why people left money to institutions. Up to 1947 the principal legacy benefactors were: Mrs. S. Davern (£4,477), Mrs. R. Waylen (£4,033), Sir Charles McNess (£4,000), Mr. Archibald McKellar (£1,836 — together with equal amounts for the Mission and for Redhill), Mr. Charles Barnett (£3,235), Mr. H.W. Rischbeith (£2,034), Sir William Loton (£2,000), Mr. George Ridgway (£2,000), Mrs. E.C. Scott (£1,480), Miss Annie Flowitt (£1,320), Mr. W.N. Hedges (£1,000) and Mr. R.P. Vincent (£1,000). During this same period there were also a good many smaller amounts received, and there were some very generous legacies to come in the next fifteen years. In earlier times there was one wealthy man's will, however, that proved most disappointing to the Board. In his lifetime Mr. Walter Padbury had been a generous supporter of the Orphanages. He was an orphan boy when he first arrived in the Colony, and because of this he felt drawn to the needs of destitute children. When he died in 1907 he left a large bequest to the "Poorhouse", and those who knew him best felt certain that by this he meant the Orphanages. But the High Court, where the Board eventually contested the will, ruled that the only interpretation of the term "Poorhouse" that it could accept for Western Australia was the "Old Men's and the Old Women's Homes". So they received the benefaction. His nephew, the late Mr. Matthew Padbury, who was very close to his uncle, was very bitter about the court's decision. "At all times my old uncle was most sympathetic towards needy children", he told the author. "He never forgot that he too had been an orphan. *But he had no time for old men!*"

The decision of the Board to accept money from the Lotteries Commission roused the ire of a good many Anglicans, and in 1939 this matter was hotly debated by Synod. A committee chaired by Mr. J.H. Reynolds of St. George's College was finally appointed to enquire into the morality of the whole matter and to report its findings to the next Synod. This it did, and immediately the controversy flared up again. "We find no moral fault against the laws of God or man in the theory and practice of the Lotteries Commission", said the report. However, it went on to say that it was arguable whether, if the money required were otherwise forthcoming, the Board should continue to apply for assistance from the Commission. But because of the inadequate support it received from other sources — including that from the church — the Board could not be condemned for using such money to help needy children. The opposition based its case on the contention that by accepting Lotteries' money the church was encouraging gambling, which "in our present Society has passed beyond the scale of mere amusement to become an acknowledged social weakness and a serious danger. A large proportion of those whom it affects are ill-able to afford any unproductive spending". When a vote was taken it was found that eighty Synodsmen approved of the Board's action, while forty were against it — a majority of two to one. A leading article in the 1941 September issue of the church's official paper, the "W.A. Church News", summed up the decision in these words: "Synod is a fairly representative cross-section of the church, and its vote probably reflects the general opinion". So ended one of the most controversial debates in the history of the Synods of the Diocese of Perth.

One cannot help wondering about the interesting situation that would have arisen had the vote gone the other way. For it was always the Board's contention that the Church had no authority over the Orphanages. It was supported in its belief by two "Opinions" received from two eminent K.C.'s — one from Sir Henry Parker and the other from Mr. Septimus Burt. Each in his time had been requested to advise the respective Diocesan Secretaries on this very matter. The gist of each "Opinion" given in reply was that the Orphanage had been founded by Subscribers and that they alone determined matters of policy in their institutions. The 1941 Subscribers had, prior to Synod, already passed a motion at the Annual Meeting expressing their gratitude to the Lotteries Commission for its generous assistance — one that was carried unanimously and with acclamation. One can be certain that they never would have agreed to discontinue receiving Lotteries' assistance, no matter what Synod said. Fortunately such a confrontation never arose.

Birch's third main objective for his boys was that when they left the institution they should go to jobs in which their interest and abilities really lay. Formerly most had been sent to farming, which was all right provided that farming was what the boy wanted to do. Such a placement had the additional advantage that it had no accommodation problem. Normally the boy lived with the farmer as one of the family, and mostly this proved a happy arrangement. If a lad went to any other sort of occupation suitable board had to be found for him, and this was not always readily obtainable. But should a boy be sent to a farm, when in fact he was not interested in farming, there was the situation of the square peg in the round hole. Neither party was happy. The boy was disgruntled and unwilling, while the farmer was disappointed and dissatisfied. In such circumstances the Orphanage was usually blamed for the placement, both by the farmer and by the boy.

Birch was well aware of all this, and he was anxious to avoid such a situation. If he found a lad was academically inclined, he tried to give him every encouragement. Any Scholarship winner went to Modern School, and after 1929 all boys who reached post-primary standards were sent to Midland Central School or to the Midland Techni-

cal School. All these older boys who were receiving more advanced education and vocational training, also had the advantage of being a minor group in their respective schools. At Middle Swan Primary they had been in the majority on the school's enrolment — for the Orphanage boys comprised about eighty per cent of that school's population. In the playground they invariably stuck by one another, referring contemptuously to any boy from a private home as "Unorphanage". Such a lad often got a bad time at the hands of the "Swanees", so much so that local parents several times wrote letters of complaint to the Education Department and requested that it establish a school at the institution for the inmates. The Director of Education would then write to the Board about these complaints, and Birch would be asked to try to encourage a better attitude in his boys. Doubtless he did reprimand them, but as the school was away from his premises, there was really not a great deal that he could do. A physically dominant group within any school is never a good thing. But when the boys went to Midland they were but a tiny minority in the school's enrolment. In fact the only thing that gave them any conspicuity was that they went bare-footed. This was not Birch's fault. He did provide them with boots, but as they walked the three miles to school they took these off as soon as they were safely beyond the precincts of the Orphanage and hid them in the bush, collecting them on the way home. Then they would return with the boots dangling around their necks. This would be accepted by authority, since all the other boys at the institution, including the older lads who had left school and worked around the establishment, mostly went bare-footed. In the meantime the situation at Middle Swan School remained much the same until years later when a fine new school was built nearer Midland. This accommodated many more scholars, including children from the newly-developing areas of population to the north of that town, as well as those from Middle Swan. Here the Orphanage primary children — now girls as well as boys — were a minority group, and it proved a much happier school.

The "majority situation" did not arise at East Perth School where the girls from Adelaide Terrace attended. It was already a large school when they first entered it in 1908, and there do not seem to have been any of these problems. As stated earlier, if a girl completed her primary education before she turned fourteen, she was then sent to Perth Girls' School in James Street, and a few of these were able to enter careers other than that of domestic help. In 1925 Fletcher's Business College offered a scholarship to the institution to enable one of its girls to undertake commercial training. Then Stott's Business College made a similar offer, and later increased the number of such scholarships to four. In 1936 Hartill's Commercial College also awarded a scholarship, and so in this way several girls were enabled to enter a new field of employment, viz. office work. Some others passed the Nurses' Entrance examination and were accepted for training, and there were also a few who were able to get jobs in such city employment as dressmaking and hairdressing. After about 1950, with more and more girls staying on at High School, there was a steady decline in the number going to domestic situations. Eventually the time came when such placement was almost unknown.

In the 1930's an important development at Swan Boys' was the introduction of technical training. This was largely due to the encouragement Birch received from Mr. J.J. Kenneally, the chairman of the Lotteries Commission. Building maintenance at Swan had always been carried out by boys who had left school — "Trainees" they were called — working under the supervision of the staff. But at Clontarf Orphanage the Christian Brothers, under the Superintendence of Brother Keaney, had gone further. There the boys were actually *erecting* buildings, the trainee boys carrying out the various trades such as carpentering and bricklaying, etc. Mr. Kenneally thought

that the lads at Swan might undertake similar ventures. It was hoped that such experience might then count as part of apprenticeship time if later they could be articulated to building contractors — an idea, however, that the Trade Unions refused to accept. Birch was much impressed with what he saw taking place at Clontarf and he decided to introduce it at Swan. With the Board's consent he secured equipment and material for technical training and set up a workshop for this purpose at Cornwell House. Here the older lads received regular instruction in carpentry, tin-smithing and oxy-welding. Soon they were ready to start their first building. Working under the direction of experienced men such as Mr. Tom Carrick and his son, Harry, both well-known contractors, and Mr. Harry Adie, a retired building inspector, and Birch's own son, Derek, who had served his time as an apprenticed body-builder and whose training had included some experience in metal-work, welding, fitting and turning and black-smithing, the boys erected pig-sties and poultry sheds, making their bricks of cement mixed with sand which they collected in the summer from the dry bed of Jane Brook. These initial efforts proving satisfactory, they next commenced the building of a much more ambitious project, viz. a machinery, hay and milking shed, 70 feet by 50 feet. As the work proceeded from footings to the top of the roof the boys got experience, not only in brick-laying and carpentering but also they made what was needed in the way of rods, bolts, strappings and brackets, and they learned how to fix roofing, guttering and down-pipes. Everyone was both pleased and proud of their efforts, and today it is still a very good structure for its purpose.

Birch then reported: "We have now outgrown our small workshop, and the class-room which is carried on while we are building has been badly handicapped by lack of room. To overcome this we propose to put up a building to be used as a technical school and workshop, using only the labour of the boys and staff to erect it. The size of the building will be approximately 130 feet by 35 feet. The Lotteries Commission is prepared to make us a grant towards the cost, and a number of friends of the Orphanage have promised donations of equipment when the structure is finished. When that time comes, the Education Department has agreed to provide us with instructors".

The Board was very impressed, and so the ambitious project now known as the "Maurice Birch Workshop" (but more commonly referred to as "The Tech") was commenced in March 1941. It was completed a year later, and included a lecture room for instruction in mechanical drawing, two large areas for carpentry and metalwork, and at the northern end, a blacksmithy. To build it the boys had to make 60,000 cement bricks by hand, again using the brook sand. Throughout its erection the work was regularly checked by Government Inspectors, who reported that a high standard of workmanship was being maintained. When the job was finished it was a creditable achievement, and while, for a number of reasons, it has not fulfilled Birch's high hope of its becoming a technical training centre, it has proved an asset to the establishment in many ways — especially as a maintenance workshop — and it did provide the boy-tradesmen with much building experience. So, in his last year as manager, Birch had the satisfaction of seeing some of his lads entering commercial and even professional careers, and some going to trades. In this way his third objective was partially fulfilled. Boys with special interests and abilities were being helped to a vocation.

But now we must turn to the Orphanage in Adelaide Terrace. How had it fared in the period between the two World Wars? For the most part there were no exciting developments, and life in the institution "kept the even tenor of its way" — that was how Archdeacon Hudleston, its manager, described it. There had been some building additions and furnishing improvements, and some new equipment supplied. There was

the purchase, first of the Como house, and then of the premises at Coogee Beach, each of which provided a venue for the annual exciting holiday away from the institution. Each year many pleasant outings were arranged for the girls, and after "Guides" was introduced, there were many contacts with outside girls for those who joined. The Girls' Friendly Society also began to take a lively interest in the Orphanage children. Once a week the seniors went to the G.F.S. Headquarters in Hay Street for a Social Club evening, which was arranged for them through the good offices of two lady-members of the Board — Mrs. R. Sundercombe and Miss E. Cotton — both of whom were prominent members of the Society. A similar weekly function was arranged for the junior girls, but was held at the Home. A donation from the "Youth and Motherhood Appeal" was spent in improving the playing fields, and gifts of apparatus for use in this area were received from several sources. Latterly a Miss Burton regularly attended to give the girls training in sport — which at times must have been a discouraging experience for her, for few were really interested, and those who did play were often bad losers. Not until much later, when many were attending High School, did the Orphanage girls overcome this trait. In general, compared with the interesting changes and developments that had taken place at Swan during Birch's management, life in the Perth Orphanage during those years was indeed very placid.

However, there was one event in that time which really ruffled the feathers of the Board and the Girls' staff, and they remembered it for years after. This was the temporary appointment of a Miss Evans as Acting-Matron in 1935. When Miss Cantrell resigned after twenty-two years as Matron, the Board were some time in finding a successor. Archdeacon Hudleston then heard of a lady who had brought a group of children from England for Fairbridge Farm School. Prior to that she had acquired much experience of social work among girls, both in England and in South Africa. She was remaining some weeks in this State and he asked her if she would take charge at the Girls' Home until a permanent Matron was appointed. She accepted the post, and the Archdeacon then asked if she would also make a report to the Board on her impressions of the institution. She did so, and it is quoted here in full as giving an insight into the conditions at that period (1935) — as she saw them:

#### **Report on Perth Girls' Orphanage by Miss Evans, 16th September, 1935.**

"The Orphanage needs a great deal of attention to bring it up to date and to accommodate the children in conformity with decent standards of living.

The bathroom requires urgent attention. The present arrangement is most unsatisfactory and not at all conducive to cleanliness or decency. There are not enough wash basins, and also hanging wardrobes are required in the sewing room, which, for lack of a changing room, has to be used for this purpose when the girls are bathing. At present the children have nowhere to hang their clothes, so that they just leave them lying about the floor. Two new boot cupboards are necessary. There is one very inadequate boot-rack, and consequently the children leave their shoes anywhere around the house or the grounds.

There is no place provided with recreation cupboards for the senior girls, and but for the six cubicles the children have no corner for their personal belongings other than in the old schoolroom, which, I understand, has been condemned. Certainly in its present condition it is not a safe place for children. I suggest that new recreation cupboards be built in the dining room, since that room has to serve a double purpose" (of mealing and recreation).

“The present sleeping arrangements are far from ideal. At the moment each child hangs her damp towel at the foot of her bed, while her clothes at night are left on top of it. No place is provided for her washing things, etc. I suggest a combined towel rail and a shelf be built around each dormitory at the back of the beds, unless of course the bathroom problem is solved by building a new bathroom downstairs, with a proper place for towels, etc. Each child should be provided with at least a chair. This would teach the children not to sit on their beds, so spoiling their mattresses. It would also provide a place for their clothes at night.

If the verandah at the top of the back outside staircase were enclosed with “Cyclone” netting, and a door provided in this, it would be a great improvement, and serve the double purpose of making the Orphanage safe at night, and also save those girls who sleep on the new balcony the long journey around passages and through dormitories before they can reach the lavatory. A properly equipped sick-room ought also to be provided. The fire escape half-door should be altered to open outwards. At present it opens inwards and the children have to bend to get through it.

The children need new clothing. The underclothing they are now wearing is very out of date and unpractical. There are no mackintoshes provided, and as the school is at some distance from the Home, the children are constantly catching bad colds, caused by their frequently getting wet.

Nearly all the mattresses require re-making or renewing. The staff linen is in a deplorable state. There are not enough sheets, towels, etc. to go round. Nor is there a complete dinner service or tea set or sufficient silverware, cutlery, etc. The children also need new table cloths and proper equipment to do their work. Curtains and blinds need renewing in several rooms.

There are 67 children in the Home, aging from one and a half to sixteen years. The majority of them are very undisciplined and have little idea of self-control. They are untidy, which is not surprising since they have very little incentive to be otherwise. A great deal remains to be done for them, to show them how to make use of their recreation time, and in training them to be self-respecting members of society, capable of taking their place in the world. The whole Orphanage needs to be made a great deal more homelike”.

This shattering report did have an effect, and quite a deal was done to improve conditions along the lines suggested by Miss Evans. Further changes might have been introduced, but for the fact that the presentation of her report to the Board coincided with an even more dramatic proposal, viz. that the Adelaide Terrace Orphanage be closed altogether and a new Home for girls be established at Middle Swan in close proximity to Swan Boys’.

This idea was not new. It had even been suggested as far back as 1876 when the boys were first moved from Perth to the Swan, and it had often been mentioned since. But now, for the first time, it received serious consideration. In detail, the proposal was that the Rectory cottage at Swan and all the land surrounding it that still belonged to the Vestry be purchased, and a number of cottage homes erected. Each was to accommodate about twelve girls who would be under the charge of a housemother. To these all the girls resident in the Perth Orphanage would then be transferred and the old establishment sold.

After a full discussion the Board approved in principle, and immediately purchased the Rectory and the land. A leading firm of architects was commissioned to prepare a



set of sketches showing a number of suitable cottages and a chapel. It did so, and very attractive it all looked. But when the whole project was costed it was found to be far in excess of the endowment funds available. Reluctantly the scheme had to be shelved for the time being.

Then came World War II. After Pearl Harbour and the invasion of Malaysia by the Japanese, culminating in the capture of Singapore, the threat of an invasion of the Australian mainland by the enemy became very real. When bombs fell on Darwin the authorities gave instruction that children attending city schools or resident in colleges or institutions in Perth were to be transferred to a safer locality. The Perth Orphanage, being close to the East Perth Power House, was in especial danger. The Board asked Mr. Birch and Matron Campbell to confer and arrange for the Girls' staff and all children who could not be sent to private homes to be transferred to Swan Boys' for an indefinite period. It was decided that the younger boys could be shifted from Forrest Cottage to Brown House to make room for the little girls, while the senior boys would return to Waylen, vacating Cornwell for the older girls. These changes were made, and on Friday March 6th, 1942, the last of the girls left Adelaide Terrace and took up residence at Swan. So after being separated for sixty-six years, the two Orphanages were once more being conducted on the same property.

About the same time there was another important change, but it was one that went practically unnoticed. This was the introduction of a new constitutional principle. From the time they were founded the Orphanages had been administered under a set of rules formulated by the original Subscribers. In the years between there were few changes and only one major one. That was in 1919 when ladies as well as gentlemen were elected to the Board. As early as 1913 Bishop Riley, speaking at the Annual Meeting, said: "It is not right that a committee of men should have the entire management of institutions in which there are so many girls". But the only outcome of his address was an agreement that some ladies would now be asked to make regular visits to Perth Girls' and to the Mission to talk over problems with the respective Matrons, and then report on these to the Board with recommendations. But really this was no different from the original rule, whereby lady visitors had been appointed for this purpose. In time that practice had been discontinued and was long forgotten. Now it was re-introduced in the appointment of a "Ladies Committee of Advice". Six years later the Subscribers passed an amendment to the rule which had provided for the annual election of seven gentlemen to form the Board (together with the Archbishop and the two Managers) to read "*Seven Ladies and seven Gentlemen*". Later the number of elected members of each sex was reduced to six.

In 1941 a second major change was made by the Subscribers. For some time there had been a growing body of opinion among interested people that the church ought to be more closely connected with institutions that were widely regarded as "Anglican" Orphanages. It was also thought that if the Annual Report could be presented to Synod for consideration along with the other reports, the clergy and laity might thereby be induced to take more interest in the work of the Homes. They would have the opportunity of asking questions about them, and of speaking on proposals and difficulties referred to in the report. The suggestion was accepted by Synod, though without any great enthusiasm. To many it was: "Just one more report to be got through!" A little later the Subscribers passed a further amendment, viz. that half the seats on the Board should be elected by Synodsmen, and that at least one of its representatives should be a clergyman. Again Synod agreed. The importance of this amendment was hardly grasped at the time, for by its acceptance the continuity of the Anglican tradition in

the Orphanages was virtually assured. In the past there had never been any threat to this, but in later times another Anglican institution was to be lost to the church because of lack of interest and indecision by Anglicans, together with loose constitutional control of that institution at that time. Now it was reasonable to assume that the Orphanage Board, which included the Archbishop, the two Managers and six of its members elected by Synod, would never agree to any proposal that was contrary to a Synod decision or in any way anti-Anglican in character. But it might also be noted that the Subscribers had not departed from the principle that decisions on matters of policy remained with them. Any changes in this would be included in their report to Synod, which that body could only pass or reject — it could not amend. Should Synod pass a motion that would in any way affect Orphanage policy this had first to be submitted to the next Annual Meeting of Subscribers for endorsement before it could be put into practice.

Throughout the whole of their history both institutions constantly experienced the problem of a heavy turnover in staff. This was one that came especially hard on the Managers; for the work had to be carried on, so that they often had to step in and perform the extra duties in addition to their own, until a replacement for the vacancy could be made. One of them had to substitute for several weeks as the laundryman, and he became quite proficient at the work. Then he heard that it was being whispered behind his back: "Now we've got a good laundryman, howabout getting a good Manager!" Whenever new staff arrived few of them had any previous experience in the difficult matter of controlling institution children, and they usually found these very trying. This, combined with long hours, low rates of pay and little time off, made the job unattractive unless the person was genuinely interested. So not many stayed for long. Some indeed were like "the man who came to dinner". He accepted the job, had an evening meal, a good night's rest in a comfortable bed and was gone by daylight. But there were exceptions. Such a one was Miss Grant who remained on the Girls' staff for twelve years. Of her, Archdeacon Hudleston wrote: "She had long been the Matron's right hand, taking charge in her absence. She endeared herself to all the staff and children by her loving and patient disposition and by her transparent goodness and integrity of character". Birch, too, had several faithful, long-serving assistants. There was Miss Jacobs who was sewing mistress for sixteen years; Mr. and Mrs. Marony, for twelve years his principal assistant and matron respectively, and latterly Mr. and Mrs. Pettigrew and Mr. and Mrs. Carter, all of whom served him well. But such extended service as these all gave was most unusual.

The end of Birch's management came with dramatic suddenness. For several years he had not been on friendly terms with his respective chaplains — the Rectors of Swan. There had been criticism of him both at Clergy Conferences and in Synod, and as a result he developed a real bitterness towards the church. This in turn had a bad effect on the senior boys, by whom Birch was both respected and liked. They developed a strong anti-church, anti-God attitude which soon spread to the younger lads. So marked was this that Archbishop Lefanu told the author that he had felt the atmosphere in the 1941 Confirmation Service at Swan to be so bad that for nights afterwards he had been unable to sleep because of his worry over it. Chaplains complained that they got little co-operation from the manager, who now rarely attended service at St. Mary's. Staff members who were practising churchmen felt disliked and distrusted.

Undoubtedly all the fault did not lie on Birch's side. One Rector in particular had much to answer for. But an impossible situation had developed. A person cannot remain an employee of the church — and most people regarded the Orphanage as church work — and be in active opposition to it. Matters came to a head at the February 1942

meeting of the Board, when Birch reported that there had been more staff resignations, and also that he had dismissed two members. This gave rise to a discussion on the frequent changes of staff that were taking place, and on the two sackings, both of whom were regular churchgoers. Birch said he had dispensed with their services because he had found them to be deliberately disloyal to him, and he reminded the Board that he had been given the right of "Hire and Fire". A motion of confidence in the manager was then proposed, and was supported by most of the members, but was not carried unanimously. Thereupon Mr. Birch tendered his resignation. The next day Mr. J.O. Fisher interviewed him and asked him if he would reconsider his action now that he had had time to think it over. But Birch was adamant. As he no longer enjoyed the confidence of every member of the Board his resignation stood, and must be accepted. He hoped that the Board would proceed to the making of a new appointment as quickly as possible.

So the position was advertised and in due course a new manager was appointed. The day before he assumed control he spent with Birch, discussing details and administrative matters. Their talk continued far into the night, for Birch had arranged to leave Swan the next day. On the afternoon of his departure he called an assembly of all boys and introduced his successor to them. Then he went along the lines, shaking hands with each lad and having a friendly word with him as he said "Good-bye". Many of them had tears in their eyes and a choke in their voices, for to some Birch was the only father they ever remembered. Then he handed his whistle — his symbol of authority — to the "new boss", and after a shake of the hand, a "Good luck" and a friendly wave to everybody, he climbed into the Orphanage van and was driven away from the institution he had done so much to improve in his twenty years of management. He never visited it again.

The new manager, feeling emotionally moved by the farewell, quickly dismissed the boys to their own resources and hurried into what was now his office. He sat down and said aloud to himself: "What happens next?" He had no idea. What *did* happen in the next thirty years is told in the following sections of this book.

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# 1. THE NEW MANAGER

*AUTHOR'S NOTE: Much of the remainder of this book is autobiographical. I was the "new Manager" referred to at the end of the previous chapter, and as I was chiefly responsible for the introduction of most of the changes in policy which occurred during the next thirty years, it would be artificial for me to refer to "the Manager", or "Peterkin" or "he" when the reader would be well aware the person referred to was the author. But I will often use the personal pronoun "we", because the direction of the establishment was very much a joint affair in which my wife, Mary, played an equal role with me. I can recall very little that was introduced or changed during the long period we were at Swan which had not first been thoroughly discussed between us. When I accepted the position I was required to agree to a list of rather formidable terms of appointment, one of which read: "The wife of the Manager has no official position on the staff". Mary scrupulously observed that instruction except on those occasions when a housemistress of one of the girls' houses resigned and we had been unable to get anyone to take her place. Then my wife would cheerfully fill the vacancy till we could make what we hoped would be a permanent appointment. The time came, however, when the Board, who soon got to know her ability and character, invited her to accept the position of "Honorary Supervisor of the girls and their living conditions". She agreed to this, for it gave her official standing with the other staff, the girls and parents.*

It was April 1st, 1942 — April Fools' Day — when I commenced my management. I am quite sure that many of my teaching associates and friends thought that in my case the day's title was one of singular appropriateness. For a young man of thirty-six I was already reasonably well-established on the road to promotion in the Education Department, having been a senior lecturer at the Claremont Teachers' College — the only Training College in those days — and on the Special List for promotion to the Headmastership of a country school. I liked teaching and also teacher-training, and in both areas I believe I had achieved a favourable reputation. So I was not surprised when, a few days after my appointment to Swan, a teacher-friend said to me: "You know, I don't follow your move". I'm quite sure he wouldn't. For it was with no thought of professional advancement that I had applied for the position. What he didn't know was that I was thrilled with the fulfilment of a long-cherished ambition — one that had been with me daily for eighteen years!

It had originated in this way. On March 8th, 1924 — my eighteenth birthday — I left home to take up an appointment as Assistant Teacher-on-Supply at Fairbridge Farm School — a place I knew nothing about other than that it was some sort of Children's Home and was near Pinjarra. At the station I was met by Mrs. Fairbridge in her sulky, and as we drove the five miles to the Farm School she told me something about the establishment which her husband, Kingsley, had founded about ten years earlier. It would never have crossed her mind that a quarter of a century later she would again talk to that enthusiastic but rather callow young man — older and maturer then — this time hoping to persuade him to apply for the position of Principal of that same Farm School, which post had become vacant

In due course we arrived at Fairbridge and immediately I was thrilled with the whole prospect. There in front of us were the unique wooden cottages in which the children lived, and there were other interesting buildings, too. Some of the surrounding paddocks had been cultivated, but much of it was still bushland. Not far away smoke was rising from where some clearing was in progress and from the fires came the lovely aromatic scent of the burning gums. In the distance the upper end of the farm merged with the blue slopes of the Darling Ranges, making a beautiful background to the scene. But the peacefulness of the view contrasted with the shouts and excited laughter of barefooted girls and boys hastening from many directions towards the dining hall for their midday meal. Numbers of them gave Mrs. Fairbridge a friendly wave and me a curious stare as we drove past.

Fifty years later I still get a thrill from the view near the Farm School's lower gate. From that first day I became enthused with the idea of caring for destitute children living in an institution-situation, so that I knew instinctively that this was what I wanted to do with my life. From then on I read everything I could find about similar welfare work, and every day I scanned the "Situations Vacant" columns in newspapers, looking for an advertisement calling for applications for the position of Principal of a Children's Home. For eighteen years I continued to do so, waiting for the elusive vacancy to appear. But the years went by and I began to think that such an opportunity was not going to come my way. "If you can wait and not be tired by waiting", says Kipling in his famous poem, "IF". I was beginning to get tired by waiting, and I became more and more resigned to the probability of a career in the Department. Things seemed to be pointing that way, especially when the Director of Technical Education suggested to me the possibility of an interesting position he was shortly creating — one which he thought I might fill. At the same time another Superior, the Principal of the Teachers' College, dangled before me the prospect of one of several positions he said were due to be filled in his establishment in the very near future.

Then on March 2nd, 1942, there appeared in the "West Australian" the advertisement for which I had waited so long: "Applications are invited from those capable of filling the position of Resident Manager of the Swan Boys' Orphanage". One can imagine the dismay of my wife as I burst in upon her with the news — "Here's the job advertised for which I've been waiting for eighteen years!" I can appreciate her dismay. At odd times she had heard me murmur ideas about the possibility of our undertaking some form of social welfare work, but she had not taken this suggestion too seriously. My prospects for promotion in the Department were so good. We had built our own home, of which we were justifiably proud, in a beautiful situation overlooking a park and the Swan River at Freshwater Bay, and we had quite a circle of local friends. These things I was suggesting we throw over to manage an Orphanage at five pounds a week! It was not very much when we remembered that we had the future of our two young children (and a third on the way) to consider, though when we found that accommodation and board were included, it made the remuneration look much better. At that time there was also an additional anxiety which we shared with most people. The realities of war were drawing very close to home. That day bombs were dropped on towns in the North-West of the State. How soon would they be raining on Perth? Few people were giving any thought to taking on new responsibilities. They felt much more concerned about the safety of their own families should the Japanese invade Australia.

However we talked it over, and I think rather to humour me and my astonishing suggestion, Mary decided to accompany me on a visit to see the place. We were shown

over by the Matron, and it was not long before we were both most enthusiastic about the idea of my applying for the position. So the next day I wrote and posted my application — the date, March 8th, exactly eighteen years after that March 8th when I had gone to Fairbridge on my eighteenth birthday. It really was a remarkable co-incidence, and to me it seemed a good omen for success. And indeed so it proved, for I was shortly called up for interview, and a few days later was informed that I was the successful applicant. The Archbishop then persuaded the Director of Education to allow me to resign immediately without giving the regulation three months' notice. Following that news we had quickly to arrange about our house, deciding to let it rather than sell it, in case we found that we didn't like working for a Board — a doubt in our minds that proved completely unfounded. For the kindness, understanding and co-operative support shown to us in our earliest days by the members was maintained throughout our long management. At all times there was between us a bond of friendship and mutual esteem.

So it was that on April 1st we arrived at Swan, I in the morning to discuss further details with Mr. Birch prior to his departure later that day, Mary in the evening with the children and the furniture. We were full of hope, determined to do a worthwhile job in caring for the boys, and to promote the progress of the establishment to which we both felt really proud to have been appointed to manage. Little did we realise the problems and anxieties that lay ahead of us.

## (2) OUR EARLY EXPERIENCES 1942 - 1946

### *A. OUR FIRST DAYS:*

April 2nd was for us a day never to be forgotten. Within the space of twelve working hours we found ourselves facing up to the three major problems in every voluntary institution for child care — disciplinary difficulties, shortage of staff and insufficient income. That day we were awakened to trouble. Six o'clock in the morning. Knock, Knock, Knock, at the door. Derek Birch who was staying on with us for four weeks till the day of his army call up — thank goodness he did so, for his experience was to be invaluable to us — reported that during the night eleven boys had absconded. We were aghast! In later years I was never over-disturbed about abscondings. From experience I had found that such children rarely if ever come to harm. They usually ran to where one of their parents or relatives was living who generally rang us up; or else the absconders wandered around until they were picked up by the police who telephoned us to come and collect them from the lock-up. For some of them the experience taught them the useful lesson that security and food and companionship were better than the "hunted" feeling that at any minute they might be caught, and the constant anxiety as to what would be the consequences. For them the excitement of the adventure soon waned.

But on my first morning in charge I was dumbfounded by the event. What a start! I imagined that in a few hours I would have the Archbishop, the head of the Child Welfare Department and the Commissioner of Police all on my doorstep demanding my immediate resignation. Coupled with the anxiety was a sense of failure and disappointment. It seemed to me that the boys had taken one look at me and eleven of them had run for their lives! How many more would be gone by midday? Perhaps the whole lot would clear out! But that didn't happen, and during the day most of the eleven trickled back of their own accord. Word was also received that all but two of the remainder had been apprehended at Toodyay and were awaiting collection. Surprisingly no officials seemed in the least concerned. The Child Welfare Department was notified, but abscondings from institutions were commonplace to them. "Not to worry. They'll get picked up", they assured me. But I felt very humiliated when, facing my first Board meeting that afternoon — one summoned especially for members to meet the new Manager — I had to report the massive absconding. It was such an inauspicious beginning.

In later years Mary and I learnt from one of the boys on the enrolment at that time that over fifty had run away during that night, but most of them, having got as far as Redhill in the Darling Ranges felt they had nowhere to go and decided to return. "I was never so cold in all my life as I was in those hills", he said. "So, like most of the others, I decided to go back and see what the new boss was like. I ran all the way to the Orphanage and sneaked into the dormitory undiscovered. Boy, was I glad to get into bed!"



Those older boys who didn't run away expressed their feelings about our arrival in a different fashion. The Orphanage didn't have much in the way of farm machinery, but recently it had acquired a maize drill. This the lads proceeded to wreck so completely that it was beyond repair. I was told that they did this because they believed that Mr. Birch, their "old boss", had been unjustly dismissed, and the opposition they showed to his successor was their way of expressing where their loyalty lay. Boys are creatures of prejudice, and when they are convinced that injustice has been done, that belief dies hard. Their opposition to me was to last a long time. The staff and many of Birch's friends and supporters also believed that the church had deliberately got rid of him and had replaced him with its own nominee. So I became something of a scapegoat. But the facts regarding Birch's leaving are exactly as recorded in the previous chapter (see page 65). There was no suggestion of a dismissal. The Diocesan Secretary and most of the Board pleaded with him to withdraw his resignation, but this he refused to do. So far as I was concerned, I knew neither Archbishop Lefanu nor any member of the Board. His Grace actually favoured another applicant and was displeased with the Board's decision in my favour. Here I must add that whatever private doubts he may have had at that time, he gave me a warm welcome, and at all times I enjoyed his support and friendship, and after a time, his confidence. At Swan, however, there was no welcome. The boys showed animosity, and all the staff with one exception tendered their resignation. The one that didn't do so had just recently been discharged from Heathcote Mental Hospital!

So we were immediately faced with the problem of getting an almost entirely new staff — not an easy matter when, because of the war there was a great shortage of labour. Moreover applicants are inclined to look askance at a situation where there are so many vacancies to be filled simultaneously. "There must be something wrong with that place. Better try somewhere else". However out of the few responses to our advertisements we managed to re-staff the establishment. Three of them proved exceptionally good. One was Mr. Ernest Cope who remained in our employ for the next twenty-five years. My appointment of him was unpopular with several members of the Board, for he was one of those suspended by Mr. Birch because of difference of opinion between them regarding the relations between the institution and the church. However I had known Mr. Cope for many years and had seen his worth elsewhere, so that I readily endorsed the Archbishop's suggestion that he be re-employed on trial. I have always regarded that decision as one of the best I ever made, and in time my high opinion of him was completely shared by every member of the Board. Among his services to the institution was his laying-out of the gardens, lawns and pathways, and he planted many of the trees, shrubs and rose beds that today make Swanleigh so attractive. He took a special pride in the care of St. Mary's Church and its churchyard, and these came to be regarded as among the most beautiful in the State. I also appointed Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Williams to the staff and this, too, proved highly successful. He was a capable energetic Assistant-Manager and was very popular, while his wife ably filled in turn the positions of laundress, cook and seamstress. With her bright personality she, too, was a great favourite with the boys, and together they did much to break down the hostility towards us.

My other appointments, however, were not so successful and none of them lasted very long. I well recall my first cook, a capable, experienced lady who took a pride in her work but was very quick-tempered. A few days after she commenced, she decided to make the boys porridge for breakfast. It so happened that one of the serving orderly boys was a scamp, nick-named "Scotch", who, as he took the plates to each table,

muttered to the boy at the end: "There's weevils in the porridge". Word quickly passed round the room: "There's weevils in the porridge!" So the food was uneaten, and in due course was cleared away and scraped into the pig-bins. Suddenly the cook saw what was happening. "Stop!", she called. "Why hasn't my porridge been eaten?" A member of staff came in from the dining room and explained that Scotchy had said that there were weevils in it. "What rubbish", said the cook. "Which is Scotchy?" When he was pointed out to her she seized a broom and wielding it over her shoulder she made straight for the boy. But he saw her coming, and either in mock terror or real — I suspect the former he raced down the aisle of the hall yelling "Murder! Murder!" with the cook in hot pursuit, swinging the broom. She never caught up with Scotchy — no one ever did. A few days after that she resigned.

Nor was the lady lately from Heathcote without problems for me, and one experience with her bordered on the melodramatic. I was conducting a social one evening when she suddenly strode into the hall and shouted out that she was leaving us. A couple of days went by and we had received no word of her. The door of her room was locked and we couldn't find a duplicate key to see if she had taken her things. Another day passed and still no word, and we began to get a little anxious, more particularly because just before she disappeared she had borrowed an old "cut-throat" razor of mine from my wife — "to cut her corns", she explained. Had she borrowed it for anything else? Her room being on the upper floor and locked was only accessible through the window, which required an extension ladder to reach it. When we got one in place I nervously ascended, got the window opened and climbed in, dreading what I might find. To my great relief there was no dead body, but the mess was indescribable. She had been cooking in there because she believed that the kitchen staff were trying to poison her. There were weeties scattered on the floor and packets and tins of foodstuff, clothing, bedclothes, cases and boxes cluttering the room higgledy-piggledy. What a mess! However a few of us got to work, cleaned the floor, tidied everything up and changed the lock. A few more days passed but still no word was received from her. Then one day the telephone rang, and an angry voice said:

"That you, Peterkin? The Archbishop here".

"Yes, Your Grace", I replied.

"Have you got a Mrs. .... on your staff?"

"We had", I said, "but she's disappeared and we don't know where she is".

"Well I do", replied the Archbishop. "She's in the most expensive suite in the Church's 'Mount' Hospital. She says she's recuperating. When she was admitted she told the office that the account would be paid by Swan Boys' Orphanage. So what are you going to do about it?"

Perhaps the reader will understand the hilarity of Mrs. Williams and my wife a day or two later when I told them the name of my next appointee. It was a Mrs. Heathcote!

Boy problems, staff problems, and then the problem of shortage of money! Immediately prior to the Board meeting, I had been asked to call at the Diocesan Secretary's office, where I found Mr. M.T. Padbury, a Diocesan Trustee who was also a member of the Orphanage Board, was present. He and Mr. Fisher spoke to me about the very

serious position of the institution's finances. The overdraft was £4,721 and the free endowments £5,494. That left a balance of only £773. "And what happens if that gets used up?" I enquired. "Your Orphanage is bankrupt", was the reply. It was then explained to me that the only course left open was that from then on we must live within the Orphanage income. "Work out a budget and stick to it", said Mr. Fisher. This I determined to do. When I had the figures ready and approved, I called every member of the staff to a meeting and told them the position we were in. "No item of expenditure, however small, must be incurred without approval" was my instruction to them. Then I commenced seeking avenues to try to reduce costs, and I received a surprising amount of sympathetic consideration from numbers of firms when I told them about our financial plight. Some of the heads of departments in city stores went to considerable trouble to help us buy to the best advantage, sometimes ringing us up when they had a good line selling at a bargain price. We started to buy our vegetables from the market where Mr. Gordon Bloomfield in particular was always most helpful to us. Goode Durrant & Murray allowed us to purchase clothing, manchester and other household requirements (and toys at Christmas) at wholesale rates. J.&W. Bateman did the same for us with groceries, and leading pharmaceutical suppliers with our medical and toilet requisites. The Apple and Pear Board were most generous to us with gifts of fruit, while Mills and Ware allowed us to collect plentiful supplies of rejected biscuits which were greatly appreciated. Numbers of city retailers also gave us cut prices, as did Len Cant (and later Mrs. Fry) of the Midland Produce Coy. with our stock-fodder requirements. We cut and carted our firewood from the bushland at Stoneville and we arranged contracts for bread and meat. Canon Clift of the Missions to Seamen also proved a good friend to us. During the war years a generous public donated to his organisation far more supplies for sailors than he was then able to distribute. So on several occasions he asked me to bring our van to Fremantle where he packed it from floor boards to roof with surplus tinned goods — a most acceptable gift.. The heaviest item of expenditure in an institution is wages. But for some time the only increase I made was to raise the salary of one employee from £1 a month to £1:10:0 a week.

We continued to work to a budget for several years with the result that the overdraft steadily decreased, as the following table shows:

April 1st 1942.....	Overdraft £4,721
June 30th 1942.....	Overdraft £4,080
June 30th 1943.....	Overdraft £3,664
June 30th 1944.....	Overdraft £2,730
June 30th 1945.....	Overdraft £2,149

By that time we had definitely turned the financial corner. Moreover we began to get more legacies so that the days of scraping penury were past. After our first year we felt we could afford bathers for our boys so that they no longer had to wear old pants when they went swimming at Coogee Beach. The girls all received new social dresses — and how attractive they looked in that change after the dreadful scarlet dresses they had worn previously — scarlet so that they could easily be detected if they ran away! Going to High School both girls and boys wore the school uniform, including shoes and socks: and our girls were held up to others by the teachers as examples of how High School girls ought to dress when coming to school. There was still not much comfort for the children within our houses, but a start in this direction had been made by replacing the forms and trestle-tables in the dining hall with chairs and tables., Slowly the living conditions began to improve.

There was just one other event on that April 2nd that in retrospect I find very significant. When I got home from the Board meeting, I found the Institution Officer from the Child Welfare Department waiting for me with a boy for admission — my first new boy. His name was Geoff and his case was quite exceptional. He had left home because of unhappy conditions there, and a few days later had given himself up to the Police as destitute, with the request that he be sent to the Swan Boys' Orphanage so that he could get a Junior Certificate and make a fresh start. It was the first time in the history of the Department — possibly the only time — that such a request had been made. The Children's Court Magistrate before whom Geoff appeared decided that the boy deserved this chance and so the lad came to us — a boy seeking to improve his education. The encouragement of higher education among our residents was to be one of my major objectives during my years at Swan. At first none of the boys had any inclinations that way — more schooling meant more years at the Orphanage and they resisted the very thought of that, often accepting jobs in which they were not interested, just to get away. But slowly, so slowly, the tide turned. More and more went from primary school to High School, where they saw others get better jobs because they had entry qualifications gained through passing examinations. They began to realize that this was the one sure way to a better future and they faced up to the necessary study. Geoff did pass his Junior and then was awarded a Technical School Scholarship to enable him to proceed further with his studies. That academic success was to be the first of a good many that were to come to our students in the years that lay ahead.

## ***B. THE AMALGAMATION***

Historically the most important event in our early years was the uniting of Perth Girls' and Swan Boys' Orphanages into one establishment — the Swan Homes. There were two main factors leading to this. The first was the transfer of the girls to the Swan, referred to earlier (see page 64).

The second was that their manager, Archdeacon Hudleston, was now well-advanced in years and his retirement was imminent. It was noticed that though the girls were "roughing it" — as the matron described their new life at Swan — they were much better in health than they had been at East Perth, and the Board began to feel that the time had arrived when its earlier proposal of re-establishing the Adelaide Terrace Orphanage at Swan — a project that it had already approved, but only in principle, might now be put into practice. So it was that about eight months after my appointment the Archbishop sent for me and told me that the Archdeacon was retiring as manager, and he asked how would I feel about a suggestion that I take over the management of both establishments. I replied that I would be happy to do so if that was what the Board wished. "But", I enquired, "what about the matron? How would she re-act to such a change?" She and her staff had accepted the move to the Swan as a necessary war measure, but they were very unhappy with their conditions there, and were hoping for an early return to the easier and more orderly routine existence of Adelaide Terrace. There the Orphanage was fairly close to the city which had its attractions for staff, and the re-occupation of their former institution would mean the end of their having to cope with the overcrowded and somewhat primitive existence with which they were now contending. The Archbishop, however, was adamant that the decision for the girls to remain at Swan was the right one, and when he put his proposal to the Board that I be appointed manager of a united establishment, the members endorsed it unanimously. The matron, with understandable reluctance, accepted a senior position at Swan Boys' where she remained until her enlistment in the army shortly afterwards.

I was to find that the task of welding the two institutions into one was more difficult than I had anticipated. The ladies at Cornwell House did not at all approve of the new arrangement. Their approach to most of my suggestions was unenthusiastic and their attitude towards me was distinctly unfriendly. For some time they maintained a policy of non-fraternisation with members of Swan Boys' staff, and this was naturally resented. But after one or two of the dissidents left the others began to "defrost", and relationships improved. Eventually the Board sold the Adelaide Terrace property, which decision made any possibility of the girls' return to Perth out of the question. From that time all the girls' staff accepted, however reluctantly, that they were now employees of the Swan Homes.

The two institutions were now combined in name and management, but for some time their finances were kept separate. This was because some of the Board felt that in so-doing there was always the possibility of a benefactor making bequests to each Home rather than leaving only one amount to the new establishment. So each year two financial statements were published. But this dual system of accounting took up a good deal of time in breaking down tradesmen's accounts so as to determine fairly the amount to be charged to each institution. I reminded the Board that it had been its decision that we were to be a unity, sharing common conditions. Therefore we ought to pool our financial resources — legacies and income — to meet the capital and the working expenses incurred in maintaining and improving our establishment, which now cared for destitute children of either sex indiscriminately. After some hesitancy the Board agreed. Actually many of our later benefactors did make bequests to one or other or both of the institutions by their former names — "Swan Boys" and "Perth Girl's" — rather than to the "Swan Homes." But from the time of the Board's decision all bequests received were regarded as "Swan Home's Endowments".

The establishment of the Swan Homes meant that there was now one more co-educational voluntary children's home in this State, the others being Parkerville, Fairbridge and Sister Kate's Home. Since Kingsley Fairbridge was an Anglican Lay Reader and Sister Kate an Anglican Religious, and all four establishments had Anglican Chapels, it would seem that the Church of England favoured this type of home in preference to institutions being confined to one sex, which was the usual practice in other denominations. Personally I am a strong advocate of co-education, for I believe that it has two distinct advantages. The first is that it enables the sexes to grow up in a more natural atmosphere than exists in the somewhat monastic-conventual institutions which are confined either to girls or to boys. "Before I came to Swanleigh", said a fifteen-year girl to me one day, "I used to be tongue-tied with embarrassment if a boy approached and spoke to me. Now I can talk with them naturally and feel quite at ease". The co-educational situation enables the institution to arrange socials, dances, picnics, outings to the theatre, sporting events and the like, in all of which I believe the presence of both sexes makes for greater enjoyment. Authorities who oppose co-education usually do so on the grounds that the danger of a moral scandal is much greater in such an establishment, and that the close proximity of the sexes interferes with a student's study concentration. It may sometimes be so, but with many years of experience and with having had hundreds of teenagers on the enrolment during my time at Swan, I did not find either of these "dangers" of serious account. Certainly my staff were required to exercise proper supervision at all times, and especially at any functions when girls and boys were present, and also at evening prep, though the latter was mostly carried out in separate parts of the establishment, so that at that time there were no pretty girls or handsome boys to distract attention from the mysteries of mathematics.

The houses where the girls lived were at some distance from the boys' dormitories. I made it clear to students and to parents, and, in the case of State wards, to the Child Welfare Department, that any sexual immorality meant "Out"! and they all knew I meant it. Clear instructions and a knowledge of what the penalty would be if these were not carried out made for security in the mind of the child — and security is what every child needs. For without security there can be no lasting happiness.

But there was a second feature of the co-educational institution that I hold to be very important. It enables brothers and sisters to be in daily contact with each other. Prior to the arrival of the girls at Swan some of them had hardly ever seen their brothers since the family had been placed in the Orphanages. I recall two brothers and two sisters meeting for the first time after years of such separation. The boys and the girls just stared at each other, speechless and uncomfortable. It was most embarrassing for everyone. "Now look here", I said, "this will never do. The four of you come into this other office where you will be alone and undisturbed — and get to know each other. Now, in you go!" It was not too long before I could hear sounds of laughter and animation emanating from the room.

At the Swan Homes and later at Swanleigh we had heaps of romances, but never a scandal. Nor did our academic record appear to suffer, for the majority of students passed their annual examinations. But, most important of all, brothers and sisters grew up in close association. Nowadays the co-education system seems to be spreading fairly rapidly among those former strongholds of monastic seclusion — the Public Schools. It has long been standard practice in the State High Schools.

### *C. SCHOOL ON THE PREMISES*

Just as the threat of Japanese bombing had led to the transfer of the girls from Perth to Swan, so the same danger was responsible for the dispersion of the pupils at Midland schools to places deemed to be safer. For if the East Perth Power House were considered to be the enemy's first target, the railway workshops would almost certainly be their second. One such "safe place" was the Middle Swan School, with its enrolment mostly comprising boys from the Orphanage. The Education Department considered that class rooms for these could be arranged within the institution's premises, and the vacated places would then accommodate some of Midland's primary scholars. The few High School boys at Swan Boys' would travel with their Midland class to Guildford or Bassendean. All this was complicated by the arrival of the girls from Adelaide Terrace. They, too, had to have class-room accommodation, and as Cornwell House was already overcrowded, they could not be taught there. Finally it was arranged that upper primary and post-primary girls would have school in one of the boys' dormitories to be converted into a classroom; the older primary boys would have their lessons in the mechanical-drawing room of the recently-completed "tech"; and the primary girls and younger boys would have classes in the gym. The few very young children would reside at Forrest Cottage under the supervision of the experienced Sister Taylor and of Miss Harth, the kindergartener, both of whom had accompanied the girls from Adelaide Terrace.

Such an educational spread, though far from ideal, was in the circumstances about as good as could be managed. It meant that Swan Boys' staff had children in and around their part of the establishment all day and every day, and that the boys lost the use of the gym for evening and wet weather activity. The teachers, too, were handicapped in the matter of school and classroom facilities, but they entered into the temporary conditions cheerfully, and at all times maintained good rapport with the institution staff. The Head Teacher, Mr. Albert Rogers, who had previously been an Advisory Teacher

specialising in agriculture, took a great interest in our farming activities, and on several occasions he addressed the older boys in the evening on such topics as "Cattle Raising" and "Poultry Farming". He found among his pupils a rather high percentage of youngsters on the Burt Backward Scale (i.e. two classes below the average standard for the age) which made the work of teaching them much more difficult. He had his disciplinary problems, too. I recall one incident where the teachers were leaving for home at the conclusion of the school day. When they had proceeded about fifty yards along the path one boy (it was Scotchy again) yelled out after them: "Ah! Ha! Ha! Bloody old Buck Rogers!" and then dived up an alley-way, through a window, upstairs and under a bed, before Mr. Rogers could discover the culprit. In our cluster of buildings the Headmaster had no chance of finding him or who the boy was.

School remained on the premises until the authorities decided that any serious danger of the bombing of Midland had passed. The High School and Primary Schools were then re-opened and their pupils returned to them. This in turn left the way clear for the resumption of normal classes at Middle Swan where Mr. Rogers remained in charge for several years. He never lost interest in our girls and boys, and at all times we had good co-operation from him. Among his many interests was a great enthusiasm for sport, and a number of his boys later became leading cricketers in the Midland Club, with one of them eventually playing for Australia in a Test Match! All of them owe much to his encouragement in their boyhood days. In this, as in a number of others ways, our boys profited from his appointment to Middle Swan, and we were sorry when the time came for his retirement.

#### *D. TRAINEE ACTIVITIES*

One of the terms of my appointment required that I "maintain and develop manual work such as carpentering, and that the farm was to be worked so as to make the Home as self-supporting as possible, as well as providing experience for trainees".

In these two areas — technical work and farming — I had had no previous experience. I could neither lay a brick nor milk a cow. I would need much guidance in all matters pertaining to farming and building and I would have to employ at least one practical man in each department to work with the boys and teach them the basic skills. Fortunately at the time there were two men on the Board who, each in his own sphere, had a wide knowledge of his subject, and on this I was also to draw. Mr. M.T. Padbury, after a lifetime of successful farming, had created one of the finest rural properties in the State at Koojan. He was now living in retirement at his beautiful home, "Rosehill", in outer Guildford, only a few miles away, and had joined the Board where he was taking a special interest in all matters pertaining to the institution's farming. As recently as 1941 he had been instrumental in arranging for much of our land east of the Geraldton line to be cleared and successfully cropped. Now he was keen to see further farming developments undertaken at the Orphanage, so that when he found that I shared his enthusiasm for this he was very pleased. He had known Kingsley Fairbridge well, standing guarantor for the Farm School in its blackest days, and when he learned that Fairbridge was my original inspiration in undertaking institutional work, it became a sort of bond between us.

The other member of the Board whose guidance was to prove equally valuable to me, but this time in the field of building and technical work, was a former Public Works Building Inspector, Mr. Harry Adie. As a lad he had been apprenticed to a small builder in an English country town, and after a life-time in the trade, during which he acquired

a practical knowledge of most aspects of building, he had risen to the very responsible position he held prior to his retirement. Reference has already been made to his active association with Mr. Birch in the erection of the "Tech" (see page 61), and for the next fourteen years he was to be a frequent visitor to Swan. He was an extremely likable man, popular with boys and staff.

So I was more than fortunate in having these two competent and friendly men guide me in my inexperience. I was also lucky during the first decade of my management in several of my staff appointments in these two areas. My first Assistant-Manager, Mr. Williams, was a competent tradesman in upholstery, but he had a natural aptitude for any building work. When, towards the end of the war, manpower restrictions were lifted and he was able to return to his trade, I replaced him with a highly-skilled technician who had been employed at the East Perth Power House — Mr. Brian Marshall — a young man with a strong vocation towards the care of destitute boys. During the time these two were on our staff we were able to carry out a number of projects we would never have attempted with less capable assistants. But on the farm side I was not as fortunate at first in getting men who both knew their work and could manage boys; and for success in an institution both these attributes are necessary. Not until Mr. Harold Milton joined us, and in later years Mr. Charles Gartner, did we have the leadership and experience necessary for progress in this area. Both were practical farmers, respected as such by their boys. Regrettably numbers of men I employed over these years to assist on the farm were far from efficient, and for them the boys had no respect. Instance one such whom the boys nicknamed "Bootlace". Why? "Because", they said, "he wasn't a farmer's bootlace". Mr. Gartner was also very keen on sport, devoting much of his spare time to coaching the older lads.

Soon after our arrival I made my first inspection of the farm in company with Mr. Padbury. I learned that our pigs were of reasonably good quality but the dairy herd was just a collection of poor-looking cows. There was a large amount of hay in the shed from the recent harvest, but in the machinery section we had only a chaff-cutter, an ancient single-furrow plough, a cart, and two sets of harrows which Mr. Padbury had given to the institution fourteen years before. I was shown some lucerne being grown under sprinkler irrigation, which looked good but was costly fodder since scheme-water was being used. At that time there was no vegetable cultivation because nearly all the trainees had been employed on the "tech." project. All the paddocks surrounding the institution buildings had been fenced and were used for grazing, but the meandering Jane Brook with its extensive flooding in winter made the area unsuitable for cropping other than clover. Then we drove to the other side of the railway line to see that part of the farm always referred to as "the block". This was an area of about 140 acres, much of which had been cleared, and where the successful oats crop referred to above had been grown. The soil was not of good quality, all the best of the land — the Redhill area — having previously been sold by the Diocesan Trustees (see page 36). At the block the cattle could be grazed only in winter because the Jane Brook and a streamlet that flowed at the opposite end of the property, both of which were needed to supply drinking water for the cows, dried-up in the summer months.

From that inspection it was immediately obvious that several things were necessary if we were to improve our farming. We needed a better dairy herd and better pastures on which to feed it. There must be a water supply out on the block, available all the year round if the land there were to be fully utilised. More modern implements were necessary to enable us to get the operations performed speedily and efficiently, for when the rains came the land quickly became boggy and unworkable. Moreover in the situa-



tion that then existed machinery was required because we were faced with a shortage of trainees. Nearly all the older lads were due to leave. Indeed for some of them the time for them to go to employment was well overdue, for they had been retained longer than ordinarily to complete the tech. For my part I had no desire for them to remain. They made it quite apparent that they were opposed to me and my ideas, so that I lived in an atmosphere of conflict. I placed them in jobs as soon as I could, and hoped I would have more success with younger trainees. There were not many of the latter, and some of them would be required to assist in the kitchen and laundry. The farm would therefore be very short-handed, but if we could get additional machinery it would help overcome this problem.

Machinery, however, costs money, and we could not afford to make much inroad into our remaining endowments. Perhaps the Lotteries Commission would help us. It was worth a try. So Mr. Padbury made a list of what he thought would be most needed and after costing it we made the application. To our great joy we received a cheque for £279 on a £1 for £1 basis — enough to purchase our immediate requirements. While selecting these at H.V. McKay's depot we were shown round by the Manager, Mr. McIntyre, whom I knew slightly, having met him when I was writing a book for schools for the Government \* just prior to my coming to Swan. At his suggestion I wrote to the H.V. McKay Trust for a grant from the Fund to assist the institution in its Farm Improvement Programme, and again we were successful, receiving a donation of £50, which combined with the earlier financial assistance enabled us to buy two ploughs, two cultivators, a six-foot drill, an eight-foot super-spreader, a small reaper and binder and more harrows. These, together with the purchase of two working horses and the gift of a third, was a most encouraging start. Mr. Padbury then bought a well-bred Illawarra Shorthorn bull at what was practically a donation price, and six good AIS calves, which proved to be the foundation of a herd that in later years came to be regarded as the best shorthorn herd on the Swan. That autumn, with our new manure-spreader, we commenced the systematic top-dressing of all our pastures, while out at the block we subdivided the paddocks, finishing their clearing and put down two bores from which we were able to pipe water throughout that section of our farm, thus enabling us to pasture our dry cattle there at all times.

In winter the cows had to swim the Jane Brook to reach the milking shed. It was felt that this had a detrimental effect on the amount of their milk-yield. Mr. Williams told me that he thought he could build a bridge across the brook and he knew where he could get some second-hand timber suitable for the job. He seemed both keen and confident, so that after talking it over with Mr. Adie we decided to attempt the project. Thanks to some expert guidance and the enthusiasm and energy of Mr. Williams and his band of boys, the work was completed before our second winter. It was a complete success, twelve feet wide and strong enough to carry a heavily loaded truck. After all these years that bridge is still in service, withstanding many severe floods. I have seen the water a raging torrent pass beneath it with no ill effect to the structure.

The greatest problem in farming at Swan Homes was that a large part of the land was of poor quality. The home paddocks were mostly of stiff heavy clay, hard as a brick in summer. It was in fact excellent for brickmaking — Whiteman's Brickyards were on the opposite side of the road that divided our property from theirs. By contrast the land out at the block was sandy — not good farming land either. I discussed this

\* F.N. *"The Industrial Development of Western Australia"* — Government Printer 1942.

with Mr. Padbury, telling him how I had hoped that one day I, too, might be able to establish a farm school as Kingsley Fairbridge had done at Pinjarra, and the Christian Brothers at Tardun and Bindoon. But with so little good land at Swan a farm school there was just not a viable proposition. My earnestness must have impressed him, because shortly after that I was invited to accompany him and also Mr. Fisher to look at some land in the hills. We were met at Mt. Helena by Mr. Reen, the ranger for the Diocesan Trustees, who took us to look at most attractive country still in a virgin state. He said that from a lifetime experience of the hills this was the best land in them. "How would you like a thousand acres of this for your farm school?" I was asked. Naturally I jumped at the offer. Later in the year I was invited to address the Diocesan Council on my farm school project and to make a request for the area I required. Prior to the meeting it had been suggested to me that the 2,000 acres lying between two surveyed roads would not only include plenty of excellent land but ensure that there was ample provision for future expansion of the school should this prove to be a desirable step. So I asked for this area, and on Mr. Padbury's recommendation and with the Archbishop's support the Council made the grant — actually 2,069 acres. I felt full of gratitude to the Archbishop, the Trustees and the Council for the generosity of the gift. What I did not know then was that they were giving us a quarter of the land that had been given to the Orphanage Board by the Governor-in-Council sixty years earlier! (See page 20). I must add that there would not be more than one or two present that afternoon who knew the facts about the real ownership of that land. The story of how Swan Homes founded a farm school there is told later. (See page 99).

So much for early farming experiences. It will be recalled that I was also to continue the technical training of the work boys which had been commenced and featured by my predecessor. The Education Department had promised Birch that when his technical school was finished it would send a manual-training teacher to give regular instruction. But because of its shortage of manpower due to the serious war situation, it found this promise impossible to fulfil. This posed a problem for me. We had a good building, some equipment but no instructor. I had a great friend in the Department who was one of its leading manual teachers — Mr. Bert Schorer — and I discussed my difficulty with him. At that time he was free on Saturday mornings and he offered to come and take a class — a suggestion which I readily accepted. So the technical training class was resumed, with Mr. Schorer concentrating on woodwork at first but intending to include metalwork when tools and materials became available. He continued his classes for some time till an appointment as instructor of Manual Training at the Teacher's College precluded his coming to us, for he had now to teach students on Saturday mornings. By then Mr. Marshall had joined the staff and he continued the class. During his time, and with financial assistance from the Lotteries Commission, our equipment was improved by the addition of some machine tools, and we also received gifts of hand tools from the Lumpers' Committee and, later, from the army. After his resignation the instruction became somewhat spasmodic. Several times voluntary teachers commenced evening trade classes for the trainees, but these were not maintained for very long. To give up a night a week regularly, and after a day at work, travel out to Swan to teach older boys, some of whom showed little interest, soon became unattractive, and the class lapsed. In time more and more lads remained at High School where there were excellent technical-training facilities and permanent instructors, so that the necessity for any evening classes in trade work at Swan disappeared. The tech. became simply the establishment's maintenance workshop, with parts of it put to other institutional uses.

In addition to attending technical training classes, the trainees were required to assist in building maintenance work at the institution so that they received practical experience as well as theoretical background in trades. Such work consisted mostly in repairs, extensions and alterations to existing buildings and in painting. During our first two years much of the exterior and interior of Waylen Block was renovated; a verandah with two sleep-outs was added to the front of "Swan" cottage (the small house on the left-hand side of Yule Avenue); and the back of "Forrest" was taken down and then re-built to include a kitchen and dining-room. But the job that gave the lads the most useful experience was the building in wood and asbestos of two staff-rooms and a verandah at Cornwell House under the direction of a local contractor, Mr. Ted Layton. He had been asked to do this job but as he could get no labour at all he suggested we let him have a few boys to assist him. For them the experience would be good, while for us there would be a reduced contract price, and when the work was finished we would then be able to let each member of the girls' staff have a room of her own, thus overcoming one of their principal, and indeed justifiable, grievances. I was quite agreeable to Mr. Layton's suggestion and the project was carried out most satisfactorily.

The erection of these two rooms gave rise to the consideration of future building projects. Obviously the greatest need was accommodation for more girls — especially for little girls. In Perth the total enrolment of girls had averaged 80 but in 1943 at Swan it was only 40. It had been reduced to this figure to avoid the overcrowding initially experienced in Cornwell House, and there was no room for the admission of more children. I felt that this was the time to put forward a plan for a children's village based on "Cottage System" as was in vogue at Parkerville and Fairbridge. If we were to undertake such a project it was essential that we had an overall plan, because the houses would be erected in brick to conform with the structures already in existence at Swan, and once such a building is in place it is there for a long time. Moreover there are roadways, septic systems, water and light mains to consider and the whole prospect should be pleasing. The Board suggested that I draw such a sketch plan setting out my ideas — one that it could use as a basis for discussion. This I produced at the next meeting. It included cottages for the accommodation of 214 children living in groups of about fourteen to a cottage. Two of the cottages were to be for very young children, that for little girls having a kindergarten wing which the little boys could also attend in the daytime. A larger cottage would be designed especially to accommodate girl-trainees, while the older boys would return to Cornwell House. I felt that the existing kitchen and dining-room, gymnasium, laundry and St. Mary's Church would not need enlarging, but a staff dining-room and a storeroom were to be included. There was also to be a properly constructed playing-field and basketball and tennis courts.

In time much of that plan became a reality, but there was one important exception. A feature I had included was the conversion of all the Waylen dormitories to classrooms, so as to have primary school on the premises. This project never eventuated, and the majority of boys are still accommodated in Waylen and Brown Houses. After attentive consideration the Board gave general approval to the proposals, but this was with the proviso that it be amended should time and circumstances show changes in it to be desirable.

At that same meeting the Board went further. It decided to invite architects Messrs. Eales and Warne who were then acting for the Orphanage Architect, Mr. Howard T. Forbes (on active service), to prepare sketch plans and estimates for the little girls' cottage, including the kindergarten wing. When it was drawn everyone was delighted with it, for it seemed ideal in every way. But the cost estimate of £5,000 was far higher

than had been anticipated. An approach to the Lotteries Commission was disappointing, for its members also considered the cost too high, and Mr. Kenneally made it clear that there would be no help at all unless the boys assisted with the building. The architects both expressed grave doubts about this, for their reputation was involved as well. But eventually they agreed to the Board's request provided a competent contractor supervised the work. The appointment of Mr. Layton satisfied them, and after a second approach had been made to the Commission, we received a donation of £2,500. One condition the Lotteries laid down in making the gift was that the institution would guarantee that at least ten boys would be continuously employed on the project.

There remained one other serious difficulty — that of getting a permit to build. The State authority first refused to grant one, but the Archbishop came to our rescue by prevailing upon his friend, the Hon. John Curtin, the Prime Minister, to intercede with the Department, and the refusal was rescinded. And so it was that on April 19th, 1944, Mr. Layton, surrounded by a group consisting of Mr. Adie, Mr. Warne (Assistant Architect), Mr. Williams and the initial team of boy builders, drove in the first peg to begin marking out the foundations, while I took a photo of the event.

But two years were to elapse before the building was finished and the first girls went into residence. Two years to build! I will not go into much detail about that frustrating period with all its problems and so-frequent delays. The only kilns from which we could obtain bricks were at Byford — thirty miles away — so that day after day, for months on end, our truck with its trailer gas-producer would set off early each morning to collect a load and return with it late in the afternoon. Before we had finished the walls we were informed that no more bricks would be available to us for several months. There was nothing for it but to make the remaining bricks we required by hand, using the brook sand and colouring those required for the exterior walls to match the reds already laid. But it was not only bricks that were in short supply. The difficulty of getting any of the building requirements was ever-present. When the time came for us to call in tradesmen for those jobs the boys could not do — plastering, because it was considered too heavy; plumbing and electricians' work, because building regulations required certified tradesmen; and roof-tiling, because the suppliers insisted we use the firm's team — such men were often unavailable, and we had to wait our turn. Consequently there were more delays. To add to all this there were times when we had to take Mr. Williams and the boys off the job to do emergency repairs to keep the institution functioning, and there were necessary preparations to be made prior to special events on our calendar such as the Field Day, the Lumpers' Picnic and the Boxing Tournament. No wonder Mr. Layton grew exasperated and at times all of us grew rather weary of the cottage project.

But eventually it was finished and ready for occupation. Indeed it was a proud moment when on May 28th, 1946, the Housemistress, Miss Eileen Burling, and nine little girls (later increased to fourteen) went into residence. Down the years Swan Homes received much praise for this very creditable achievement, and I think two are worthy of recording. The first came from the architects themselves who, though they drew the plans of the house were only engaged to make three supervisory visits during its erection. Mr. Eales, at that time the doyen of the West Australian architectural profession, wrote: "We are pleased with the quality of the workmanship carried out by the boys of the Home. It is indeed a credit to them, particularly the brickwork which compares most favourably with similar city work. This is the more remarkable when it is considered that the lads had not had any previous experience or training, but possessing unbounded enthusiasm, and directed and encouraged by a competent master

builder (Mr. E. Layton) acting as supervisor, they readily absorbed the technicalities of the work. Consequently splendid results have been achieved”.

The other tribute came from quite a different source. A few years after the building was finished we had a visit without prior notice by officials from the Commonwealth Immigration Department, Canberra. They made it their practice to arrive unannounced at every institution in Australia that was accommodating child migrants, to conduct a thorough inspection of it. This ensured that there was no “dressing-up” of the establishment to impress them — a charge often levelled against institution authorities. In our case they suddenly appeared in the kitchen at 6 p.m. while the day’s hot meal was being served. Afterwards they expressed themselves to me as being very pleased with the quality and quantity of the food they had seen being served to the children. But what had thrilled them most in their walk through the Orphanage buildings before coming to the dining-room was Hudleston House. “It was the nicest cottage for children we have seen anywhere in Australia”. I wasn’t very pleased with their inspecting the institution without first reporting their presence — but what could one say after a tribute like that!

We had named the building “Hudleston House” to commemorate the Archdeacon’s long record of service to our Homes — twenty-eight years, for most of which he had been Manager of Perth Girls’. He had laid the Foundation Stone on September 30th, 1944, but died before the work was completed. We were always sorry that he never saw the finished house, for he had taken a great interest in the project and was delighted with the Board’s decision to name it after him. It was officially opened by His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir James Mitchell, on October 5th, 1946.

#### *E. BACKING THE CHURCH:*

Soon after I received word of my appointment several interviews were arranged for me, the most important of these being one with Archbishop LeFanu. He was most anxious to learn what was my attitude towards the church, for he made no secret of his distress at the lack of harmony that had existed between my predecessor and his chaplains, and he wanted an end to this. “Was I prepared to back the church?” I replied that I would do everything I possibly could to improve the relationship, for in my own thinking I considered that the church ought to have an important part in the life of any Christian institution. I told him briefly of my own association with the Anglican Church — Cathedral chorister, choir-boy and choir-man in St. Luke’s, Maylands, server, Sunday School teacher and vestryman. After marriage we had lived at a considerable distance from our nearest parish church, but we had continued to attend worship and could certainly claim to be practising Anglicans. I assured him that he need have no anxiety as to my loyal support for his chaplains in their work within the life of the institution.

But at Swan Boys’ I found that the attitude of the lads towards the church was one of intense hostility. When a new boy arrived it was customary for him to be asked three questions: “What’s your name? Why are you here? Do you believe in God?” If, in answer to the last query, he said he did, a jeer went up. “He says he believes in God!” and he was in for mockery and a bad time. On Sundays church attendance for the children was compulsory, and on my first Sunday I found that only the chaplain and the few parishioners sang. Not a sound from the girls or boys. At Communion a few went to the altar to receive the Sacrament, the boys returning to their places with a smirk or a wink at having tasted wine, but the girls came back hardly able to

control their laughter, so that I felt a shudder go through the small adult congregation. At that time I could do nothing about the girls, for they were not in my charge, but then and there I determined that the boys' standard of behaviour in church would improve. Immediately after service I called a meeting of all those who were confirmed and I spoke to them about this matter. It was pointed out to them that no one was obliged to receive Holy Communion, but I was not going to permit irreverence. The reception of the Sacrament was their privilege, but they did not have the right to upset other worshippers by offensive behaviour, and that if they were not prepared to observe satisfactory standards of conduct in the service they were not to go to the altar. After that I never really had any serious trouble from them in this respect. When the management of the Girls' Home passed to me, I immediately tackled the matter of their unsatisfactory behaviour in church, taking a similar line to that which I had already adopted with the boys. With a few of them this had little effect, and I promptly stopped their receiving Communion, telling them that when they felt they could do so reverently they could come and see me and their ban would be lifted. Within a matter of a few weeks they all did so, and I had no further cause for serious complaint about their behaviour in church.

Getting the boys to sing proved more difficult. For a few Sundays all my exhortations were of no avail. It was then that I decided we would have a short daily service of worship, lasting about a quarter of an hour, with an opening hymn, a short Bible reading and a few prayers. This service took place just before the evening meal and was most unpopular. But among its few positive results it did lead to steady improvement in the hymn singing. When on the first night no one sang I suggested they all sit down and think about it, while I took out a book and started to read. After several contemplative sessions (during which their desire for dinner steadily increased) they eventually grasped the idea that they would not be leaving the church till the singing was really satisfactory. Then they started, and so began the Swan Homes' hymn-singing tradition, for which in time we gained quite a reputation in the Diocese, with many invitations from parishes to come and sing Evensong with them.

I suppose these methods would be regarded by some as very authoritarian and therefore highly reprehensible. For my part I am quite unrepentant about having used them. I explained to the girls and boys that only the best that we could achieve was worthy of Almighty God who had given to each of us the gift of life; that all of us, however sorry for ourselves we might like to feel, had many blessings for which we could be grateful; that though we did not possess much in the way of worldly goods we could show our gratitude for life in giving our best in His praise. I think the time came when many of our children took a pride in the singing and developed a love of St. Mary's. Later many of them chose our church for their wedding. I also recall one boy, a very difficult character whom on several occasions I thought I would have to expel, arriving at church one Sunday morning years later with his wife and their newly-born baby which he wanted baptised. They had come from their farm, a long way from the Swan, but for him only St. Mary's was good enough for the christening of his child. "It was my church", he explained.

But the factor which brought about a marked change in the earlier hostile attitude towards the church was the appointment of the Revd. (later Canon) "Dick" Hamilton to the Chaplaincy in July 1942. He was not a newcomer to the Orphanage as I had been, for he was already a member of the Board and a frequent visitor to the institution, where, because of his generosity, news of his arrival was always hailed with delight

by the boys. His car seldom drew up when from out of it boys surged everywhere. How they had all got in we never knew. After the seats emptied out he would open the boot and out would scramble more. Once we counted twenty-three passengers in all! Certainly it was an exceptionally large car — the “Orphanage Taxi” it was called — but twenty-three! Of course they never travelled far — only to the local store where each was given an ice-cream. I did not want to be a “spoil sport” but I had to remonstrate with him on the danger of his taking so many boys at a time, and he was more careful after that.

Dick made his Rectory a place where he would hold a weekly discussion group for the senior boys, encouraging these to talk about their problems and difficulties. He had the great gift of being able to get children to speak about such matters — an ability not very common because girls and boys tend to keep such things to themselves, and are usually reticent about discussing them with others. When the group discussion was over, Dick would make some of his personal resources available to the boys. Some would read books or play table games — he had a marvellous library and a well stocked supply of material for indoor pastimes. Others would go into the adjoining room to play some of his gramophone records. One or two would be permitted to use his typewriter. Some would just loll on his lounge and talk or listen to the radio. To boys coming from a place where there was little personal comfort, it was a night each week to be eagerly awaited. Finally all were given supper, after which they clambered into the “taxi” and home to bed. Dick was a wealthy man, but unlike many wealthy men he liked to share much of what he had with others less fortunate.

Most nights found him wandering from dormitory to dormitory, and if he discovered a lad who had been unable to get to sleep he would sit and talk quietly to him — even tell him a story — till the boy settled down. Finally he would stroll to our quarters and we would hear the familiar rat-tat tat-tat on the door, and in would walk the rotund figure of the Chaplain, who always looked astonishingly like what we imagined G.K. Chesterton’s Father Brown might appear. (Someone has also suggested Friar Tuck). He loved to talk and indeed was an excellent conversationalist. Mary would bring in coffee and then he would tell us of something that had come up in the discussion group, or some clerical tit-bit he had heard at Church Office, or of some incident at Hale School where he was visiting School Chaplain, or at Bindoon where he was padre to the Protestant delinquents (and a great friend of Brother Keaney), or in the Children’s Court where he was an honorary member of the Bench. There is much to be said for a man who can be equally at ease with boys attending a Public School and with tough young characters in a reformatory; with a wealthy parishioner or a struggling farmer. Everywhere he went there was always “Welcome!” for him. He was the most loved man I have ever known, and I have always thought that the Vestry’s choice of the figure of St. Francis of Assisi in the Canon Hamilton Memorial window in St. Mary’s Church was one of singular appropriateness. The face of St. Francis in the stained glass has a remarkable resemblance to that of Dick’s.

But when he came to visit us it was often about none of these things that he spoke. Frequently his opening remark would be: “I heard a lovely story today”. Dick and his lovely stories! The ones we remember best were mostly based on his first-hand experiences at Swan, such as: “You know, Roy, something really unique happened to me this afternoon. I went driving with a ghost!” “Really”, I would reply with the appropriate inflexion in my voice, “tell me about it”. “Well”, said Dick, “I was taking a group of boys in the ‘taxi’ to the shop, when John W. found my streetguide.

He turned the pages till he came to Leederville where he used to live. Suddenly he called out excitedly 'Look, Mr. Hamilton, look! There's Monger's Lake. That's where I was drowned three years ago!'

Being single Dick always employed a housekeeper, and over the years he told some amusing stories concerning these ladies. He was slightly inclined towards High Churchmanship in that he genuflected at the Holy Communion and he wore a chasuble. His was a very simple vestment compared with the ornate robe that is often worn by priests, and it was made of plain white linen with a pale red cross back and front. It was washable, like a surplice, and one of the housekeeper's duties was to attend to its laundering. Imagine Dick's delighted surprise when one day one of them greeted him: 'I've just washed your Jezebel for you, Mr. Hamilton, and it's lying on top of your bed!'

Just one more Hamilton story. At the boys' Coogee holiday the Lumpers continued to cook for them, and sometimes one or two of their supporters would come into residence to help. One of these brought along his young son to camp with our lads, but unfortunately this didn't work out well. If the boy didn't get all his own way he ran crying to his father or to the lumpers, complaining that our boys had called him names or had hit him. One day he came in crying and when he was asked — "What's the matter now?", replied that "Megs" had hit him. The staff man on duty told Megs to stand against the wall and stay there when the others went swimming. But Dick was in residence at the time, and when the rest had gone to the beach, he went over to the disconsolate boy. Putting on his sternest expression (Dick was one of the finest actors in the Perth Repertory Club) he said: "Come here, Megs". The lad had never seen Dick look so severe. "Megs, did you hit that boy?" "I only thumped him on the chest, Mr. Hamilton", the boy stammered. "Why did you do that, Megs?" asked Dick. "He's always pimping on us, and half of what he says isn't true", blustered the boy, "so I thumped him one". "Megs, did you really hit him". "Yes, sir", said the boy, frightened now at this big man standing and glowering at him. "Megs", said Dick, "Well Done! Good work" — and handing him a coin added "Go and get yourself an ice-cream!" When they heard the story in the father's absence, the lumpers roared laughing.

His sermons were models of clarity. A favourite device of his was to illustrate a point by means of a simple story — one of "Hamilton's Fables" — in which an imaginary incident took place at a certain Orphanage not far away from the town of "Jidland Munction". The head of the Orphanage was a certain Mr. Paulkin (all the congregation would look at me with delight on their faces, in eager anticipation of my subsequent discomfiture by some bright resident). Dick himself would also figure in the story — perhaps as a very cross Minister — the Reverend Damilton, or perhaps he would arrive at the Orphanage mounted on a camel as the noted African traveller, Hanon Camelton. Here Dick would hump his body and make his face astonishingly like a camel — at which the congregation roared its delight.

He was much in demand as a preacher, for his theology and knowledge of the Scriptures were excellent, and his homily always well worth listening to. "He has easily the best brain among us", said Archbishop LeFanu to me one day. Moreover he usually introduced some humour into his address which tickled and sometimes even shocked his congregation. I recall a sermon of his at St. George's Cathedral, on the occasion of an annual Sunday School Festival. Dick was in the pulpit describing the behaviour of a boy in a story, and then he added: "You know, if a boy does that what he really needs is a swift hard kick in the pants!" I saw some of the clergy and teachers look



at one another, and I don't think the new Archbishop of Perth was particularly pleased. It was not the sort of Christian reaction normally recommended to Sunday School children.

Dick's death occurred in 1951. He was only forty-nine at the time and he had not enjoyed good health for much of the latter part of his time at Swan. He was a diabetic, and this, coupled with a serious heart condition, had been responsible for his hospitalisation on several occasions. In the last of these he suddenly collapsed and was gone. I do not think there was a girl or boy or member of staff who did not feel his passing as a grievous personal loss. He is buried in the beautiful churchyard of St. Mary's close to the sanctuary and near the drive along which children and parishioners pass to and from worship.

The following tribute to his memory, which was included in the Annual Report in the year of his death, has tried to summarize something of the esteem with which he was regarded: "It is difficult to find words to express adequately our appreciation of the work and influence of the late Canon Hamilton. Looking back on the nine years of his chaplaincy one cannot help feeling how privileged we were to have him for our spiritual leader and friend. He came to us at a time when religion in the Homes was at a low ebb, and by his devotion to duty, his genuine love of children — especially boys — and with his skill in handling the moral and theological problems of youth, he affected a great change in their tone and in attitude to religion.

Apart from his spiritual leadership the Canon will be remembered for many other things. Especially will his memory live in the hearts of the children for his generosity. Though richly endowed with this world's goods, he used them most liberally to try to bring happiness to others. Both during his lifetime and in his will he was a most generous benefactor to our institutions. Himself a lover of beauty in all forms, he was enthusiastic for all our efforts to beautify our Homes, and to assist in this he gave almost all the splendid collection of pictures which adorn all sections of the Anglican Homes. He was always willing to help financially in any scheme for the improvement of the institutions.

Canon Hamilton will be remembered, too, for his keen sense of humour, his narrative and dramatic powers (especially his ghost stories) and above all for his sincerity and friendliness. Every child knew instinctively that the chaplain was a man to whom he could confide his little sorrows and joys. Such men are not easy to replace for there are few who possess the human requirements for this particular vocation."

Shortly after his death we learned that his bequest to the Swan Homes amounted to £29,499 — our largest legacy. In 1957 the Board erected a house for the accommodation of little boys, and in commemoration of his wonderful record of service and in gratitude for his generosity this building was named "Hamilton House".

I felt that in the closing years of his episcopate Archbishop LeFanu was well-satisfied that the church was being "backed" at the Orphanage. If he needed further evidence he might have been even more convinced about the attitude of his manager at the Swan if he could have heard one of my most difficult boys one day turn on me in anger and retort: "Garn, yer only training to be a priest!" What a difficult boy that lad was — one continuous problem! On one occasion I was talking about such lads to my friend, the Superior of Clontarf. "I know", he replied, "I have them, too. But", he added, "don't worry. The Holy Father, himself, has assured all of us that everyone who has worked in an Orphanage will go straight to Heaven when he dies. There will be no purgatory for them. They've had their hell on earth!"

#### F. THE "HOUSE" SYSTEM:

If the most important event in our early years was the amalgamation of Perth Girls' and Swan Boys' Orphanages, the second would be the commencement of the "House" system. In this type of institution all the children are accommodated in groups, the number in each varying according to the financial resources of the establishment. They live in separate houses, each of which is supervised by a housemother or a married couple. Social Welfare authorities believe that this arrangement is much to be preferred to living in large numbers in one building which is often referred to as the "Barrack" system, for in the former the conditions much more closely approximate to a normal home situation. The Board had this in mind when it adopted in principle the proposed development plan in 1944 (see page 82) and had authorised the erection of its first new house — "Hudleston". From the experience we gained in its building it was obvious that the new system was going to be a costly long-term project. In the meantime there were groups of children who ought to be separated from others as soon as possible, viz. those of kindergarten, lower and middle primary ages. In 1944 the situation at Swan was that the youngest boys were living in "Forrest" (which really ought to be accommodating girls, since Perth Girls' had purchased it from the Swan Parish). As soon as we could complete Hudleston we would be able to place our youngest girls there. But all other children were living a crowded existence under Barrack system conditions. Could something be done to improve this state of affairs?

With this thought in mind we decided on an experiment. We would convert the upper floor of Brown House into a unit to accommodate about twenty boys of the 8-11 years age-range and place them under the supervision of a housemother who would live with them in that section. There were two very large rooms with a staff-bedroom between them. In one of the rooms was a fireplace, so that room would be the boys' sitting-room, while the other, with two adjacent verandahs which we louvre-enclosed, would be their dormitory. Bathroom and toilet accommodation was provided in rooms downstairs. It was far from ideal, but when cupboards, lockers, furnishings, furniture and pictures were provided, it was a great improvement on their earlier conditions. As all the older boys slept in Waylen House, these younger children had Brown House very largely to themselves. We called it "Stanton House" after our lumper friend, Albert Stanton, and appointed our most experienced assistant, Miss Beatrice Fletcher, to be housemother.

The Board was delighted with the transformation that had been effected, so much so that its very success suggested: "Why not make a similar conversion of downstairs Brown House and transfer the kindergarten boys to it, thus freeing "Forrest" for the accommodation of primary girls?" We lost no time in embarking on this project, even borrowing a few boys from the Hudleston building to enable us to carry out additions and alterations. For though the ground plan was not unlike that of Stanton, one of the large rooms was needed for an indoor playroom, since a number of the boys did not yet go to school. Consequently it could not be used as a dormitory, and a new wing had to be built for that purpose. Mrs. Ellen Logan who had been in charge of the little fellows at Forrest entered with enthusiasm into the experiment, and until 1957 the two units accommodated all boys below upper-primary age at Swan. At times our makeshift "houses" came in for some criticism, and certainly were not comparable with Hudleston. But as was pointed out earlier the success of any scheme depends always on the people in charge — in this case the housemothers — and here we were well-served by devoted women. I have already mentioned Miss Fletcher and Mrs. Logan (and I will be returning to them later). But there were also Miss Eileen Thompson, Mrs. Reiken and Mrs. Volt, all of whom served us well, either in Stanton or in the kindergarten.

With the vacating of Forrest House by the little boys the opportunity was taken to renovate it thoroughly, following which a party of primary school girls took up residence in it under Miss Thirlwell. Some months later Hudleston was occupied by our youngest girls, and these two moves left us with much more room for the older girls at Cornwell House. We even had a very large staff bedroom empty and this was made available to the four senior girls, allowing them a degree of privacy not previously possible. At the same time extensive improvements were made to the Cornwell dining-sitting room, so that with a new ceiling and floor, two fireplaces, additional furniture, some pictures presented by Canon Hamilton and pleasing curtains, the very large room was completely transformed into what became widely regarded as the most beautiful room in the whole of the Swan Homes.

So by the end of 1946 we had five groups living under "house" conditions. But the system as practised in our institution had a number of features which came in for considerable criticism. The first was the matter of meals. These were neither prepared nor eaten in the houses, the children coming to the dining hall for them. (In the case of our later houses daily breakfasts and week-end teas were taken in them). Dining in the house is an important feature of many institutions conducted on house lines. It is much cosier and more "homey", and with this I must agree. But there are two serious disadvantages. Cooking meals means a good deal more work for the already hard-worked housemother. Secondly there is considerable difference in the cooking ability of women, and it has to be remembered that feeding is one of the most important items in child care. While at Swan we were extremely fortunate in engaging some excellent staff, but there were others who proved to be lazy, incompetent, not at all particular about cleanliness, and indifferent to the welfare of the girls and boys in their charge. To have entrusted the feeding of children to such women would have been disastrous. On the other hand when the main meal was taken in the dining room the Matron and I could see that food of the proper quality and quantity was being served to each child, and that attention to its dietary value was observed. For many years our cook was Mr. Ivor Parry — a competent man who took a pride in his cooking and in the cleanliness and efficiency of his kitchen — a man always out to raise standards in our meals. I had seen what had happened in some houses in other institutions and I was not prepared to run the risk of unsatisfactory or inadequate feeding at Swan. My critics would say: "Why didn't you dismiss the incompetents?" We did get rid of them as soon as we could, but with Orphanage rates of pay any staff at all were hard to come by, and we had to have an adult sleeping in each house. By mealing the children in the dining room we could at least be assured that they were receiving wholesome well-cooked food.

The second criticism was that we didn't have girls and boys in the one house. I have already said that I am a believer in co-education. But I feel that to have the sexes in close contact in one small building puts a good deal of extra responsibility on the housemother. The usual argument advanced in favour of such an arrangement is that it is more like a family with brothers and sisters. Most families, however, have father to assist mother, and there is blood relationship between the children. In the institution house there would be few who were brother and sister. Most would have come from different family environments and have varying hereditary factors. I know it can work for it did so at our Seaside Home. But there we had excellent staff with always at least two in residence. Even so, they made no secret of the fact that they kept a firm grip on the situation to prevent any sexual immorality. So once more it comes back to the matter of quality of staff, for without competent people there would be constant anxiety for the management.

Another criticism was the absence of age-range in our houses. "In the ideal cottage", say the theorists, "there should be included children from kindergarten to adolescence. This is what happens in many ordinary homes, and it gives opportunity for care and responsibility by the older for the younger". Yes, this can happen. But it can also result in two evils, viz. spoiling and bullying. A weak housemother tends to put too much responsibility on older or willing youngsters. My experience is that children do best when they are living with their own age group, and I found it was better for them not to have too much association with those of different ages or with the opposite sex.

Closely allied with this feature of Swan Homes' House System was that of a child's progression from house to house during their years of residence. When the British Government's "Fact-Finding Mission" visited Australia in 1955-56 to investigate the conditions in those institutions to which migrants were being sent they were almost hilarious about the absurdity of our arrangement. Nowhere had such a system ever been heard of! But despite their criticism I found it worked very well, because most children regarded the transfer as promotion, just as at school most children look forward to going to a higher grade the next year. In practice our progression was not nearly as fast as that. Normally a child would stay in the same house for several years, until he reached an age when he expected to be shifted. If children grew up with no change of housemother, they might well have their thinking dominated by her views. This is one reason why educationists favour a child having a variety of teachers throughout his school and university career. And suppose a housemother takes a dislike to any child — something which can and does happen, and is not always easy for the institution authority to detect. Is it a good thing for that girl or boy to remain with her throughout the whole of his or her childhood?

Concluding this section I would like to add three things. The first is that I have rather dwelt on the weaknesses of some housemothers working in this system. In case this gives a one-sided impression I want to say that there are housemothers in institutions who do a superb job in their trying and difficult task of bringing up other people's children. Their charges are loved and cared for by them as they would their own. Secondly there are seldom any orphans among the children in their care. Most of them are partly-orphaned or come from a marriage broken by divorce or desertion, so that there is usually a real mother or father or both, somewhere, and quite often at least one parent who is actively interested in the child. To such children the housemother may be a friendly — even a lovely — person, in whom they may confide their joys and sorrows, problems and successes, and know that there will always be an interested sympathetic ear. Between them there may develop a life-long friendship. But to suggest that when she leaves or the child is eventually moved to another house he has lost the one person in the world that humanly matters, is unrealistic. He could — and often does — find himself even happier with his next housemother. If a child has an interested father or mother usually no house-parent ever takes their place in the child's mind no matter for what reason they have placed him in the Orphanage.

Finally one sometimes hears the statement: "Any child is better off in a bad home than in a good institution". In the jargon of our time that is "a load of rubbish!" A good home is best for a child, and a good foster home is the next best. But after that comes the good institution. For in this he will experience a preparation for life that will be endeavouring to promote his spiritual, physical, educational and social welfare — a preparation that is mostly minimal or entirely lacking in those private homes where standards of care are low and where he experiences little or no love or interest. In ev-

ery good institution worthy of that name he will find some staff at least who extend friendship and goodwill towards him, and are working for his welfare. Mostly he has a much better time and prospects of a more successful future than if he had remained in his unhappy home, though normally in his institution years he would not admit to this. For such children often are intensely loyal to their parents, even when these have been very undeserving of such affection.

In subsequent years the Board built four more houses at Swan in which smaller groups of children lived under the supervision of a housemother. Smaller numbers were also accommodated at two branch institutions. References to this extension of the 'house' ideal will be made in later sections of this book.

### *G. THE RECREATION PROGRAMME:*

So far little mention has been made of any of the children's leisure-time activities. But in any scheme of child care these are very important, for it has been rightly said that "all work and no play make Jack a dull boy". When we came to Swan we found him a very dull boy indeed, whose attitude to most things was one of boredom, which was not surprising because he appeared to us to spend so much of his life outside of school or trainee hours lazing around doing nothing. Largely he was not to blame for this, for arranged recreational activities were minimal, being limited to the annual camp at Coogee, the Lumpers' Day picnic, the Boxing Tournament, a very occasional cricket or football match against a visiting team (which rarely arranged for a return match away for the Orphanage boys), and a few outings and entertainments. The older work-boys occasionally had a trade class, and the daily swim in the river after work in summer months was a good feature, but did nothing to fill in the long evenings. Ten trainee boys were allowed to go to the pictures in Midland on Friday nights — this through the kindness of the proprietors, Messrs. Herbert and Tefoy. Because of the war the Corn Tars had practically ceased, and the boys had a lot of time on their hands.

I recall a conversation I had with the Headmaster of one of the Public Schools early in my time at Swan. In the course of this he said something which I think is very true: "The secret of success in any boarding school is occupation". If a group of boys are studying or kicking a football, playing cricket, tennis, hockey, or are swimming, or even just chasing one another around, or are reading books, or engaged in a hobby, or practising for something, the management has little to worry about. They are not up to mischief, and in many such activities they are using up surplus energy in a healthful and enjoyable way. But if they constantly just sit around doing nothing, evincing no interest or participation in any form of worthwhile activity, that is where moral and other trouble is often engendered. 'Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do'.

In order that activities may take place, there needs to be some planning and at times encouragement on the part of the management. Facilities have to be provided for certain forms of recreational activity and in some cases staff supervision has to be arranged. For games there must be suitable areas and sporting gear available; for hobbies a supply of tools and materials are necessary, together with a room or place where they can work undisturbed; for readers there must be books, magazines and suitable papers in a reading room in which reasonable quiet is maintained; for those who wish to play indoor table games, these must be purchased; gymnastics require a hall with apparatus, and since there is some danger, an instructor should be present — and so on. But when management has provided these things and rostered staff for general supervi-

sion, it will be found that most boys require a degree of urging and often organisation. Inexperienced adults are prone to think that children don't need this. "Leave them alone — they'll entertain themselves". Nothing is further from the truth — at any rate as far as children in the mass are concerned. Adults can do so but not children. What normally happens is that if nothing is arranged for them, they will start to push one another around and begin to "muck about" just for the want of something better to do. I was once asked to bring some of our girls and boys to a large party for children — one in which the kindly well-meaning organisers had given no thought to its planning. The result was chaotic — and no one seemed to be enjoying themselves. On the way home some of our children said to me: "It was a rotten night. We don't ever want to go there again". As a contrast I recall Canon Jack Watts in later years bringing many Anglican Youth Fellowship parties to Swan, and on every occasion our children and their visitors had a wonderfully good evening. But Jack always had his little list of games made out, and the necessary materials prepared beforehand, so that by the time the laughter and applause at the end of one item had died down he was ready to start the next. Certainly there should always be ample opportunity and encouragement for free play in institutional care. All educationists are agreed on this. But I am convinced that children in number have a better time if there is some organisation in the background. At a small hostel in the country with which I was associated for a short time there was an occasion when some of the girls ran away. After their return they were paraded before the Committee of Management. "Why did you run away?" each girl in turn was asked. In every case the reply was the same. "We were bored. There just isn't anything to do!"

In my first interview I told the Board that if I were the successful applicant the encouragement of sport would be one of my main objectives. I recall the comment made by one member at the time because it rather surprised me. He said: "That would be a good thing. In the past the Orphanage has not been strong on the sporting side". So it was that on my first Saturday afternoon — four days after our arrival — I organised a cricket match. Thirty years on, my last project was the construction of a swimming pool. In between times sport was to be one of the most important features of the establishment's leisure-time programme.

That first cricket match was no great success. I thought I would try an experimental game on the same lines as we played at Fairbridge. It was to be the boys versus the girls, but the boys had to bat with the opposite hand to their normal and also to bowl under-arm.. Miss Campbell, the girls' matron, was quite enthusiastic for the match, for she was a keen cricketer and had been considered for selection for the All-England Ladies' Team. She would captain the girls, but she insisted that the boys had to bowl over-arm to her. The girls went in first with Miss Campbell opening for them. The first ball she drove towards the covers and ran, but the girl at the bowler's end never bugged. She had started to talk to the bowler, for it was an opportunity not to be missed. When Miss Campbell realised that the girl hadn't moved, she dashed back but was easily run out. As umpire I suggested that since the girl hadn't understood that she also had to run we make a fresh start. But Miss Campbell would have none of this. She was out — and no nonsense about it. Any excitement soon went out of the game and the boys were easy winners. There was no enthusiasm for a second such game.

I had also arranged with Miss Campbell that on that same Saturday evening we would hold a social for the girls and boys. The first half would be community singing with a few items, to be followed by dancing in the second half. When I announced to the

boys what was to happen there were moans everywhere. "We're not going to dance". "Do we have to go?" "Who wants to learn dancing?" — and so on. There was opposition on every side. But I insisted that everyone would attend, and so the reluctant audience seated themselves in the hall — giggling girls to the right and scowling boys to the left. The first half of the evening was hard enough, goodness knows, trying to encourage the children to sing, and to persuade a few brave souls to give items. Those who did so mostly turned their backs to the audience to face up-stage. But these difficulties were nothing when compared with those of the second half of the evening. When the younger children had been sent off to bed and the hall re-arranged, I announced in my best "M.C." manner: "Take your partners for the Canadian Barn Dance!" Not a soul moved. "Come on, now", I urged, "everybody's got to get up". Still no response. "Well what about you girls going and taking a boy partner? We'll make it a Ladies' Choice". The girls all turned their faces to the wall. Not one budged. So I decided to use the Merry Chain device, in which the girls and boys march around the hall in opposite directions. "When the music stops", I explained, "the couples nearest to each other will be partners". But when this did happen the pair stood nervously back to back. Then with the aid of a member of staff we demonstrated the very simple opening steps, which one or two couples reluctantly tried to do, keeping as far away as possible from their partners. Gradually a few more joined in, and then the others. Demonstrations of the rest of the dance were then given and practised, after which music was introduced with my calling the steps. The waltzing was terrible, but that was excusable because that is a difficult dancing-step for beginners. Then we used the "Change Partners" step so that each boy constantly danced with a different girl, and by the end of the evening a good many had at least some idea of the dance. But I was hoarse and exhausted, and felt completely worn out. In later years if ever I was asked the question: "What was the most difficult thing you undertook in your thirty years at Swan?" I would reply without hesitation: "Teaching the Orphanage children to do the Canadian Barn Dance at our first Saturday Evening Social".

For many years the socials became a regular feature of life at the Swan. The concert half was made much easier by Whitford's Broadcasting Network lending us slides and music of popular songs, for with the words on a screen in a semi-darkened hall, the children were much less self-conscious about singing. Our programme was greatly helped by the chaplain (Dick Hamilton) often filling-in for us with one of his ghost stories. Later we purchased a cinematograph projector and had pictures in the first half with dancing to follow. Gradually the children grew more enthusiastic for the latter, improving their steps and obviously enjoying the evening. Any reticence on the part of the boys in asking girls for a dance disappeared, so that a visitor would see the unusual spectacle of boys rushing across the hall to grab a partner as soon as the dance was announced. "Make the most of it, girls", I would say to them. "It will never be like this when you leave here"... When they heard that we had introduced ballroom dancing at Swan, the Lumpers' Committee decided to have an evening with us. They brought their band and a bus-load of supporters, and all were surprised and delighted with the progress the children had made. One of my few early thrills was when one of the older boys approached me some weeks after the socials had started to enquire why they were not having one in the coming week-end. He had been amongst the most bitter opponents of the introduction of dancing. Now he said: "Why can't we have one, Sir? The boys would like a social".

One of my reasons for introducing dancing was with an eye to the future. A good many of our girls and boys would be going to service in the country, where they would

be welcome as partners at local functions if they could dance. The boys would then be past that awkward stage where they so often stand self-consciously near the door for much of the evening, unable to join in because of their inability to dance. But if they could do so they would have more opportunity of meeting and mixing with local residents and so become assimilated into the community.

Once a year the social was replaced by a Fancy Dress Ball. As the date for this event approached there would be excited planning of costumes by children who usually sought the co-operation of housemothers and staff to suggest or help them make something suitable for the big night. "Miss", (female staff were usually addressed as "Miss") "have you got anything out of which I could make a pirate's hat?" "What sort of a coat would a Turkish soldier wear, Miss?" "Could you please get me some coloured paper to make a dress for 'Mary, Mary, quite contrary'?" "Tom and I want to go as the old gray mare. Will you help us make the head?" — and so on. Many of the little boys made themselves up as tramps or "swaggies". One I recall was Georgie, then aged eight. "Look at me, Miss. Do you know what I am?" "I'm afraid I don't, Georgie", she replied. "What are you?" "I'm a bugger, Miss". At this point I chipped in: "You don't mean that, Georgie. You mean you're a beggar" — at which the housemistress leaned towards me and said sotto voce: "Same thing!"

Early in our management a Swan Homes' Choir was formed, with Mary as accompanist while I conducted. We soon received numbers of invitations to sing at various functions, but easily the most popular outings were those to provide an item at the Fremantle Community concert. It was quite a journey, travelling from Swan to Midland station in the truck, then by rail to Fremantle where we had to grope our way along streets and footpaths in an extra heavy blackout. Arrived at the Hall we gave our items which were always very well received, after which there was the long journey back to Swan. Looking back on these outings, they seem to have been a lot of trouble for the short time we were on stage. But the Community Concert, which was organised by Stations 6AM-6PM, had a large radio audience, and our association with it gained us good publicity. It was also responsible for the growth of a strong friendship between Mr. Frank Whitford, the proprietor of the station, his compere, Mr. John Luke, and our children. For many years the choir was invited to give Christmas and Easter broadcasts under the direction of "Uncle John", and we greatly enjoyed doing these, because afterwards the station always regaled our girls and boys with a party. At Christmas, Mr. Whitford also arranged for a radio appeal for our Homes, the response to which was most generous.

As well as the institution children providing entertainment for others, there were a good many groups who visited us to give concerts, games nights, parties or dances. Particularly was this the case in the war years when numbers of voluntary organisations were formed to entertain troops stationed near Perth. Some of these would visit Swan to try-out their programme before presenting it to the soldiers, so that in this way we came in for a good many more concerts than we would otherwise have had. Then there were other groups who for years just prior to Christmas gave us a programme and a party. One recalls with appreciation the high standard of performance of the pupils of the Misses Gable and Williams which always delighted our children, and the excellent entertainment of the magicians in the Xenophon Masonic Lodge. For days after the latter's visit there would be articles missing as the boys tried to emulate the Brethren in conjuring.



In 1944 the "Week-end Out" was introduced. Formerly some of the children spent occasional week-ends and school holidays in the home of a relative or friend, but there were numbers who seldom got away from the institution. I discovered one girl who had entered the Orphanage at five and who was now fourteen, who had never slept in a private home during those nine years. Certainly she went to Coogee with the others, but though this was an enjoyable change from life at Adelaide Terrace, it was still institutional in character. What sort of knowledge of life in an ordinary home could that girl possibly have? So I contacted a number of the clergy seeking their co-operation in procuring accommodation for such children in the homes of their parishioners for one week-end a month. They would leave Swan after school on the last Friday of the month and return on Sunday evening. The majority of the Rectors approached were very enthusiastic and succeeded in getting billets for the children, and so the scheme was launched. It was to continue until the Hostel system was introduced in 1960, becoming one of the most important features of life at Swan Homes. Some associations between our children and their hosts lasted for years. But there were others where it quickly came to an end. With them the novelty of having an Orphanage child to stay once a month soon wore off, and we would get a message to advise us that they were sorry but they wouldn't be able to take the boy or girl this month. The cause of the breakdown in association wasn't always the fault of the hosts. Some of our children were not at all co-operative, having gone very unwillingly because they didn't really want to go at all. They felt insecure in the unaccustomed surroundings and were much happier remaining at the institution. In some cases there were problems of personality, manners or conduct in the child we sent, which made him or her unacceptable to the host. Some people anticipated far too much from the institution children expecting them to be models of perfection rather than human beings with weaknesses. But for the most part the monthly week-end-out was a happy event and was awaited with great excitement. It is interesting to note that for the majority of those who did not get away at that time they also enjoyed the week-end-out, but for a different reason. At such time there was a great reduction in numbers in residence at the institution, enabling normal routine to be relaxed, and with special efforts being made by the staff to see that these children all had outings and extra entertainment.

The main competitive sport throughout the "Swan Homes" period was boxing. Annual tournaments always attracted large crowds from Midland and its environs, for the boys had built up a good reputation for their skill and courage. Not long after my appointment the Lumpers asked me if I would bring a team to Fremantle to stage about a dozen contests against the local Police Boys' Club, which I agreed to do. But to our great disappointment the evening was a complete disaster for our lads who won only a single victory. The Lumpers who had boasted to their friends about the prowess of the Swan Boys' were really upset at our poor exhibition, for which I felt they blamed me. Such a thing had never happened in Mr. Birch's time! But the truth was that our boys were not fit. They had done little boxing in the previous twelve months, and Mr. Williams, their coach, had not had much time to give them training. But as we dejectedly returned from Fremantle that night we resolved that such a debacle would never occur again. Serious training for our own annual tournament was commenced next day and some of our better boys became temporary members of the Midland Police Boys' Club where they received additional instruction and gained more ring experience by boxing for that club. When later in the year the Orphanage tournament was staged, there was a noticeable improvement in our standard and we felt encouraged. The hard training was continued, and in due course we challenged the Fremantle Club to a return

match, which was accepted by them. Our Lumper friends, remembering our poor exhibition the previous year, were not enthusiastic for our chances of success, but they agreed to come along and support our boys whom they hoped would put up a better showing. Came the night and the hall at Fremantle was packed, most present being supporters of the local club, which they no doubt expected would score another resounding victory. What a shock awaited them! The results were a complete reversal, with Swan Boys 11 wins, Fremantle 1 win. It was a tremendous triumph and the taste of victory was sweet indeed. Never after that night did the Lumpers' Committee have reason to be other than completely confident that our boys would give a good exhibition in the ring — and they were never disappointed. Later two Swan Boys won State Championship Belts and represented Western Australia in the Australian Championships.

Finally a reference should be made to the commencement at this time of another physical activity that was to become an important feature in later years. This was the introduction of gymnastics. In 1944 I was approached by a young man living in the Swan District who had been taking a course in Youth Leadership and was eager for an opportunity to give service. This was Mr. Steve Illich who for several years was to be our gymnastics instructor, and who aroused a good deal of interest among the lads for his subject. When he was no longer able to come, his work was taken over by our new Technical Officer, Mr. Brian Marshall, who prior to his coming to us had been in charge of this work at the Subiaco Police Boys' Club. Not only was he a fine instructor, but he had some additional apparatus which he made available to us. Under his instruction the boys' standard of performance improved greatly.

These were some of the ways in which we endeavoured to provide more recreational opportunities for the children enrolled in our Homes in our earliest years. Later our programme of activities was to be considerably extended (see page 117), whilst with more students remaining at school for higher education there was a steady increase in the amount of time required for evening study. Ultimately these two factors put an end to the completely wasted period between dinner and bed-time which existed too often in our earliest years.

### 3. THE YEARS OF DEVELOPMENT, 1946-1955.

In 1968 the history of Swanleigh was presented in Pageant form and this included a scene depicting the events of our first day. In it one member of staff asks another: "How long do you think our new manager will stay?" The second replied: "I give him six months. Six months and he'll be on his way". There were times in those earlier years when we did have serious thoughts of resigning. The constant antipathy of most of the boys, the non-co-operative attitude of a good many of the staff, and the difficulty and endless frustrations we experienced both in obtaining requirements and in our efforts to improve conditions were often discouraging. Although I thought I had gained some experience of the institutional child in my year's residence at Fairbridge, where I had got on particularly well with the children, and though I had taught hundreds of boys during my fourteen years at Perth Boys' and maintained good relationships with them, I found it impossible to establish a satisfactory rapport with the majority of the Swan Orphanage boys. Recalling that time I think that two of the reasons I failed to do this were first, that it is never easy to follow a popular and experienced man in whom the boys have confidence and whom they respect; and secondly, I was over-anxious to introduce changes — and generally boys don't like changes. A policy of "*Festina Lente*" would have been much wiser.

In my more despondent moments I remember receiving much encouragement from a chapter in a book by H.G. Wells — "The Story of a Great Schoolmaster". This was a biography of W.F. Sanderson, the famous headmaster of Oundle, a school which in twenty years he raised from a small third-rate establishment to become one of the leading public schools in Great Britain, and reputable by world standards. The particular chapter describes how Sanderson arrived at Oundle full of enthusiasm, with many original ideas for improving the education then being offered there. But in his first years he found himself constantly frustrated and sorely tried by a wall of prejudice against him. There were the school's traditions, the un-co-operative attitude of the staff, and the open hostility to himself and his new methods by the boys. He soon came to the conclusion that he could not hope to implement his ideas until the older generation of boys had left, and this proved to be the case. With their departure a new spirit of friendliness towards him began, together with an ever-increasing enthusiasm and confidence in his new approaches to the teaching of all subjects. Oundle became not only a highly reputable school, but a happy one.

Was there a lesson for me in Sanderson's experience? If I could hold on till most of the trouble-makers had gone things might become easier and happier at Swan. I hoped that this would be the case. And to a degree that did happen, so that with much less open hostility from the lads, and with the support of an enthusiastic Board and the nucleus of a competent and loyal staff, we began to gain in confidence and to introduce some new developments, which in time greatly enhanced the reputation of the Swan Homes and improved the quality of its service to its children. The first of these was the establishment of a Farm School.

#### *A. THE PADBURY BOYS' FARM SCHOOL:*

In a previous chapter reference was made to the "gift" of over 2,000 acres of virgin land in the Stoneville district, to enable us to establish a farm school which would be conducted as an adjunct to the Swan Homes. Now we were faced with the problem of launching that project — no easy matter in the rather heavily-timbered hills' country. A suitable site for the institution buildings had to be selected and cleared, a water supply and roadway provided, temporary accommodation erected, staff appointed and suitable boys chosen to pioneer the new venture. A fair amount of finance would be necessary both for the initial expenses and because it would be some time before any monetary returns could be expected. This would be difficult to obtain because in 1946 we were still under strict budgetary control. Certainly the Home's financial position had improved, but the Board was not anxious to find itself once more with its endowments almost exhausted, as had been the case in 1942.

But the most important requirement of all was to find a suitable man to pioneer the project, and here the choice proved to be a most fortunate one. My recently-appointed Deputy, Mr. Jack Nugent, was an energetic, enthusiastic young man, who at the end of hostilities had been discharged from the Air Force. He had been doing very good work at Swan, had married and seemed well-settled, so that I was not a little surprised when he approached me with a suggestion that he be given the opportunity of pioneering the proposed Farm School. I had serious doubts about this, for he was inexperienced in rural activities. But I also felt he was a man prepared to work hard and would listen to those more informed than himself and accept their guidance. Moreover he had ambition and imagination — two useful attributes in the establishment of this sort of project. After discussing with him the great difficulties he would have to face and the arduous conditions under which he and Mrs. Nugent would have to live at first, I found that, though aware of these things, he was still keen to undertake the task. So I decided to recommend him to Mr. Padbury who approved of his appointment, and the three of us arranged to commence the Farm School as soon as possible. So it was that on February 25th, 1946, just two months after the land grant had been made to us by the Diocesan Council, Mr. Nugent with a former Swan boy, Mr. John Bentley, as his assistant, and accompanied by four trainees, pitched their tents and commenced clearing the site for the first building. We named the branch "Padbury Boys' Farm School" in honour of the two Mr. Padburys associated with the history of our Homes — Walter Padbury and his nephew, Matthew.

At Swan all were astonished and delighted with the progress made at Stoneville in its early years. In the Annual report for 1946 written in June of that year - only a few months after the commencement of the project - it is recorded: "Already a start has been made with the development of this property. Three army huts have been purchased, dismantled and transported to Stoneville, the first of which has been re-erected to provide accommodation for the Superintendent and his wife, and also for Mr. Bentley and the boys who accompanied them. A contract has been let for the clearing of ten acres for the orchard, and this work is already in hand. Two bores have been put down, one of which has proved fairly successful. A windmill and a Ford truck have been purchased, vegetable cultivation has commenced and a start made with roadmaking. It has indeed been a strenuous time for Mr. Nugent and his helpers, but his enthusiasm and energy remain undiminished. All are to be congratulated on the progress made under very difficult conditions".

Mr. and Mrs. Nugent remained in charge at Padbury till the end of 1951, maintaining throughout their management a fine record of achievement. By the beginning of 1948 further buildings had been erected, and conditions were then considered fit for the reception of schoolboys as well as trainees. That year the total enrolment was eleven, but eventually it reached twenty, so that a lady-assistant was needed to help Mrs. Nugent with the domestic duties. Miss Fletcher, now at Coogee, volunteered for the position and was appointed the School's first Matron. By 1950 three hundred fruit trees had been planted - a total which was considerably increased in later years. Other paddocks had been cleared, fenced and sown with clover, some of which would help meet the fodder requirements at Swan, while the remainder would be used for pasturing the sheep and cattle that had been either donated or purchased for the School. New farm equipment included a tractor, a small road-grader, a plough, harrows and fire-fighting plant. (Several times the boys rendered much-appreciated service in the district when bush-fires occurred). Water storage tanks to a capacity of 12,000 gallons were erected, poultry production commenced and a new "International" truck purchased to replace the second-hand "Ford" bought earlier. A lighting plant and a refrigeration chamber were installed and the School was connected to the Government water mains to ensure that there was a permanent supply for drinking, cooking and laundry purposes. But the most spectacular improvement of all was the construction of a dam to conserve seven million gallons of water for the irrigation of the orchard and for stock watering.

Two tributes made to the Farm School in those earlier years are worth recording. The first was made by the Chairman of the Lotteries Commission after a visit by the members to see how their initial gift of £2,500 towards the cost of the establishing of the School had been spent. His comment was: "We believe our donation has been well-applied and we want you to know that the Commission is right behind you in your project". It then gave us a second £2,500 towards further development work at the Farm School. Each of these grants had been dependent upon the Board contributing a like amount. The second compliment was made by a lady who knew only too well just what pioneering a Farm School really involved. While still in its very early stages Mrs. Fairbridge, then re-visiting Western Australia, accepted my invitation to come with me to Stoneville and see what we were doing at Padbury's. She was delighted with her visit: "This would have thrilled Kingsley", she said, "for it is a real farm school with the boys not only clearing and cultivating the land which they have carved out of virgin bush, but even erecting their own buildings".

No record of the Stoneville project would be complete without a reference to the support given it at all times by the local residents, who became greatly interested in its progress and in the welfare of the lads. Ted and Jim Brindle who were near neighbours and highly successful orchardists gave Mr. Nugent invaluable advice on all matters pertaining to fruit culture. The Revd. Jack Watts, then Rector of the Hills Parish (Mundaring) was appointed Chaplain of Padbury's, where he visited regularly, either in his pastoral capacity or with parties of parishioners to entertain the boys. A very happy relationship between people living in the district and the school resulted in the boys receiving many invitations to spend week-ends in private homes or to parties and dances. Dr. Breckler of Mundaring was particularly helpful to the institution whenever sickness or injury occurred, while the Headmaster and members of the staff of Mt. Helena Area School took a great interest in the educational progress of those boys from Padbury's still attending school. All the boys continued to share in the major recreational activities at the Swan Homes where they were always made welcome and where they enjoyed happy re-unions with their former associates. For it must be remembered

that the boys living at Padbury's were in exactly the same category as those at Swan. This point needs to be emphasized because in later years a delinquents' institution was established at Stoneville. *But no boy at Padbury Boys' Farm School had ever been committed by the Court for any act of delinquency.*

At the end of 1951 Mr. Nugent resigned in order to commence study to enter the Teacher's College. We are happy to record that he fulfilled that ambition, not only gaining his Trained Teacher's Certificate, but a University degree as well - a fine achievement for one who had left school in his early adolescence. At Stoneville the Nugents left behind them a record of which they could be justly proud, and their decision to retire was one which was received by the Board with very great regret.

For the next three and a half years Mr. and Mrs. Ron Smith were in charge. They, too, worked hard, successfully maintaining the good reputation of the school. During this period the Board appointed a committee to supervise the farming activities, and this included some men whose names are now a by-word in the history of agricultural development in Western Australia. Among the members was Dr. G.L. Sutton, the distinguished former Director of Agriculture. He in particular took a tremendous interest in all the activities of our institution. There was also Sir Edward Lefroy of Walebing, Mr. W. Burgess of "Tipperary", York, and of course the Brindle brothers. But while the school under the guidance of these experienced men continued to progress in its farm development, a new factor began to exert a counteracting influence. About the middle fifties applications for admission to voluntary institutions began to decrease. We will have to examine the reasons for this in a later chapter, for it was one which was not just a passing phase in the history of child welfare in this State. Rather it was a development which continued and grew in strength both here and elsewhere. Several establishments in Western Australia had to close for want of numbers, for there comes a time when, if the enrolment in a Children's Home falls below a certain number, it can no longer keep open. This is what happened at Padbury's. Its cost began to be a financial embarrassment to the Board, whose members saw no prospect of this position improving, or of the enrolment increasing. So suggestions that the school might have to close began to be heard at meetings. Then in 1955 Mr. and Mrs. Smith resigned - I think they realised that the closure of the establishment was inevitable - and this was followed by a decision to transfer the boys then in residence back to the Swan and to find a new position for Miss Fletcher. An experienced farmer was employed to carry on farm maintenance until new arrangements were made for the future of this property.

So with much regret, especially from the last of its boys, the Farm School came to an end. It was never re-opened as a residential branch of Swan Homes. But while it lasted it had been a very happy home where its older lads had gained valuable experience in farming. A fine property had been pioneered - one that was to feature in some interesting developments that are described later.

### ***B. SEASIDE HOUSE:***

The year of July 1945 to June 1946 was to be a very important one in the history of the Swan Homes. Elsewhere it saw the cessation of most of the carnage and destruction which had characterised the previous six years in the war-torn countries of the world, and the dawn of what most of mankind fervently hoped would be an era of peace and goodwill. Men from fighting forces and women from war-time employment now

expected to settle quickly into their former routine of work and home life. But the years of international strife had also brought problems of a social and domestic character to many people which did not end with the signing of the Peace Treaty - problems which often revolved around children, so that institutions such as ours inevitably became involved. With fathers away at the war and mothers often in full-time employment, the consequent disruption of family life too often resulted in neglected children, which undoubtedly helped to swell our enrolment. It might be thought that the ending of hostilities would bring this state of affairs to an end, but this did not immediately prove to be the case. Rather we were faced for a time with an increased number of applications for admission. The excitement and variety of experiences through which so many parents passed during the war years made the resumption of home life difficult for some. In such a transition period children often suffer as a result of strain and re-adjustment in marital relations.

Then because there had been little home building while the war was raging there was now the problem of an acute shortage of houses, which often resulted in many families having to live under crowded conditions. Sometimes they had to board with relatives - an arrangement which frequently proved a serious obstacle to peaceful family relationships. We had many requests from parents: "Would you please take our children until we can get a home. The atmosphere is not good for them where we are living". I recall one week when we were asked to admit no less than sixteen girls or boys. By straining our accommodation resources we managed to find room for only six!

The opening of Hudleston in 1946 had enabled us to increase our enrolment by sixteen little girls. The Farm School Project also commenced the same year, but it was not ready for the accommodation of boys till 1948. The post-war pressure for the admission of children to our Homes then led the Board to make another important decision. In the previous fifteen years the fine building at Coogee had been occupied only during the school's summer holidays. For the remainder of the time it stood empty. The Board had considered the possibility of its being used during this vacant period, but no satisfactory suggestion had been advanced. In 1946, however, the risk of "squatters" taking it over arose. People were so desperate for housing that any empty building that could be used for accommodation was often occupied by a family, with the owner having little chance of evicting them. If this happened to us at Coogee our children might lose their annual seaside holiday. To prevent such a risk and at the same time help us to meet the unprecedented demand for admission to the Swan Homes, the Board decided to establish a permanent branch there. It was as well they did so, for on the first night in the history of this little institution, a lorry drove up with a family to occupy the building. Its retention had been a matter of touch and go!

That was March 28th, 1946, when Mrs. Ellen Logan, with Miss Beatrice Fletcher as her assistant, and accompanied by twenty-five children, all went into residence. Mrs. Logan had now been with us since the end of 1942 in charge of the little boys, first as housemother in Forrest and then commencing the kindergarten project in Brown House (see page 89). Each year she had accompanied her boys to Coogee when they went on their annual seaside holiday and several times she had remarked to me that she would dearly like to have charge of a group of children permanently living there - something I remembered when the choice of a person to be in control of the new branch had to be made. I discussed this with her, pointing out that the living conditions there would be primitive compared with those at Swan, and that we would be able to afford only one other permanent member of staff there. Mrs. Logan was elderly, and I felt that the amount of work that would have to be done to convert the building into

a comfortable home might be too arduous for her. But she was keen to be given the position and adamant that she could overcome the difficulties. "You know, Mr. Peterkin, an old dog for a hard road. I can manage". She was on very friendly terms with Miss Fletcher who had expressed a desire to accompany her in the commencement of the new project. Starting new things was Miss Fletcher's forte, and I knew she was a most capable person. So although their appointment meant finding new staff for our kindergarten and Stanton Houses at Swan, I had confidence that in the two ladies there was competence, dependability and enthusiasm, so that the children selected for Coogee would be well-cared for. I needed to be sure of this, for Coogee was thirty miles away and the staff had largely to be left to their own resources in matters of routine management. In the party I included two trainee girls to help them over the first three months. I also arranged that at the end of the year any Coogee girls or boys who could not be accommodated privately for the whole of the school vacation would go to Swan so that the annual seaside holiday for our children could take place as usual.

The winter of 1946 was a rigorous one - perhaps the worst in our thirty years at Swan. I recall lying awake one Friday night listening to the howling gale outside and thinking: "Tomorrow I will take the truck down to Coogee and bring them all back. I don't know where I'll put them, but, squatters or no squatters, they can't stay down there". (Until the first building was ready for occupation the pioneering party at Padbury Farm had always returned to Swan for the week-ends). Immediately after breakfast I set off for Coogee, taking with me a few of the older boys to help load mattresses and cases and children into the truck while the two ladies would sit with me in the front. On our arrival I went into the dining area and looked at the scene. The floor was covered with water inches deep so that to move from the dormitory to the kitchen or to the bathroom the children and staff had to walk across planks which they had placed on bricks. I walked gingerly on one of these over to where Mrs. Logan was waiting for me at the kitchen door on the opposite side and greeted her with: "I've come to bring you back to Swan. You can't stay here under these conditions any longer". But the matron would have none of this. "Everything's fine", she replied, and neither she nor Miss Fletcher would hear of returning. So we went back without them; but at the next meeting of the Board, after describing the conditions at the Seaside House to the members, I insisted that if it were to become a permanent branch there had to be improvements

To this the Board agreed, and over the next two years it spent more than £3,000 on extensive alterations, renovations and additions to the old building, including the erection of a new ablution and laundry wing, the remodelling of the kitchen, staff dining-room and pantry, the installation of a new stove and a hot-water system and the purchase of a large refrigerator. A separate play-shed and storeroom were also built, but the most striking improvement was the renovation of the dining area, which was re-floored, ceiled and plastered and a large fireplace was added. Now with its new chairs and tables replacing the forms and trestles formerly in use, and with a piano and books and bookcases, and attractive pictures on the wall, it became a very presentable room, unrecognisable from the shabby old place it had been. Both ladies felt justifiably proud of the new-look of their institution, but they must have been mightily relieved when the building contractor made his final tidy-up and left. For their two years had been spent under most trying conditions. In both winters they had been nearly flooded out, while during the second twelve months the alterations were constantly in progress, so that it must have been a nightmare of an existence for them. Yet despite all this, they cheerfully stuck to their task, refusing to give in.



Amidst all their difficulties there was always one particularly encouraging factor. That was that their branch never lacked enthusiastic supporters and friends. Foremost among these was an organisation known as the M.I.O.C. - the Meat Industries Orphanage Committee. Soon after Mrs. Logan and Miss Fletcher arrived at Coogee two young men - Mr. Clem Booth and Mr. Norm Allen - called on them, explaining that they represented a group of people who had been engaged in a welfare project in Fremantle, which was now completed. The members were desirous of continuing their association and were looking for a new object for their efforts. Would the ladies be interested? The matron replied that the Home would gladly accept any assistance that was offered. So began the association between the Committee and the Seaside House that was to mean so much to the children and staff at Coogee for the next twenty-two years.

The M.I.O.C. members became "Uncles and Aunties" to the children. Their first objective was to take a personal interest in the girls and boys by making regular visits to conduct socials for their entertainment or by taking them on picnics or outings. Their other aim was to raise money to purchase presents for the children and amenities for the institution. To this task the members brought such keenness that in the first year the Committee donated a talkie-cinematograph projector, and in the second year a piano. Later gifts included playground apparatus, a slide lantern for community singing, a wireless, a radiogram, a television and a cake-mixer. It furnished a sitting and reception room, and provided funds to assist in the Board's project to completely modernise the kitchen. Throughout the long association every Friday night was "Committee Night", when the members screened a film or arranged an entertainment or conducted a social, at all of which their own families and other supporters often attended so that they too became personally interested in individual children. These were very happy gatherings, and the cordial co-operation that existed at all times between the Seaside House staff, the Board and the Committee and its supporters was a delight to all.

Nor was the M.I.O.C. the only friend of the little institution. Mention must be made of generous donations in kind from the Mutual Help Society, Fremantle Apex, and the Ladies' Committee of the W.A. Breeders, Owners and Trainers' Association, and also of help rendered by local residents and many individuals. Said Mrs. Logan to me one day with her usual twinkle in her eye: "You know, Mr. Peterkin, I'm a wonderful cadger". But in fact she often did not have to ask for things. Rather, a feeling seemed to come over people when they visited Seaside House that they wanted to help this remarkable old lady. They would enquire whether there was anything her establishment particularly wanted, and if it were within their means they donated it. I well recall one such instance. A man who preferred to remain anonymous spoke to me about Coogee's requirements. I discussed this with Mrs. Logan, who said that what they needed most at that time was an electric sewing machine and a washing machine (the latter were then not nearly so common as is the case today). I told the man about these, but warned him that the models really necessary for the amount of work they would have to do would have to be larger than ordinary household size and would therefore be expensive. "Well", he said, writing out a cheque, "here's £200. If there's anything over, buy something else that will be useful". Many helped with donations of money or goods. Even the prisoners at Barton's Mill heard about the matron and made two large wardrobes for her dormitories!

In 1950 Mrs. Logan suffered a stroke which left her almost blind. Her son and daughter-in-law, Don and Ruth, volunteered to carry on the work at Coogee - an offer we gladly accepted, especially as the matron decided to remain in residence while they settled

in, thus enabling her to help them by giving them advice in their inexperience. Then suddenly she had a further stroke and was gone. So while she had been still on the job she ended ten years of remarkable service in child care. To those who knew her, her memory is evergreen, for between her and the children she loved was such a bond of affection as is rarely found in an institutional situation. She was the cottage mother "par excellence", and I am very proud to write that at all times I enjoyed her esteem and friendship. "You know", she said to me one day, "I regard myself as your second mother" - a sentiment from this old lady, then well over seventy, that moved me greatly.

In a later section I will be writing of the concluding years of Seaside House. Suffice it to say here that after Matron Logan's death her work was carried on by Don and Ruth, under whose management the institution maintained its atmosphere of happiness and good service. We had been fortunate indeed in our selection of Mrs. Logan senior and Miss Fletcher to establish this branch. We were equally fortunate in our choice of their successors.

### *C. CHILD MIGRATION:*

At a Board Meeting early in 1946 mention was made that recently there had been references in the press to the possible resumption of child migration to Western Australia, and I was asked whether I was interested in having such children come to Swan. I replied that ever since my year at Fairbridge in 1924 I had been a keen advocate of this form of migration, believing that the child was the best migrant, and that Australia offered a much better future for the English institution-child than if he remained in Britain. "But", I added, "we could not take any girls or boys at present because our accommodation is already severely taxed by the many applications for admission that we are receiving". The members agreed, and nothing further was said on this subject at that time.

But shortly after this a meeting of the heads of denominational institutions for child care was called to meet the Hon. A.D. Fraser, M.H.R., who had come to Perth at the request of the Commonwealth Minister for Migration, the Hon. Arthur Calwell, M.H.R. to ascertain whether any Children's Homes were interested in introducing child migration, and if so, how many could they accommodate. From the outset I made it clear to Mr. Fraser that though we would very much like to co-operate in such a scheme, it was quite impossible for us to do so unless financial assistance could be given us with the erection of further buildings. He said he would note my suggestion, but he had no authority from his Minister to promise any such aid. Then the heads of the other denominational Homes made their offers to Mr. Fraser which left me astounded when I heard them: Presbyterian, 100 in 1946 and a further 100 if a building programme were subsidised; Methodist, 25 at once and 68 in 1948 if subsidised; Parkerville, 20 at once; Roman Catholic, 1,000 at once and 1,000 per annum after that.

I decided that the Archbishop ought to be informed about what the other denominations were proposing. So after the meeting concluded, I went to see His Grace, taking with me Mr. Robertson who had also been present, and we told him what had taken place. But when I said that the Church of England couldn't do anything about child migration because our enrolment was at capacity, he replied fiercely: "Peterkin, don't you ever say that the Church of England can't do anything about anything". He was in fact most hostile that we were not co-operating, and eventually it was decided be-

tween us that, provided help with the erection of buildings was forthcoming, we would offer places for fifty child migrants a year. This figure was 'phoned to Mr. Fraser who included it with the other offers, which shortly afterwards were submitted at a special conference of Premiers at Canberra, summoned to discuss the whole question of immigration.

The Premiers decided to support the migration of nominated children from the United Kingdom and Europe to selected Australian institutions. Shortly afterwards Mr. Calwell himself visited Western Australia and met the principals of the various Homes to give them the details of what had been decided at the conference: In brief this was:

1. Weekly subsidy would be paid to the institution for each child migrant. The State Government would pay 5/-, the Commonwealth the usual 7/6 Child Endowment, the British Government 5/- sterling. If the institutions accepted Lotteries per capita grants they could expect the extra 3/- per week per child.
2. Building grants would be made to approved institutions to assist them in accommodating migrants. The State and Commonwealth Governments would each pay one-third of the cost of the erection and furnishing of such building, the institution itself being responsible for the remaining third.
3. Migrated children would not all be accommodated in the buildings thus provided, but rather would be distributed throughout the living sections of the institution. In this way integration with Australian children would be helped, because new-comers best assimilate new ways of life by close association - in the case of children, by playing with each other, going to school together, eating together, sleeping in the same dormitories, even fighting with each other! And that was just how it worked out.
4. The assisted institution was to continue to receive child migrants to an agreed number as long as these could be enlisted.

The scheme evolved between the Governments and the denominational institutions differed from the Fairbridge scheme in that under the latter the children accommodated were confined to migrants from the United Kingdom. No West Australian children were enrolled. Many considered that this was not a good arrangement, for the institution tended to be "a little bit of England" rather than an Australian establishment. An Old Fairbridgian once said to me: "Though we had lived in Australia for several years we rarely met an Australian boy or girl until we went to employment". Then he added: "Personally I thought it was wrong".

The morning after he met us Mr. Calwell made an official call on the Archbishop, who urged him to go and see Swan for himself. If he did so he would see the excellent opportunities any migrant child would have there. Mr. Calwell told me about this when he visited us next morning, and after a good look round, he expressed himself as being very pleased with our establishment and that we were co-operating in the scheme. But there was an underlying note of sadness as we talked. For in the previous evening Archbishop Lefanu had suddenly collapsed and died.

To me his passing was one of personal sorrow, mingled with just a little pride that almost the last public act in the life of this distinguished Archbishop and Primate of Australia was to speak so enthusiastically about Swan, especially as I recalled my first interview with him when he had said: "I was unable to sleep for several nights, worrying about the attitude of the orphans".

A few years later we again had the pleasure of a visit from Mr. Calwell, this time to inspect the first of two buildings we erected under the Migration Agreement. On

this occasion the circumstances were happier, and he was extremely pleased with Lee Steere House. I have always been glad that I met him, for I think that irrespective of one's political affiliation it is widely acknowledged that no man ever did more for Australian immigration than did Arthur Calwell.

In the recruitment of children from the United Kingdom Mr. Robertson was of particular assistance to us. As stated earlier he had for many years been associated with migration as the representative of the Anglican Church in Western Australia, meeting and welcoming settlers on arrival at Fremantle and assisting them with their preliminary problems of customs, accommodation and employment. In his work he had developed a useful association with the Secretary of the Church of England Council for Empire Settlement in London - Miss Enid Jones, M.B.E. During the depression in the thirties there had been a steep decrease in the numbers migrating to Australia, and throughout World War II none at all. But now there was great enthusiasm for it in Britain. So he made immediate contact with Miss Jones requesting she undertake the formation of parties of children to come to Swan Homes. She agreed to do so, and during the next twelve years over two hundred girls and boys emigrated to our establishments. Some of these were from smaller voluntary institutions in England, a number of which were being closed. Many of them were sent to us by parents who intended following their children in the near future. Regrettably some were just "dumped" by their parents who had promised them that they would follow them to Australia but never seriously intended to do so. As one would expect, the children in total varied in suitability for future citizens. Most were strong healthy types - all were supposed to have been "screened" before they left England. Educationally they ranged from exceptionally good to sub normal, with a very few so mentally weak that they had to be returned. Some of them mixed well, readily adapting to their new environment, while others were often unhappy and non-co-operative. A weakness in our scheme was that we received no detailed case-histories which, had they been available, would have been a great help. Those whose parents did come to Western Australia mostly settled in well, for such children had the security of knowing they were loved, and that there was a father or a mother (rarely both) who was genuinely interested in their welfare. Usually such parent visited the Home regularly and took his child for outings, holidays and the week-end out. From some parents we received great co-operation and friendship, while from others we came in for a good deal of criticism, and at times serious antagonism, as though it was our fault that their child was in a Home. Some of the children remained with us for years, but in the case of those whose parents did follow them to Western Australia, the period of residence was usually very much shorter. In 1958, after a holiday in England, Mary and I brought back with us a party of eighteen girls and boys as child migrants to Swan. All of these had a parent who shortly afterwards followed them to Australia. Within two years every child who had accompanied us had left our establishment to live with his parent.

By the middle fifties a change in the official attitude towards child migration had developed. Both the Commonwealth and the State Departments were now showing little enthusiasm for it, replacing the former slogan: "The child is the best migrant" with "The child who accompanies his parents is the best migrant". As a result the emigration of "John Bull's surplus children" - as one author once described migrating boys and girls from English institutions - steadily declined till about 1960 it had almost ceased. Later we will examine the reasons for this.

#### **D. MAJOR PROJECTS AT SWAN:**

During this postwar period the Board of Management became most enthusiastic for further improvements at Swan, particularly in the living conditions of the girls and boys. The great success of the Hudleston project had fired the imagination of the members, so that further progress towards the ideal of a children's village became their great objective. "We must build more cottage homes". The result was that in the ten years 1947-1957 three new houses - they couldn't really be called cottages - were erected, two for girls and one for little boys.

The first of these was "Lee Steere House", built to accommodate twenty senior girls. Mary and I discussed our ideas for the building with our architect, Mr. Forbes, and he produced a good plan embodying these. But before we submitted it to the Board we spent our accumulated leave on a holiday in the Eastern States where we met most of the leaders in the field of child-care in Australia, and we were shown over no less than thirty-two institutions for children - State and voluntary. After our inspection of each establishment and our discussion with its Principal, we made notes on the building plan, its furnishing and equipment, and also on any other features of the institution which had particularly impressed us. On our return to Western Australia we made a further analysis of what we had seen, and we worked out the details we now felt ought to be included in our new structure. Armed with these we had another interview with Mr. Forbes and asked him if he would draw a fresh plan which, while based on the former design, would also incorporate our further suggestions. He did this and we were delighted with the revised plan. The house was to be a spacious structure with an attractive facade and was to include two large airy dormitories, at the ends of which were dressing cubicles each for a pair of girls, providing ample space for each resident to have her own clothing and other personal possessions - a place of her own. A very comfortable, well-furnished sitting room, a dining room where week-end meals and daily breakfast would be served from a well-equipped kitchen, a sewing room in which the girls would be taught dressmaking, a modern bathroom and laundry block, a sick-bay, a surgery, a reception room, and a room for any "old girl" visiting or returning from employment - all these features were included in the plan. Three members of staff were to be in residence - the housemistress, her assistant and a sewing mistress who would be responsible for the clothing needs of all girls in all sections of the institution.

When I presented the plan to the Board all the members were very impressed. But then came the inevitable question: "It's a wonderful plan but what will it cost?" Reluctantly I had to tell them that Mr. Forbes estimated the cost at £13,000. Their reaction was as I had feared: "We think the house as planned is ideal, but at that figure it's out of the question. Mr. Forbes will have to design something simpler and less expensive". So rather sadly I took the plan off the display board and began to roll it up. At this point Archbishop LeFanu quietly addressed the meeting. "I don't agree with the decision. I think we ought to go ahead with this building. Everyone of you believes, that as Mr. Peterkin has explained it, the plan is excellent, and is just what we want. If we cut anything out of it we will regret it for all time, because we will then have a building which we know could have been better planned. We've got the money, and in all probability we'll get substantial help from the Lotteries Commission. Now what about it?" Immediately the confidence of the members returned and they voted unanimously for its erection.

I didn't always have the Archbishop's support for my projects. I recall having a torrid argument with him over my proposal to establish the branch at Seaside House. Those who remember him will recall how fierce this giant of a man could be if crossed, and on that occasion I got the full blast of his opposition, so much so that one of the ladies on the Board afterwards told my wife that she "went hot and cold for Mr. Peterkin". But I stuck to my point of view that if we were to hold Coogee from squatters we had to occupy it, and the Board agreed. As he left that meeting the Archbishop came and shook hands with me - something I can never recall his doing on any other occasion at a meeting. Swan Homes certainly owed the building of Lee Steere House to his intervention and I am sorry he never lived to see it finished.

When the Lotteries Commission was approached for financial assistance with this project Mr. Kenneally's first question was: "Will the trainee boys be used in its building?" I told him that this was out of the question, since we now didn't have many, and of those we had, some were required to help at Padbury Farm School. "Have you tried the Government for its promised assistance in return for taking migrants?" he then asked. I replied that as all the planning of the house had taken place before there had been any question of such assistance being forthcoming I was doubtful whether the Minister would give the request any consideration at this late stage. "It's worth a try", said Mr. Kenneally. "Make the application and if it's refused we will see what the Commission can do". Accordingly I wrote to both the State and Commonwealth Ministers, and was delighted when I received a joint reply from them agreeing that each would pay one-third of the cost of erecting the house and its furnishings. The building was not completed till 1949 when it was opened on October 1st by Sir Ernest Lee Steere (Snr.), who together with Lady Lee Steere was among our most generous supporters, and after whom it was named.

The one remaining member of the Perth Girls' staff who had come from Adelaide Terrace to the Swan in 1942 was Miss Elsie Ahearn. She was now the Matron at Cornwell House, and when the senior girls were transferred to Lee Steere she accompanied them as housemistress, with the additional responsibility of the oversight of the other girls' houses - a position she was to hold for the next eight years. She was a person of strong character, ladylike and capable, devoted to the welfare of all the girls, who held her in their highest esteem. Originally she had been employed as the institution's sewing mistress, but she was also very competent in all the domestic arts and often filled in when there was staff shortage in the kitchen or laundry - something that happened all too frequently. She was keenly interested in the educational progress of the children, keeping a watchful eye on their evening prep and their school reports. If they were sick she nursed them, attending to their needs with sympathy and devotion. She also liked to share in the older girls' fun, and encouraged their interest in sport and dancing. At concert time she would work far into the night making the costumes for their items - and how attractive these looked on the stage! Miss Ahearn had an unusual combination of firmness and gentleness in dealing with girls and their problems that won both their confidence and their affection. She took a great pride in their appearance and in the care and management of their house. Of her charges one of the senior mistresses at Midland High School wrote to me: "They are an exceedingly nice lot of girls", while the Director of Child Welfare, after interviewing each of the older girl wards individually, said: "Though I mustn't be quoted" (he has since died), "I could not find the least trace of institutionalism in any of them". That tribute, coming from one who was highly critical of voluntary children's homes, was praise indeed.

The transfer of the last of the girls to their new house made it possible for the older boys once more to be accommodated in Cornwell. The segregation of the adolescent lads from younger boys was to prove beneficial to both groups. Now under the supervision of Mr. and Mrs. Gartner, and later that of Mr. and Mrs. Cope, the seniors were able to enjoy much more personal interest and family life than they had previously experienced, while the consequent reduction in numbers now living in the Waylen block ended the overcrowding there. At that time extensive renovations and improvements were carried out in that building, so that the plastering and painting of the walls, the supply of new beds and bedding, of curtains and matching quilts, some extra furniture which included chairs, tables and well-stocked bookshelves, the installation of new lighting, and with interesting pictures on its walls - this the gift of Canon Hamilton - the dormitories were now unrecognizable from the dingy places they previously had been. My first sight of their new appearance when set up to coincide with the opening of Lee Steere House, was one of my most moving experiences in my thirty years at Swan - more so, I think, than the completion of any other project.

During the period under review two more houses for children were erected, viz. Freeman House and Hamilton House. The former was built to provide accommodation for upper primary girls, and included many interesting features, the chief of which was the sleeping arrangement whereby the girls were bedded in rooms of four rather than in large open dormitories. It was also built under the Migration Agreement, with the institution having to meet only one-third of the cost of the erection and furnishings. But unlike the building of Lee Steere, this time we had to wait for a long period before the Government would agree to our proposal. We submitted Mr. Forbes' plan in 1950, but the building was not completed and ready for occupation till 1955 - five years of continuous frustration, especially to the architect who in bitter exasperation eventually wrote an angry letter to the State and Commonwealth Migration Departments setting out the history of the years of delay he had experienced in trying to obtain their permission to commence the project. But even his letter was of no avail. Not until I had a personal interview with Mr. Albert Hawke, the Premier of Western Australia, and pleaded our case with him did we receive the necessary authority to proceed.

Nor was that the end of our troubles with officialdom over Freeman House. Owing to a misunderstanding due to staff changes in Church Office, no claim was sent to the Governments for the final payment. Nor did the respective Departments forward their agreed balance due on the completion of the building. We learned about this five years later in a very unusual way. My old friend Dean Moore rang me up one day and told me that he had been informed by a man whom he had recently converted to Christianity, and who worked in the Public Service, that there was a large sum of money due to the Orphanage that was about to be paid back into Government Funds as unclaimed. I thanked the Dean, assuring him that I had no knowledge of this but would make immediate enquiries. Straightaway I rang the Chief Clerk of the Department concerned and was informed by a very agitated official that this was the case, adding very lamely: "We thought perhaps your institution was well off and didn't need it!" When we finally received our cheque we found that the State had reduced its share by £ 602:18:3. The conscientious clerk had gone back over our file for the previous twelve years and discovered that in 1949 our purchase of furniture and equipment for Lee Steere House had exceeded the amount originally agreed by that sum which now must be deducted from our claim for Freeman House. (He made no reference to our loss of about £ 1,000 in interest which we would have received had the settlement due for "Freeman" been made at the right time).

Although I had known nothing of any outstanding amount - in those days the Orphanage office did not handle our capital expenditure - I did recall something of the furnishing problem for Lee Steere House, in which the Department had insisted that all furniture and equipment was to be bought by the Government Stores or else with its authority. It got closer and closer to the day for the official opening and many ordered items had still not been supplied. I would ring up urgently, only to be told that our requirements were unavailable. Finally, in desperation because I wanted the children in residence just prior to opening, I decided that we must make any essential remaining purchase ourselves and I advised the Stores accordingly, permission to buy them being granted. Came the great day when, to our consternation, an hour before the official guests began to arrive, and with the public beginning to assemble in front of the building, there suddenly arrived a Government vehicle with goods which had been originally ordered but not yet supplied by the Stores. Desperately some of the staff unloaded it, the work continuing at the back door while the Archbishop was blessing the house and Sir Ernest was unlocking the front door. When it was all over we found that we had two of numbers of pieces of equipment, some of which the Stores had already supplied - for example two very expensive doctor's examination couches for our small surgery! We returned the unwanted duplicates, but whether we ever received credit for them I do not remember. Early in 1960 we did receive £4,147:17:5 which was the adjusted balance for the new house due to us five years earlier.

"Freeman" was named after Mrs. Freeman, wife of an early manager of Foy and Gibson's store in Hay Street. At the time we were told that for years she had been undecided whether to leave her money to a home for children or to one for cats. Fortunately for us, she decided in our favour. It was a very generous legacy for which we felt most grateful, for it met our share of the cost of this lovely house. As it stands today a second wing has been added to it since its erection, and some alterations have been made to the interior to help meet the increased demand for accommodation required for girls at Swanleigh.

So by the end of 1955 all our girls were living in one of the four houses - Hudleston, Forrest, Lee Steere or Freeman. The Board next turned its attention to the further improvement of the boys' section, where the group that had the least satisfactory living conditions were our little boys. We had heard that the English Migration Commission that had visited our institution in the mid-fifties had described Swan Homes as ranging from "Park Lane to Stepney" - the latter a reference to our boys' kindergarten. Actually the parallel was very unfair to conditions in the little boys' section. The dormitory was indeed somewhat crowded, but the other parts were comfortable and attractive. However it was decided that our next building should be a new home for these little chaps. An application for it to be built under the Migration Agreement was rejected, but our old friends, the Lotteries Commission, agreed to help us on a £1 for £1 basis. The institution's share was met from the Hamilton Bequest, and the house was then erected and named after the Canon. It was a delightful place, exceedingly well-planned by Mr. Forbes, and it received great admiration from visitors. In 1958 my wife and I visited children's homes in U.S.A. and Britain, but nowhere did we see institutional accommodation for little boys that compared with that provided in Hamilton House. In it they were mothered with loving care by Mrs. Volt who for some years had been in charge of them in the old kindergarten. Now she was almost bursting with pride at being appointed Cottage-mother of Swan's "glamour house". Years afterwards her little boys, now grown to adolescents, still remembered her with affection, and when one time she decided to retire, a group of them - some in their Leaving Certificate



year (nowadays Year 12) - of their own volition organised a party for her to thank her for her care of them so many years before, and to wish her well in her retirement. She was very touched by this expression of their gratitude.

Those three houses - Lee Steere, Freeman and Hamilton - were our main accommodation projects in this period. Every year, however, the annual report included many less spectacular but useful improvements to conditions in the establishment. As an example, in the 1951 report it is recorded that a tumbler and a power-blower were installed in the laundry. In the kitchen several new stainless steel units were supplied, making that department not only more attractive in appearance but also more hygienic and so much easier to keep clean. Two of the cottages each received a refrigerator and a washing machine. Several verandahs were louvred to provide additional space for sleeping accommodation. A set of steel lock-up lockers was purchased for the eighty-four boys then living in the Waylen Block, so that each might have a place in which to keep secure his special possessions. The old wooden stairway at the back of Waylen was replaced by a steel one. Venetian blinds and curtains were placed in the main dining room, making it cooler in summer, and enhancing its attractiveness. Through the kindness of Mr. Bevan of Gingin the senior boys at Cornwell House received the gift of a full-sized billiard table which provided them with a very popular amenity. A Morris panel van was purchased to replace our worn-out "Chevrolet". Much exterior painting, including the roofs of Waylen, Brown and Cornwell Houses, was carried out. All that in one year! But every year had its list of improvements.

The record of this period at Swan would not be complete without at least a passing reference to some other important changes which improved the living conditions for the residents. Our institution stood in the heart of the State's principal vineyard area, but we grew no grapes and rarely ever received a gift of any. Early in 1952 a property on the opposite side of the river to us with a well-established vineyard and a sizeable house was to be offered for auction. I pointed out to the Board that if it were purchased it would provide us with not only a supply of grapes for table use, but there would also be a return from the sale of currants, sultanas and wine grapes, while the house would help solve the problem of our inadequate staff accommodation. Members liked the suggestion and authorised us to bid up to about £6,000 for the property. It became ours for £6,500, and from then on all of us at the institution were able to enjoy plenty of delicious grapes in season.

On the retirement of Mr. Gartner the management of the farm and vineyard passed to Mr. Cope, who, with Mrs. Cope, then became the houseparents of the boys at Cornwell. He was keen that further improvements in our farming should take place, and in his time additional clearing and cultivation with much re-fencing was undertaken. Two new bores were put down - one a very deep one that gave ample supplies of good water for our lawns and gardens, and in later years, for our playing fields. The purchase of a modern milking machine and separator improved our dairying, for with the decrease in the number of trainees such installation had become a necessity. As previously mentioned Mr. Cope also did much towards the beautification of the Swan Homes by laying out the paths and gardens and the planting of lawns, shrubs, flowers and trees. Visitors were always delighted with the scene as they walked along Yule Avenue, with the river on one side and the interesting variety of architecture and the gardens and trees on the other. In later years the mother of an enrolling hostel student once said to me: "I came to see for myself whether Swanleigh is really as attractive in appearance as it looks in your prospectus". "And is it?" I asked. "It's even better",

she replied. I was always sorry, however, that so many visitors missed seeing Cornwell House. Standing above Jane Brook and looking across the green playing fields this old building had great charm and more atmosphere of homeliness than the others, while its roses and trees planted by Mr. Cope made it the best of all our gardens.

In their interiors each building had its attractive features, but throughout the institution these were enhanced by lovely pictures. As stated earlier this was largely due to the generosity of Canon Hamilton who maintained that it was most important that children should grow up in as beautiful an atmosphere as possible. When he died he bequeathed a few of his collection of paintings by leading Australian artists to his friends, while the remainder formed part of the residue of his estate which he left to the Swan Homes. I was urged to sell these but refused to do so. "It was always the Canon's wish that the Orphanage children should have good pictures on the walls", I explained. "I propose to distribute the present pictures in the library - an earlier gift from him - among the houses, and replace them with the originals that have now come to us in Dick's will". His sister, Miss Elizabeth Hamilton, thoroughly approved of the decision and the Board also agreed. So it is that today Swanleigh has this valuable collection of art.

Then there was the bus. Previously when we took children on a outing they had to travel on the truck, with two forms for seating and a canvas cover for protection from the weather. If any number had to be transported, it was very crowded and uncomfortable. Should the road have the wrong camber the height of the covered vehicle could be dangerous. Most of the children, however, seemed to enjoy riding on it, though the senior girls were sometimes upset by offensive jibes made at them from the footpaths. One day I received an unexpected 'phone call from Mr. Kenneally who told me that the Commission would like to see how things were going at Swan. "Could they possibly come today after the Lottery draw?" "Come and have lunch and we'll inspect afterwards", I replied. We always enjoyed a visit from the Commissioners, not only because they were generous to the institution but because they were good company, and our relations were of the friendliest. After the meal I enquired of the Chairman what the Commissioners would particularly like to see. "Actually", said Mr. Kenneally, "we haven't come to inspect anything. We've come to talk to you. We are surprised that we haven't received a request from you for about two years, and we are wondering if there's anything you are particularly needing". This was indeed a change because on other occasions it was always us on the applying end. I thought for a moment and then said: "If there's one thing above everything else that I'd like to see given to Swan it's a bus!" I went on to explain our problem in transporting children on outings, stressing that we now had a good many adolescent girls, some of whom felt self-conscious when riding on the truck through city and suburbs. They saw people staring at them and I told them about the occasional cat-calls and unpleasant jeers. The Chairman pondered a little over the request. "We've never been asked to donate a bus before. How much would it cost?" I replied that I had already made some enquiries and had found that it would be about £3,000. After some discussion, the Commission decided to give us £1,500 towards its purchase - and so we got our first bus, the "Bluebird". In it we placed a small brass plate inscribed: "To the children of the Swan Homes. The gift of the Lotteries Commission". We invited Mr. Kenneally and his fellow members to come and see it. They did so, and before leaving us the Chairman told me that it had been decided to make the words on the tablet completely true. "The Commission is going to donate the whole of the cost of the bus to you", he said. That was in 1952. When we left Swan at the end of 1971 that bus was still in daily use. It was then on its third engine.

Mr. Kenneally was a Roman Catholic and was sometimes accused of looking after the institutions of his own denomination more generously than he did those of the Church of England. To that accusation I always replied that as the Roman Catholics did far more than any other church in caring for under-privileged children they deserved the most support from the Commission. "For my part", I would add, "I have always found Mr. Kenneally to be most fair and straight-forward in his dealings with us. He critically examines every request we make. His comments on our projects are shrewd and helpful, and I don't recall his ever totally rejecting any application by us for assistance. At all times I believe he has been a good friend to the Anglican Homes".

Finally the period under review saw a great improvement in the living conditions that were provided for members of staff. When we arrived in 1942, these were very substandard, so much so that I felt ashamed when showing any applicants for employment their prospective quarters. But with the passing of years these were steadily improved. Better standards of accommodation for children were matched by the provision of better quality furniture, floor coverings and curtains in staff bedrooms, until the time came when all house staff were boarded under reasonably comfortable conditions. Domestic staff in residence, however, were still not very well catered for, and in 1955 it was decided to correct this by building a block of staff quarters. In this we provided comfortable beds, very good furniture, modern bathrooms, a kitchenette and a common room. The block was erected from the generous proceeds of a bequest made to us by a Fremantle business man and was named after him. Visitors invariably smiled when they were told: "This building is the staff quarters. It is called 'Knapp House'".

#### *E. EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS:*

In the Annual Report for 1944 it stated: "Twenty children are attending Midland Junction Central School. We have one boy in the IXth Standard, (Now Year X), one girl and several boys in the VIIIth Standard, and the balance are in the VIIth." Seven years later the Annual Report includes the following paragraph: "It is our policy to retain a boy or girl at school for as long as he or she shows interest and ability. The present position is that two of our ex-boys are being partially supported at the University and one is at Muresk, while of those still attending school there are three at Guildford Grammar (Midland did not then go beyond Standard IX), three are full-time students at Perth Technical School, 57 are attending High School at Midland, Fremantle or Mt. Helena, and two are at Denmark School of Agriculture. In other words 35 per cent of our enrolment is being educated at a post-primary level ranging from Standard VII to the University". It was a percentage which was to remain fairly constant until the end of the Swan Homes period (1959).

So along with the steady improvement in the living conditions of the Orphanage children which we have been describing there was also considerable progress towards this goal of higher education for all older children. It was not long before the practice of taking them away from school the day they turned fourteen, putting them through a period of trainee-ship and then out to work, which, with a few exceptions, had been the policy in the past, ceased altogether. Now a child remained at school until at least the end of the year in which he or she turned fourteen, with the majority staying on after that for a further year or perhaps longer. The trainee system was completely abandoned.

About the same time the Education Department decided that in future any primary school children above the average age for Grade VII should transfer to High School at the beginning of their next school year, irrespective of what standard they were in. This was a very desirable change of policy because such children then became High School students, wearing the necessary uniform and conforming to the school's routine. Their course of studies might be elementary compared with that of the majority enrolled, but that would not be apparent to an outside observer. Previously such children had often been conspicuous in the Primary School playground because of their size, but now this went unnoticed as they moved among the older students. Their limited academic ability might present problems to their teachers, but their improved status as High School pupils was very good for their self-respect. Later when they went to employment they could say: 'I went to High School'. I have already mentioned that Mr. Rogers had found a number of children to be on the Burt Backward Scale. Now such girls and boys automatically transferred to the High School when they reached the age to do so, and they benefited greatly by the promotion. At that time, as a result of world-wide educational research there were new teaching techniques being introduced which aimed at combatting weaknesses in basic subjects - especially reading. These worked wonders in the classroom, and the opportunity to profit by them now became available to any of our scholastically weaker girls or boys.

This drive to encourage our children to remain longer at school did not only come from the Homes' policy. The Headmasters and members of the staff of the High Schools at which our children were enrolled constantly urged them to do this. Especially was this the case at Midland where the Headmaster, Mr. Norman McLeod, took a special interest in children from the Swan Homes. He was a personal friend of my wife and myself, for at one time we were both on the staff of one of his previous schools, where our relationship with him, both in and out of school, had been a happy one. Now in our new capacity we again became associated with him and so were able to discuss very amicably any problems or suggestions regarding any of our children on his enrolment. We felt that it was most fortunate that our girls and boys were attending a school under his direction, for he was widely regarded as an outstanding principal who achieved high standards in both staff and pupils.

But it was not only in Midland that our establishment received excellent co-operation from the school. At Middle Swan, Fremantle, Coogee, Beaconsfield, Mt. Helena and Guildford Grammar - all schools that at one time or another during this period had children from our Homes on their enrolment - we found the Headmasters consistently interested in them and anxious to promote their educational welfare. In fact during the whole of my thirty years at Swan I cannot recall a single incident in which I had reason to complain about lack of co-operation between the school principal and any section of our Homes.

It will be recalled that there were two previous periods in the history of our establishment when some outstanding boys received the opportunity of remaining at school for higher education. There was a group that went to Guildford Grammar in the Rev. Armstrong's time (see page 27). But to do so a boy of that time had first to win a Secondary School Scholarship, and each year only fifty of these were awarded for the whole State. Then in Mr. Birch's later years a few of the brighter boys were permitted to remain at Midland for the three post-primary standards in order to sit for the Junior Certificate. There is no mention in the Annual Reports of any girl from Perth Girls' Orphanage ever getting such an opportunity. Indeed it would appear that it was not

till 1947 that one succeeded in passing the Junior. But from then onwards there was an ever-increasing number of candidates from Swan Homes sitting for that examination, most of whom passed. The question of their continuing for the Leaving Certificate was a difficult one because the only State School they could then attend was Perth Modern, situated at West Leederville, and getting them there from Middle Swan presented a transport difficulty.

In 1949 through the kindness of Canon Hamilton, a boy was enrolled at Guildford Grammar to study for the Leaving, which he succeeded in passing. He was our first Leaving candidate for thirty years! After the Canon's death the Board helped this lad through his first year at the University, at the end of which he was awarded a scholarship enabling him to proceed to the National Forestry School in Canberra where he completed his degree, gaining the highest marks in Australia in his final year of Forestry. (In later years he was to receive the medal of the American Tree Society for outstanding work on the problem of jarrah die-back in West Australian forests). Eight boys from Swan Homes attended Guildford Grammar as day scholars during this period, two gaining admission by winning Coombe Scholarships, the others being supported either by the Board or by a parent or an interested friend. One of these lads was invited by the Headmaster to become a boarder and be captain of one of the school's boarding houses - an honour which we were proud for him to accept.

In the mid-1950's Midland Central School became Midland Senior High, introducing Leaving Certificate courses, so that students living in the school's contributory area no longer had to travel to Modern School or go to a college if they wished to matriculate or study for the Leaving. One of our girls was in the first of Midland's upper-school classes and she succeeded in passing that exam - certainly the first girl in the history of the institution to do so.

Mention has just been made of the success of two of our boys in gaining Coombe Scholarships. This was quite an achievement as only three of these were awarded each year. About the same time several other members of Swan Homes received noteworthy distinctions, including the prize awarded by the Federal Institute of Accountants for the candidate obtaining the highest marks in the State in Junior English and Commercial subjects, which was won by one of our girls. Then there was a "Western Mail" Scholarship to Muresk; a Masonic Scholarship; two Army Apprentices Scholarships and two Air Force Apprenticeship Scholarships; several Teaching and Nursing Bursaries, and a number of Commonwealth Scholarships. Most of these awards were designed to enable the recipient to undertake further education, and our children were encouraged to apply for them. It is also good to be able to record that after leaving Swan a number of our girls and boys were very successful academically. One gained First Class Honours in English at the university, while another received distinction in almost every subject in two Engineering Diplomas. Several girls eventually became fully qualified nurses and some girls and boys received the Trained Teacher's Certificate from the Teachers' College. One of the boys who had run away during my first night at Swan but returned the next day, ultimately studied accountancy and came first in W.A. and third in Australia in his Final Accountancy and Auditing Diploma examination. Another who worked on the building of Huddleston House won the award of the Technical College for the outstanding apprentice of the year for two years in succession — an honour one of our migrant boys was also to receive in a later year.

One of the factors that helped the Homes' children achieve better school results was the introduction of supervised "prep" each evening. Previously any homework or study

had to be carried out in the noisy atmosphere of the House sitting room or the library. Such conditions were not conducive to the attainment of good marks, so that where success was gained it was particularly commendable.

In concluding this section here are two quotations each giving the impression gained by an independent observer of the Swan boys and girls at school in 1950. The first referred to those then attending Middle Swan Primary, and is an extract from the Annual Report on the school by the District Inspector. He wrote: "One cannot help appreciating the positive attitude of the children from the Swan Homes towards their schooling, their evident happiness and very good general demeanour. These features reflect creditably upon the institution from which they come." The second is contained in a letter from Mr. McLeod and refers to the High School students from the Swan: "I am strongly impressed with their general healthy condition, their dress and bearing, their pleasing attitude to worthwhile activities, their positive outlook on life. I am pleased to note, too, the great interest taken in their educational progress and their standing in the school". Such unsolicited testimonials made pleasant reading, but what interested me most was that two men, widely experienced in assessing children, should each be impressed with what they described as the "positive attitude" of our girls and boys. This is the opposite of the popular conception of orphan and underprivileged children who are so often described in such terms as "shy", "retiring", "subdued", "self-effacing", "shrinking", "woe-begone", "unfortunate" and the like. It would seem that the girls and boys of Swan were becoming personalities rather than nonentities in the school — applauded rather than pitied. In this connection it is interesting to compare the faces of children in photos taken in early Orphanage days with those of Swan Homes' times. As a leading churchman said after watching them on the stage at one of our concerts: "They look so alive!"

#### *F. NEW RECREATIONAL FEATURES:*

Our earlier attempts to introduce more leisure-time activities into the lives of the children have already been described, and most of these were maintained throughout the whole of the Swan Homes' period. Each year the Christmas Camp at Coogee was conducted by the Lumpers, but under steadily improving conditions, because Seaside House, now in permanent occupation, was furnished so very much better than in earlier times. Previously the boys had slept on palliasses out in the open. Now they had beds and mattresses within the building. In the kitchen better cooking and serving facilities were available, while the new bathrooms with their hot and cold showers were a popular amenity — so very different from the crude bathing arrangements of former years. An enlarged dining hall made mealing conditions much less crowded and also more pleasant for any evening entertainment. The girls and boys received a good many invitations to pictures from the proprietors of cinemas in the area, and these outings were supplemented by films shown at Coogee by members of the M.I.O.C., using the projector which they had purchased for use in Seaside House. Now with a bus as well as a truck to provide transport it was easier to arrange more outings and picnics, so that these became a feature of the camp, with trips each year to Serpentine Falls, Mandurah and Rockingham, as well as excursions into Fremantle.

But the highlight of the holiday was the trip to Garden Island in the "Wandoo". What a day that was! An early start from Coogee to East Street jetty had to be made, followed by the packing on board of all the boxes of food and drink (three half-sized bottles of "pop" for every child — one for on the way, one for lunch, one for the

return journey). Then a van would arrive loaded with trays and trays of delicious cakes and pastries. These would be carefully stored, and finally when everything and everybody was aboard we were off. Under the bridges we went with everyone whistling or shouting. Then through the harbour — always an interesting experience — and out into Gage Roads where we often got quite a toss. There followed the long ocean ride to the south-eastern end of the island. Arrived there, the children would swim or fish or stroll along the beach or scramble across the high sand hills to the surf on the other side. Picnic lunch on the jetty followed, and then no swim for an hour. "Please, Sir, is the hour up yet?" "Ten minutes to go" I reply. More pleading queries. Then my whistle sounds and there is a mighty splash as they all dive in. 3.30 p.m. approaches and word is passed around — "Out of bathers and into clothes — it's just about time to leave". The "Wandoo's" siren sounds a warning and the children scramble aboard. The count commences and inevitably there is someone missing, so that a group of searchers has to be sent out. "There they are!" is the shout as a couple of boys are sighted running along the shore from the shop where they have been making last minute purchases. "All present" we indicate to the skipper as the shoppers and searchers breathlessly reach the jetty. Interested spectators cast off the mooring ropes and we're on our way, past the warships and round the corner of Careening Bay. Then afternoon tea is served to the children who file round the deck past the provision cases, selecting their cake, fruit and favourite cool drink. Now for many of them drowsiness sets in. But as we leave the shelter of the island an occasional wave sprays over the port side and there is scurry and laughter as the wet ones seek a more sheltered spot. Fremantle Harbour again and under the bridges once more. The "Wandoo" slows up and it's "Full Astern", then "Stop", as our boat ties up alongside East Street jetty once more. "Goodbye Mr. Prince" (the owner-skipper) from us all. "See you next year". So the great day is over and the weary sunburnt youngsters clamber into the bus.

Two other features of the camps helped to make them a very popular event. The first was that as the Lumpers were still conducting Saturday evening dances they invited the older girls and boys to attend these while they were at Coogee. The girls were very keen, for by now they were thoroughly familiar with most of the "old time" dances and they got plenty of partners. The boys were not so enthusiastic — not because they didn't like dancing, for that phase had long since passed — but they felt reticent about asking strangers who were usually much older than them to get up with them in a public dance. Realising this, I arranged for the girls when back at Swan to be transported to Fremantle on Saturday nights while the boys were in camp. So the problem of partners for the boys was overcome. Saturday night then became an eagerly-awaited reunion for our adolescents.

The other feature was the large number of visitors particularly while the boys were in camp. On Sunday nights many of the Lumpers' friends and supporters would attend and stay for the evening meal, and while there they would make a great fuss of the boys. Mr. Stanton, however, was never too enthusiastic about this arrangement, for it appeared to him that some of those present had given little help in the Committee's fund-raising. "Who's that man?" I would sometimes ask a scowling Mr. Stanton. "Never saw him in my life", was the angry reply. But our normally genial friend was delighted when on two occasions I invited the Governor, Sir Charles Gairdner, to come to lunch. His Excellency accepted our invitations, but with one proviso. He insisted he dine with the boys. When he arrived he moved among them exchanging pleasantries. Then he visited the kitchen and chatted with Albert and Roy O'Byrne and Jock Stewart. Finally all sat down to a very happy lunch. At the end we felt that Sir Charles had enjoyed coming down just as much as we did having him with us.

As well as the annual camp we continued the week-end-out and the Saturday night pictures and socials. The choir still made its broadcasts at Christmas and Easter, and there were many visits by youth groups and concert parties, especially during the festive season. In fact in some years there were too many of these at this time, so that our girls and boys sometimes became a little bored with it all — too much of a good thing! I used to feel sorry for some of the groups whom I sensed were resentful that the children did not show the degree of appreciation that had been expected. In some years the number of parties seeking to come reached a point at which I refused offers of entertainment, suggesting to the organisers that their group pay us a visit during the following year instead of at Christmas — a proposal that was not always accepted graciously. I am sure it was felt that I was denying Homes' children pleasure. This was very far from the truth, but I did know how my girls and boys felt about having to sit through so many parties.

With the passing of years there were several new features introduced into our Activities Programme, five of which are worthy of some description. The first was the commencement of a ballet and theatrical dancing class. That came about this way. When the girls came from Adelaide Terrace I felt many of them were rather hoydenish and lacking in grace and poise in their movements. Nor did they respond well to correction in this matter, for correct speech, quiet manners and good carriage were too often openly despised. A girl who observed these things was considered to be "showing-off", which was resented by the others. Some have since told me that when they first arrived they deliberately cultivated crudeness of speech and manner — "ocker" is the colloquial word for it — for fear of being ridiculed. One day I happened to mention to a lady cooking for me at the time that I wished I could get someone to teach the girls to dance and hold themselves properly. "My daughter would come willingly", she replied. I admit I was somewhat taken aback by the suddenness of the offer. "Has your daughter much experience of dancing?" I asked. "Oh yes", she replied, "she's been on the stage". So I asked if the young lady would come and see me, and a few days later Mrs. Fiorella Smith (her present name) arrived. "Yes, she would like to take a class on Saturday mornings". "And the fee?" I enquired. "No fees", she replied, "I'd just like to do it for the girls"

So began our institution's long association with Mrs. Smith. For the next fifteen years she came every Saturday morning, except in school holiday time, accepting nothing except her fares, teaching all girls a variety of dances including an introduction to ballet, as well as national, tap, acrobatic, chorus routines and variety. Often it must have been almost heartbreakingly difficult for her because so many of the girls were distinterested, being present only because they had to come. Few practised their steps so that it took a long time to learn each dance. Fortunately, although a good many did not enjoy the classes, they did like Mrs. Smith. She had a bright, gay personality, never losing her temper with them nor scolding them over-much. She possessed a keen sense of humour. "Not like that, dear. Raise your arms softly. You look as if you are trying to push up a window that's got stuck. Try it this way" — and she would demonstrate. With years of professional training and stage work behind her she knew just what was required, and the girls would "get the picture". After a long struggle the various dances did begin to take shape and the children became more interested. With the passing of years the younger ones, who had learnt some foundation routines on which Mrs. Smith could build, grew older so that her task became a little easier than at first.



Out of this new activity a suggestion was made that we give a concert. What could we include in a programme? The choir and the dancing class could provide items, but that was hardly enough for a whole evening. Then I recalled that in the Perth Boys' School concerts, with which, years before I had been actively associated, there were always some gymnastic displays included. Our standard in this was then not very high but the vaulting horse work was fair and I found a book on pyramids. Both these items would be spectacular and would give a good many boys the opportunity of participating. Canon Hamilton then came forward and offered to produce a one-act play, while Mary undertook to do a couple of items with the tinies. With the remainder of the boys we worked out some comic items — and there was our programme. On December 11th, 1946, we gave our first concert, presented in the Burt Hall in Perth before a packed audience.

I have that programme before me as I write. Altogether there were twenty-two items, ten of which were produced by Mrs. Smith. The children really rose to the occasion and the audience was most appreciative of their efforts and of the lovely costumes made by Miss Ahearn for the dances. In producing it on that stage we had to face great difficulties. Dressing had to be done in a lower hall and the performers made their entrance walking up steps — which does not help anyone, let alone inexperienced juveniles. The stage area was very small for some of the numbers — especially for gymnastics — and there was little space in the very limited wings area for the storage of the apparatus and for properties for the play. The curtain, too, was a problem — in fact a rather dangerous one. It was of the roll up-and-down type, heavily leaded at the base to weigh it down. It had, therefore, to be lowered very carefully and those in control had to be sure that all performers were well clear. At one point I stole the show by failing to get away from it as it was being raised. The result was that I too went up a couple of feet — a sort of Marx Brothers' act which brought the house down with hilarity and applause.

Those of us producing items were well pleased with the children's effort and the reception they received — so much so that a suggestion that we repeat the performance early the following year and use the proceeds for assisting the "Food for Britain" Appeal then current, was enthusiastically adopted. That concert was held the following April and out of the proceeds we were able to send four large packing cases of groceries to the Royal Albert Orphanage in Worcester, where Canon Hamilton had been Chaplain during his curacy years. In due course we received a very appreciative letter from the institution expressing surprise and delight with the gift.

With the exception of 1958 when we were overseas, the concert became an annual and eagerly-awaited event. After a time we changed the venue from the Burt Hall to give one presentation in the Perth Town Hall and a repeat performance in the Midland Town Hall. When the Governor Stirling Senior High School was built, the Principal allowed us the use of the large well-appointed school hall for our entertainment. It had a seating capacity of well over a thousand, and so well-attended were the Swanleigh presentations that there were always people having to stand. Throughout the years we maintained the original rule that every girl and boy on the enrolment must appear on stage in at least one item so that each resident made some contribution to the programme, even if only as a member of the choir or in the pyramid team.

Somewhat allied to the concerts were the fairly frequent visits to selected theatrical entertainments in Perth. Both my wife and I were great lovers of the theatre and we felt that most of the older children would also appreciate shows such as Gilbert and

Sullivan, and musical comedies and some plays, and, in the case of girls, ballet. In this we were supported by Canon Hamilton who sometimes met the whole of the expense of the outing. In later years very large groups were taken to the "Playhouse" or "His Majesty's" and we were always warmly welcomed by the House Staff, who not only appreciated the support for the production — and in this we were treated generously — but they were pleased that we were trying to arouse interest in theatre. The ushers often remarked to me how well the children behaved, and how delighted they were to have them in the audience — "Never any trouble — such a contrast with some parties who attend". For our part, so popular were these outings that I think the most severe penalty I could impose was to exclude a mis-behaving child from the next theatre party. I once overheard a prefect "telling-off" an offender. "You watch yourself tonight, Smithy, and no funny business. We don't want to be cut out of any theatre parties".

Then there were the tours. Each year from 1947 to 1959 a party of about fifteen boys and one of girls were taken on separate tours of the South-West lasting about ten days. In introducing this innovation we had three objects in mind. First it was hoped that they would be educational, enabling girls and boys, many of whom had spent so much of their lives in an institution, to see something of the State in which they lived — some of its scenery and industries and towns. Secondly they would be an enjoyable experience — an adventure — with opportunities for fun and excitement as we viewed interesting places such as going down a coal mine, climbing the "Gloucester Tree", riding on the rake at Pemberton, seeing the beautiful Lake Cave at Margaret River and the awesome Devil's Gap at Albany, sailing up the Frankland River with Mr. Swarbrick in his "Lady Walpole" and watching the fascinating reflections; dancing with the Agricultural School students at Denmark; climbing the "Devil's Slide" in the Porongorups or riding a horse on Mr. Taylor's farm at Tambellup. Yes, there were always plenty of exciting things to do and see, and in between times travelling in the relaxed atmosphere of the truck and later, the bus — far from the routine existence of institution and school. Then, thirdly, they would be an important exercise in social training because the nights were to be spent in the homes of people in each centre visited. Billeting was arranged by the Parish Church or the local C.W.A. When we arrived for our overnight stop the lady hosts would be there to meet the children who would then be allocated — one or two to this lady and another couple to that. Off they would go, and the staff accompanying the party would usually see them no more till starting time next morning. Then after farewells, and often with an invitation to come and spend Christmas with the host, the group would leave for the next point on its itinerary. While I was driving I would hear excited chatter and laughter as each member would describe her experience while in her billet. The tour was a never-to-be-forgotten experience for those participating, especially the kindness and generosity of those who hosted them. I remember one lady asking young Bill how long he had been looking forward to his turn to go on tour. "For just eight years", he replied.

A leisure-time activity that became an important feature of our programme at this time was the re-introduction of scouting. It will be recalled that this was strong early in Mr. Birch's time at Swan, but in his latter years its importance in the institution life had declined, and by the time my management commenced, it had ceased. But in 1946 when Mr. Robertson was seeking collectors for the annual Street Appeal, he was approached by a young man who offered to help, suggesting he wear his naval uniform. Mr. Robertson readily accepted his offer, and Perth had the unusual sight of an Engineer-Commander with two rows of decorations on his uniform rattling a col-

lector's can in Hay Street. Pedestrians crowded round to give this cheery handsome officer a donation. Anyone familiar with awards could see from the ribbons on his chest that he was quite distinguished, for these included the Distinguished Service Cross and the Reserve Decoration, the former awarded him for his being responsible for keeping afloat a destroyer badly disabled by submarine action and getting it back to port with its surviving crew. Later he was to add to his decorations the O.B.E. for outstanding services, not only to our Homes, but to a number of community causes.

This was the beginning of our association with Commander Jock Anderson — "Skip" to most of us. He was already Scoutmaster of Bayswater Sea Scouts when he suggested that a small group of our lads might like to join and be trained as foundation patrol leaders of a troop which he suggested we commence the following year. Several boys volunteered and participated in the annual "Jamborette" the following Christmas holidays. Then, with financial and other support from the Bassendean and Bayswater troops, "St. Mary's Own" was started, under Commander Anderson's leadership. The troop soon grew in numbers and in scoutcraft, winning the award for the most efficient troop at the Jamborette held that year.

But the troop's interest was not only in scouting. The boys received special commendation from the Hon. the Minister for Public Health (Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver) for service to boys suffering from the effects of poliomyelitis. For several years our scouts had taken some of these afflicted lads on excursions and camps, and in so-doing had given the handicapped boys a great deal of pleasure. One afternoon Madame the Minister presented the troop with a beautiful picture as a token of appreciation from the boys and their parents for its kindness. In time it became the custom for the troop to invite the polio lads to our concert, placing them on mattresses in front of the first row of the audience, where, dressed in the sea-scout uniform and wearing the scarf of St. Mary's Own, they thoroughly enjoyed the programme. For me it was a touching spectacle to see these children, their eyes shining with excitement, watching our boys doing their gymnastics and burlesques on the stage. Alas! they would never be able to participate in such physical activity. If I found a "Swanny" wallowing in self-pity I would sometimes remind him of those boys on their mattresses. "They're the ones I feel sorry for", I would tell him. "not you with all your physical strength and faculties". I was also much moved when on one occasion I was asked to accompany some of the troop to the Hospital where these polio boys were inmates. When we got there we found our friends in bed, but ready to commence a concert which they had arranged as a surprise. Each boy had worked out an item which he then presented from his bed. I suppose as entertainment these would not rate very highly, but to me the whole idea — their's — was a fine achievement both in intention and presentation.

We had another association with Jock that was of great importance to us. He had been appointed Engineer-in-Charge at Royal Perth Hospital (that was how he first became interested in the polio boys) and on numerous occasions he made time or gave up week-ends to install, overhaul or repair our machinery, especially in the laundry. So often did he help us in this way that we referred to him as our "Honorary Engineer". Nothing was too much for him, and when help was needed he would get into his overalls with a smile and the job would be under way.

In 1955 Commander Anderson resigned to take an important position in Tasmania — a decision which from our point of view was greatly regretted. On the occasion my feelings were expressed in the following statement included in my monthly report to the Board: "I am sure every member will join me in expressing regret at the departure

of Commander Anderson. The work he has carried out in our Homes in a voluntary capacity since he first became associated with them is beyond praise. His great interest in our boys, especially those who normally do not get away for leave and holidays, his keenness in obtaining requirements for us gratis or at gift rates, his personal efforts in carrying out our repairs and installations, and his enthusiastic support for all activities of our institutions and of proposals for their improvement have not only saved the Board hundreds of pounds, but is a record of service that could scarcely be surpassed.

It is sometimes said that no man is indispensable. That may be true. But it is equally true to say that there are some men whom it is well-nigh impossible to replace. I include Jock Anderson in this category, for how we will get on without him I don't know. On so many occasions when faced with a mechanical breakdown or similar difficulty I have telephoned him and told him about it. Invariably his answer has been: 'I'll be right up', or 'Send it down and we'll fix it'.

I could go on and write at length of his assistance to allied institutions for children. But the Board knows these things. I could elaborate on the service he has rendered to other organisations in this State — to the Scout Movement as a whole, to the Sea-cadets, the Naval Reserve, Legacy — to mention some. An appeal to him by any worthy cause was always assured of a sympathetic and a practical response. I cannot but feel that the loss of such a man to this State is a heavy one; for in an age characterised by so much selfishness, it is rare to find men prepared to give not merely money — that is often the easy way out — but their time and their personal efforts. That is what Commander Anderson has done”.

An even younger man who helped Jock with his scouting work for us was a senior patrol-leader of the Bassendean Troop; named Victor Davis. When the Commander left W.A., Vic became our Scoutmaster — a position he was to hold for the next fifteen years. Later he joined the staff as our Building Maintenance Officer, in which capacity he was most useful to us; for besides being a tradesman carpenter he had a good working knowledge of plumbing, electrician's work and motor mechanics. He made himself available at all hours, and it was very seldom that he failed to rectify the fault. Equally important to us was the fact that he carried on Jock's scheme of including in the scout camps those boys who at such times had nowhere else to go. Even if they were not scouts, if they cared to come to the camp they were welcome. So by the enthusiastic efforts of Commander Anderson, and later of Victor Davis, scouting was re-introduced into Swan and maintained continuously. At the time of writing (1979) I understand that it is still as strong as ever.

There remains one more important feature of our Activities Programme in these years to which I must make reference. Most of the innovations so far described were of a social or cultural character — dancing, scouting, tours, concerts, outings to the theatre. But side by side with these, and the improvements in the children's living conditions, and our efforts to foster their undertaking higher education, there was the encouragement of sport. Team games became increasingly important, with the institution joining district associations organized for this purpose. At first only the boys participated in these, but in the last years of the Swan Homes the girls also fielded several teams in the local basketball competition — and with some success, too, for the “Bluebirds” twice won the premiership cup in their division. We also instituted annual “at home and away” football matches with Clontarf and Fairbridge. These were keenly contested games, with the additional advantage that they were always associated with a popular social event. The match with Clontarf was followed by a “High Tea” and pictures

at our respective institutions, while that with Fairbridge was preceded by a picnic at Serpentine Falls, and there was afternoon tea with the Fairbridgians when the game was over. Old boys remembered these stirring contests for years after and would enquire: "Who won the Clonny match this year?" In time girls were included in the Fairbridge outing, usually playing hockey — a game not introduced into Swanleigh till hostel times.

On Sundays during the football season we had a good many visits from metropolitan junior teams. Swan Homes was not too far for clubs to arrange an outing, so that with its beautiful setting and the interesting nature of the establishment, it attracted many supporters and visitors. Some of the clubs were very generous, treating our boys to a picnic tea with their own lads, and including Swan Boys in the trophies awarded for the match. Officials of these clubs always thanked us for the game and for the opportunity for their members and friends to enjoy such a pleasant outing. In this way a happy relationship was built up between us and we looked forward to their visit each year. Particularly was this the case with Mr. Smeath and his "Cardinals" whom we played for many years, so that it was with great interest that we watched his son develop from one of our boy opponents to become one of the leading footballers in the West Perth League Club.

In earlier years our sports oval was a very rough affair — in fact just a cleared paddock — but the Board, wishing to raise the standard of our play, decided to have it levelled and extended. However it was still very wet in the depth of winter, which, while not making for quality football, did add to the fun. I used to encourage our boys in my "pep" talk before a match by reminding them that "our visitors won't have the webbed feet that you've developed", and I fear they sometimes helped an opponent along with a sly push that sent him skidding into mud and water. If he collected a cow pat on the way so much the better. "Always get the boys to bring a towel and a change of dry clothes with them" was my advice to organisers of visiting teams.. In later years one of my Deputies, Mr. Peter Morton, surveyed the oval and laid out a scheme of agricultural pipes for its drainage, after which its winter surface was much improved.

From 1954 onwards our older boys had regular outings to football which they greatly enjoyed. That year I asked the W.A. Football League if they would grant us the privilege of free admission for a party of boys to a match each Saturday, and they agreed to do this, renewing the pass every year of my management. No limit to the number that I could take was ever made, so that every Saturday throughout the season a busload would leave Swan for one of the ovals. I used to vary the venue, for all clubs had some supporters in our ranks. Even so I sometimes heard a mutter from some — it was meant for me to hear — "We've seen all we ever want to see of Swan Districts. Too much in fact". When the hostel commenced in 1960, I wrote to the League explaining the new situation, but it generously continued its free invitation thus enabling the country lads to see the teams in action that previously they had only been able to follow on the radio.

It remains for a word to be said about sports that were not team games. At one stage the Board decided to put down two tennis courts, chiefly in the hope that the girls would take up the game. But this never became a popular sport at Swan until hostel days. Swimming in the river was continued each summer until the pool was opened in 1971. Through the kindness of Mr. D. Lawe Davies, Headmaster of Guildford Grammar,

we were given permission for many years to hold an annual Swimming Carnival in the school's pool — a privilege we greatly appreciated. On these occasions we were also entertained by magnificent displays of diving given by the W.A. Diving Association whose members — some of whom represented Australia in Olympic Games — thrilled our children and visitors with the beauty and skill of their performance — and not forgetting the hilarious “shags” that followed the swallows. The annual Boxing Tournaments continued to attract crowds of spectators, so that, next to the concert, this remained the most important night of our year. However in later years there was a good deal of criticism of this sport throughout the world and I decided to discontinue the tournaments and not risk a permanent injury to any of the boys. Not until more recent times did athletics figure prominently at Swan though children from our establishment were often among their school's representatives in interschool carnivals.

The record of physical activities would not be complete without a reference to the great progress made in gymnastics during this period. The credit for this goes entirely to an ex-Hungarian Olympic gymnast, Mr. Nandor Antal, who had joined our staff. These days the elaborate television coverage of international gymnastic competitions has familiarised the public with the tremendous skill and artistry achieved by the competitors. But in those times such exhibitions were rarely seen. I recall the thrill of the audience when Mr. Antal gave us a demonstration of his gymnastic art in our concert the year he joined us. Most of us never imagined such a standard could be reached. Under his patient direction the boys gradually became more proficient, so that their voluntaries in displays were more creditable. It was not long before most of the State's leading gymnasts were coming to Swan for expert criticism and instruction from Mr. Antal, who by this time had become senior judge in the State Championships. In time there were sections for schoolboys included in that annual competition, and each year we entered a team. We never won it, but on one occasion we did come a close second, being defeated for the honour by a fraction of one point! It is with some pride that we record that one of our former boys ultimately became for a time the State's Champion gymnast.

### *G. PARKERVILLE:*

When in 1943 the Perth Girls' and the Swan Boys' Orphanages were amalgamated (see page 76) the new establishment was usually referred to as the Swan Homes. Its official title, however, was: “The Anglican Homes for Children”. But there was another large institution, Anglican in tradition and caring for needy children in Western Australia, which was not included under this title, nor was it officially recognised by the church as being one of its establishments. This was the Parkerville Children's Home. It was situated in the beautiful hills' district of Parkerville and it owed its origin to the devoted pioneering work of a small band of Anglican Sisters, the chief of whom was known as Sister Kate. All were members of the order the “Sisters of the Church” (sometimes described as the Kilburn Sisterhood) which had been founded in England in 1870, chiefly as a teaching order, with the special intention of assisting with education in the Colonies. In 1901, at the rather lukewarm invitation of Bishop Riley (one suspects that he regarded them as “Romanish” — many Anglicans did) the first three Sisters arrived at Fremantle. There was no one there to meet them or give them any assistance, and no arrangements had been made for their accommodation. But undaunted by this lack of cordiality, they immediately set about the business of founding a church school. And they succeeded — for the school that they commenced became Perth College!

Any reader would be well rewarded by reading Miss C.L.M. Hawtreys account of that "gallant adventure" in her book: "The Availing Struggle" (published privately 1949). But our concern is chiefly with the work of the next two Sisters to come to W.A. — Sister Kate and Sister Sarah. They reached Fremantle a month later, bringing with them a few adult helpers and twenty-two young children whom they had recruited from English institutions to settle in Australia — the State's first official child migrants. In the period between the arrival of the two parties, the first group had taken a house which they furnished with three stretcher-beds, some packing cases and a lamp. In a lovely piece of understatement Miss Hawtreys writes: "It was not really sufficient — especially after the next group arrived. For now there was only £170 in the bank with no hope of their earning anything till February (when the school was to start — if anyone enrolled), and about thirty-five mouths to feed". Sisters Kate and Sarah looked after the children, some of whom were little more than babies. They did all the cooking, washing, cleaning and nursing, while the original Sisters daily canvassed the suburbs of Perth seeking to enrol pupils for their school which was due to open in two months time.

In 1903 the Sisters decided to establish a new home for destitute children on the site where the institution now stands. A boy-member of the foundation party has given us a vivid description of the event: "We had a small hut with a table, two forms for seats, two bunks for the Sisters, two kettles and a pot. Most of us slept on straw in a barn. Our first night was a disaster because the barn was swamped with rain. We were all drenched and so was our bedding. But in a way it was a blessing. People from the Parkerville district rose to the occasion and gave Sister Kate enough chaff to make new mattresses, and this was the beginning of a very happy relationship with the district". ("Anglican Messenger", June 1978).

From that humble origin the little institution — then known as the "Waifs Home" — grew in size and importance till by 1943 it had an enrolment of about 130. The children lived in cottages — approximately sixteen to a house — in each of which there were girls and boys of varying ages. One house, however, was known as "Babyland", and in this all the children of kindergarten age or younger were cared for. A substantial brick school had been erected on the premises and a chapel and a convent in which the Sisters lived. The dining hall and kitchen block was also an impressive brick structure. The establishment was now named "Parkerville Children's Home".

This progress was achieved very gradually. At first the little institution had a desperate struggle to survive, even resorting to having its children plead for alms from passengers when the expresses stopped at the local station. But as the fine work being done at Parkerville by the devoted Sisters became more widely known, the public support became greater. In its earliest years Mr. Walter Padbury was its principal benefactor, donating both land and money to the institution and finally bequeathing to it a substantial sum to commence an endowment fund. In 1906 a "Committee of Help" was formed to organise fund-raising, while it was not too long before the Government was persuaded to pay the institution an annual subsidy. The establishment continued under the ownership and management of the Sisterhood till about 1930 when the members decided to have it incorporated. Under this new arrangement a small committee known as the Parkerville Association became the controlling body. Its membership included the Archbishop and the Archdeacon of Perth, two members of the Sisterhood, and a few laymen. Most of the latter were associated with the firm "Wesfarmers" (its present

name), which in recent times had taken a keen interest in Parkerville. Prominent among them was the Secretary of the Company, Mr. Harold Worthington, who became largely responsible for the financial management of the Home. That the institution was able to remain open during the difficult depression and war years was due in no small measure to his personal effort and ability.

Something of a management crisis occurred in the early 1930's. Sister Kate was now elderly and the Association decided that the time had come for her to retire. The Sisterhood in Western Australia, presided over by Sister Rosalie, felt that it did not have a member in the Order suitable for Sister Kate's replacement; so Archbishop LeFanu, after discussing the situation at Parkerville with the Reverend Mother Superior in England, arranged for two Sisters of the Community of the Sacred Advent in Queensland to take over the management of the institution. In making that change the Archbishop was subjected to some ill-informed criticism, for evidently Sister Kate did not consider she was ready for retirement, and she said so. "Why, she was only 72!" On leaving Parkerville she proceeded to found another new home — this time for near-white children. It became known as "Sister Kate's Home", and she continued to manage it till her death in 1946. For reasons into which we need not go here that institution is today a Presbyterian establishment — something which would probably shock Sister Kate who had arranged the children's cottages in her new institution around the then local Anglican Church in Queen's Park.

The new Sisters at Parkerville had not been in residence many years before World War II broke out. Then they too, like all other institutions, had to face many additional problems, the chief of which was a shortage of labour — and particularly of male labour. One result of this was that building maintenance became seriously in arrears. Their difficulties were increased by the fact that materials needed for repairs and replacements were in desperately short supply. Because of these things conditions at Parkerville deteriorated, and complaints to authority began to be made. In 1946 two officers of the Child Welfare Department were sent to make a thorough inspection of the institution. Their report, while praising the efforts of Sisters and staff in keeping the establishment functioning throughout the difficult war years, and in still maintaining its homely atmosphere, was very condemnatory of the physical conditions under which the children were now living. A copy of the report was sent to the Association and with it there was an underlying threat of the Department's having to remove its wards. This was serious. Something had to be done.

In the immediate years that followed there were several changes made. The first of these was an invitation to me to join the Association. Members hoped that my experience of institution management would be of assistance to them in guiding their efforts to improve standards. For my part I was pleased that this offer was made, not because I felt that I could wave any magic wand to overcome the problems — I had plenty of my own unsolved — but because I felt that it was a recognition that Swan Homes was getting a better image in informed circles. So I accepted.

The second change occurred soon after. In 1948 the Sisterhood decided that it would end the active superintendence of the institution by religious, substituting this with lay management. When I heard that this was to take place, I arranged for a private interview with Sister Rosalie, during which I pleaded with her not to take this step. "Parkerville and the Sisterhood are synonymous in the minds of West Australian people", I urged. But Sister Rosalie was quite adamant. "All the Sisters feel that the change would be best for Parkerville", was her contention. She continued: "You see, Mr.



Peterkin, we are a community and we have our rules, some of which we cannot keep in the institution-situation, where children have to be cared for at all hours of the day and night. Whenever there is a shortage of staff at Parkerville the Sisters must substitute, which means that the Order has to relax its rules for them". Then she added with a twinkle: "Of course Sister Kate was always a rule to herself. But our Reverend Mother has now come to a firm decision. Our work at Parkerville must come to an end". The Association had no choice but to accept that decision. In doing so it expressed its regret to Sister Rosalie and hoped that the time might come when the Sisterhood would once more assume control of the establishment it had created. It then proceeded to appoint Parkerville's first lay superintendent, selecting Major Owen Howes for the position. He remained in charge for some years, during which many of the complaints listed earlier by the inspectors were rectified, and a start was made with a "Cottage Improvement Programme". At that time (and subsequently) Parkerville was most fortunate in having on its staff as carpenter and maintenance man Mr. Colin Campbell — an old boy of the Home and a very competent tradesman — who was to prove most helpful in the many building alterations that were to be carried out during the next fifteen years.

Then in 1949 the Parkerville Association invited the Anglican Homes Board to become the managing body of the institution, with the Superintendent working under its direction, but with the Association retaining the ownership of Parkerville's assets. The request was made because the members realized that so much detail was involved in conducting the establishment that they did not have the time to give proper consideration to reports and proposals, all of which influenced the efficiency of the institution and its reputation. The Anglican Homes Board agreed to the request but not without some hesitation — for after an inspection of the Home there appeared so much that still required doing that they didn't quite know where to start.

So it was that from July 1st, 1949, Parkerville became one of the Anglican Homes administered by the Board. Three years later Major Howes resigned to become Principal of the Carlingford Homes in New South Wales. After his departure there was a short interregnum during which my Deputy at Swan, Mr. Henry Boulderstone, accepted the position of Acting-Superintendent, doing some very useful work both on the accounting side, in which he was very experienced, and in the improvement of the kitchen and dining area. The Board wished that he would remain at Parkerville, but for family reasons he had decided to return to England. It then appointed Major A.E. Wales to the position. He was a retired British Army Officer who had spent much of his service life in India. He had no previous experience of child care work, but, ably supported by his devoted wife, he proved to be the right man for the job at that time. Under him an extensive programme of building rehabilitation was completed and the farm successfully developed. More activities were introduced and the living conditions of both children and staff were improved. He was known to everyone as "Jack" Wales — and jackblunt indeed he was. Until they really got to know his worth officials rarely liked him. He didn't have a great deal of time for them either, and sometimes he had hard things to say to them if he felt that the institution wasn't getting a satisfactory deal. "With me", he would say, "Parkerville and Parkerville's kids come first every time". He could be very firm and strict when he deemed it necessary. But he was kindness itself to anyone in trouble. In the building work and on the farm he was energetic and practical — unsparing of himself in his efforts to improve conditions, and he expected his staff to be just as enthusiastic and willing. Such a man usually has plenty of critics and Jack was no exception. "I don't care much for your Mr. Wales", some would say to me. "You don't know Mr. Wales", I would reply. Then I would add:

“When I first met him I didn’t care greatly for him either. But as I grew to know him and his qualities I came to realise what a splendid Superintendent he was, and just how lucky Parkerville was to have him at the helm at that particular point of time in its history”.

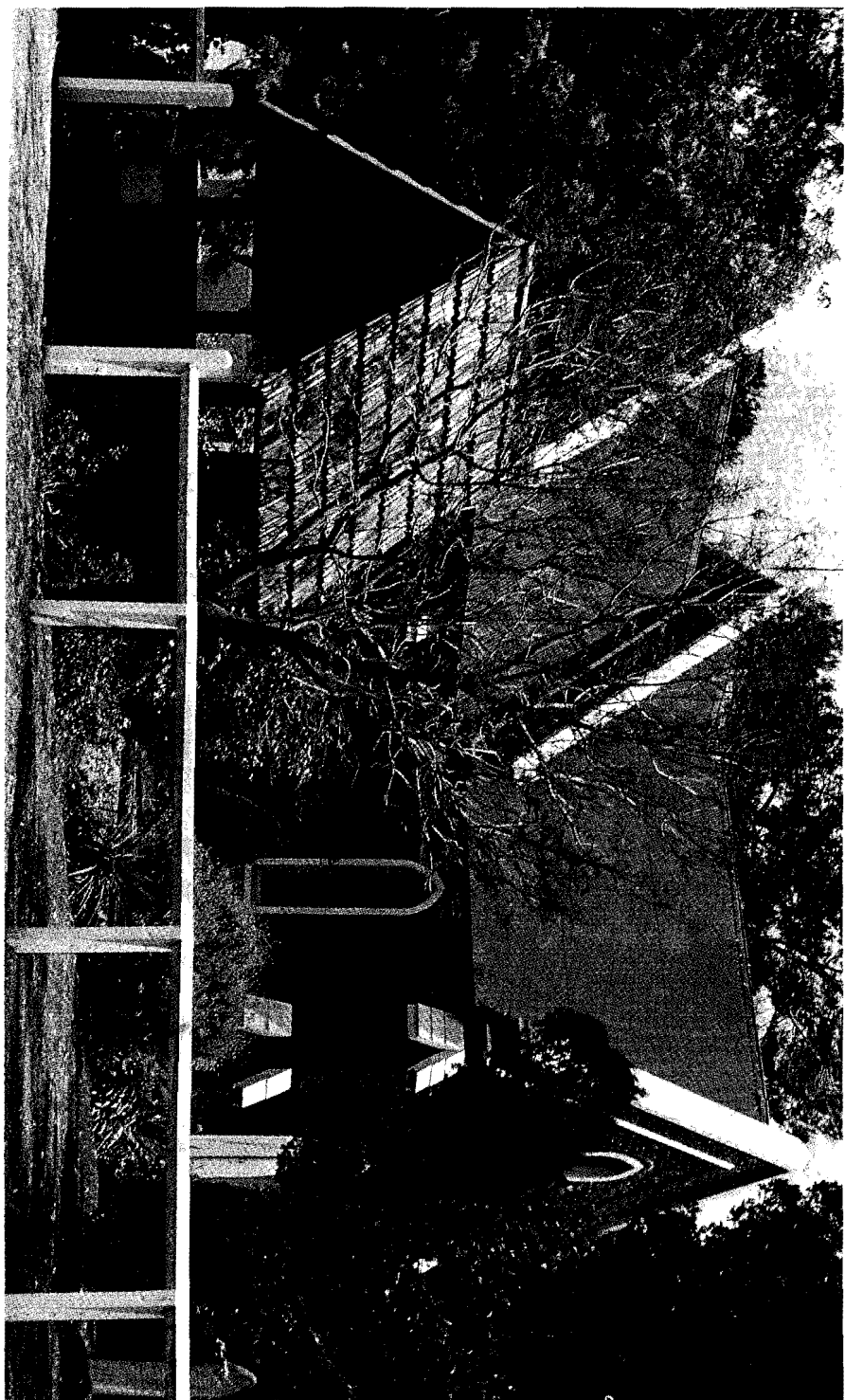
I do not propose to enter into detail regarding the work carried out at Parkerville under the authority of the Board. At the outset it set itself the goal of completely rehabilitating Parkerville in ten years. In that time every building received extensive attention. Some were partially re-built, all had their interiors altered, removing a wall here and building one there. When the school building was vacated by the Education Department (the children then attending the local school) it was converted into a recreation hall and offices. The wooden walls of the nave of the chapel were pulled down and replaced in brick. Septic systems were introduced throughout, thus enabling us to remove the numerous little W.C.’s that were everywhere dotted throughout the institution. A Government water main was laid to the institution’s boundary and this was immediately connected to its big tank. When electric light reached the district, the Board lost no time in arranging for it to be supplied to all sections of the Home. More and better furniture was purchased for each cottage as it was renovated and there were new furnishings and floor-coverings, so that the interiors were now bright and gay. On the farm there was a better land-utilisation policy so that cropping and animal husbandry improved and the milk yield increased. A modern dairy was erected and some new machinery purchased. Final decision on each of these matters rested with an advisory Committee set up by the Board to assist Mr. Wales. He and I were members of this, together with several Board representatives, and we were given authority to add to our number any person the Committee felt would be helpful to Parkerville’s progress. In this way we were able to include a number of ladies and gentlemen who did a great deal to promote the welfare of the establishment. Names of such people that come readily to mind are those of Matron Norma Monger, \* Mr. Wally Day M.M., Mr. Ted Brindle, Mrs. A.R. Robins and Mrs. A. Ingram.

There remained one other change in the administration of Parkerville in the early fifties to which reference must be made. Having seen the church lose one institution to another denomination, I felt that with Parkerville’s loosely-appointed Association the same thing could happen again. So whenever I could get the ear of any churchman in an influential position I would urge that he try to persuade the Perth Diocesan Trustees to become the Association. For some years I had no success. The Trustees weren’t interested. I think they had serious doubts about the institution’s financial stability and that they might be left with a bankrupt establishment. But eventually they did agree to my suggestion. Mr. Fred White Godfrey then arranged for a new Incorporation to be drawn up, which, besides giving the Association very much wider powers, provided that its membership should consist of those persons who for the time being held the office of Diocesan Trustee or that of Diocesan Secretary. This meant that I could no longer be a member of the Association. It was politely explained to me that by this new arrangement the regular Trustees’ meeting could be adjourned and immediately re-constituted a meeting of the Parkerville Association. Any policy decisions regarding the institution could then be made, after which the Trustees would be able to resume their ordinary meeting — a very great convenience for these busy men. With this I agreed, and in fact I was not in the least perturbed by my loss of membership. Now I had the great satisfaction of knowing that the assured permanency of the

\* F.N. Later Miss Monger was elected to the Anglican Homes Board.



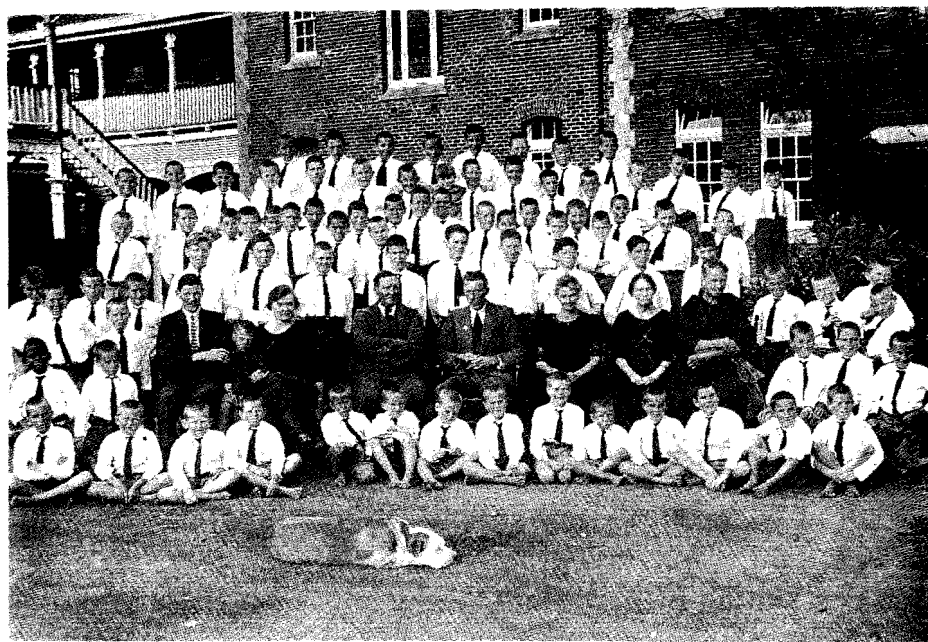
*Girls of Perth Orphanage 1904. In centre Dean (later Bishop) Goldsmith, Manager; with Miss J. Phillips, matron.*



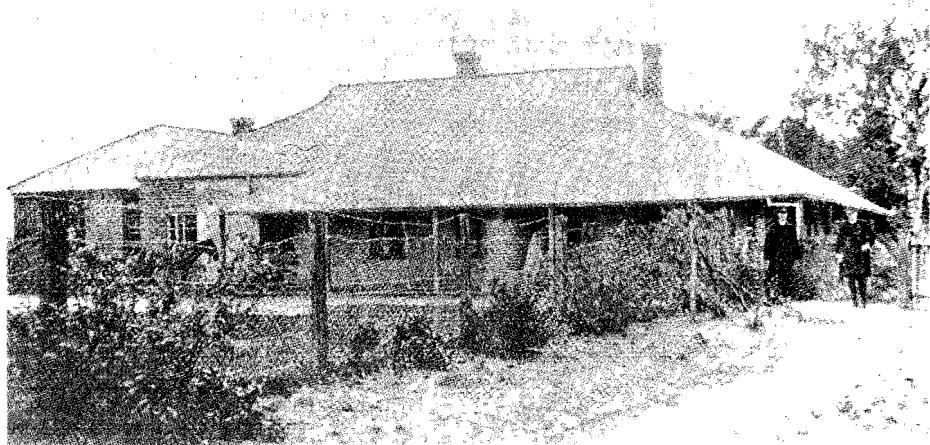
*St Mary's Church, Middle Swan. Consecrated in 1869.*



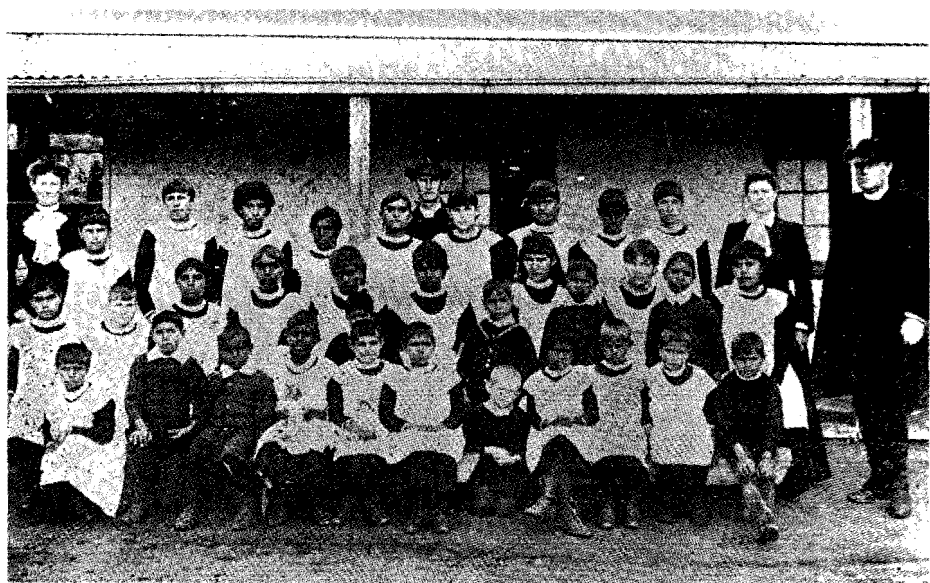
*Swan Boys 1908. Standing behind lady (seated) is Rev. (later Canon) Alfred Burton. Note that Brown house has had verandahs added. Waylen House northern wing and centre block has been built. The southern wing was not added till 1912. In staff group Mr. L. Wilcher - Schoolmaster and Superintendent - on left.*



*Swan Boys' and staff about 1930. Man seated centre Mr. A.M. Birch.*



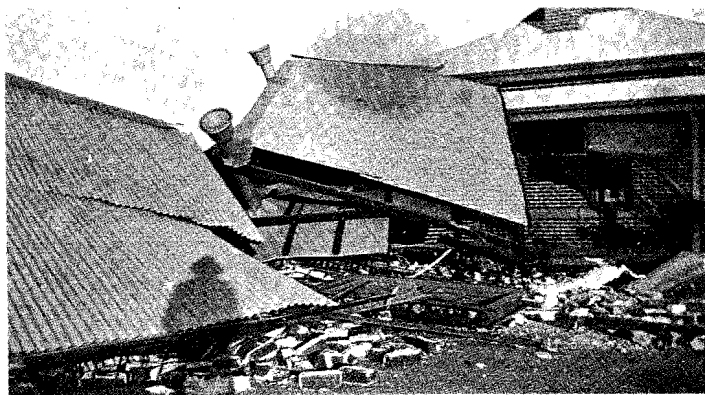
*Native and Half-caste Mission. Built in 1880s. Later named "Cornwell House". (See text)*



*The Mission Children about 1904 with the Misses Mackintosh, Bishop Riley and Revd. Burton.*



*Before the Cyclone.*



*The Mission  
Extension.*

*After the Cyclone.*



*Redhill Reformatory. (Founded 1903). Three men in foreground are - L. to R. Frank Matthews (teacher), Rev. Armstrong (manager), Mr. R.S. Spice (superintendent). On verandah with the boys are Mrs. Spice and Miss Parker.*





*Exterior of "Tech".*

*Interior of "Tech".*

*The Maurice Birch Workshop. Built by boys in 1941.*



*Building Hudleston House.*

*The Director (A.R. Peterkin) discussing plan with Supervisor (Mr. E. Layton). The boys bricklaying. In background Forrester House (originally Burton's Rectory). Rev. Mitchell and later Archdeacon Brown's Rectory was close to where the Director and Mr. Layton are standing.*



*Prominent Members of the Board of Management in earlier Twentieth Century.*



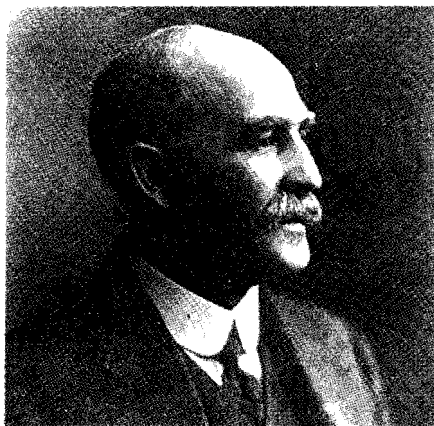
*Mr. J.O. Fisher Diocesan Secretary,  
Also Secretary of the Orphanage Board  
1897 - 1947.*



*Mr. Willie A. Saw Member from 1922  
till 1949.*



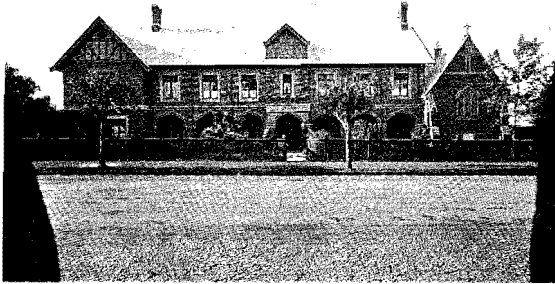
*The Venerable Cuthbert Hudleston  
Member from 1911 till 1942.  
Vice-Chairman for most of that time.*



*Mr. M.T. Padbury Member from 1923 to  
1956 A Vice-Chairman.*



*Mr. Harry Adie Member 1941 - 1956  
A Vice-Chairman.*



*Perth Girls' Orphanage.  
Completed 1904.  
Girls transferred to Middle Swan  
1942. "Mansion" sold to  
the Government.*



*Waylen House.  
Original building 1904,  
southern extension 1912.*



*Dining Hall and Gymnasium  
(Assembly Hall).*



*Hudleston House 1946.*

*The Twentieth Century "Noisy Mansions"*

*Lee Steere House 1949*



*Freeman House 1955.*

*Hamilton House 1957*



*Stanton house 1968.*



*Swan Homes Choir 1947.*



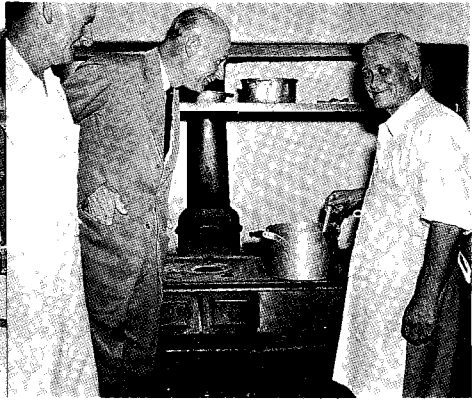
*The Tours.*

*Girls at the Mission House, Walpole. In back row  
Miss E. Ahearn (next to post), Mrs. Parry  
(second from end). In second row: Mr. A.A.  
Robertson who organised every tour.*

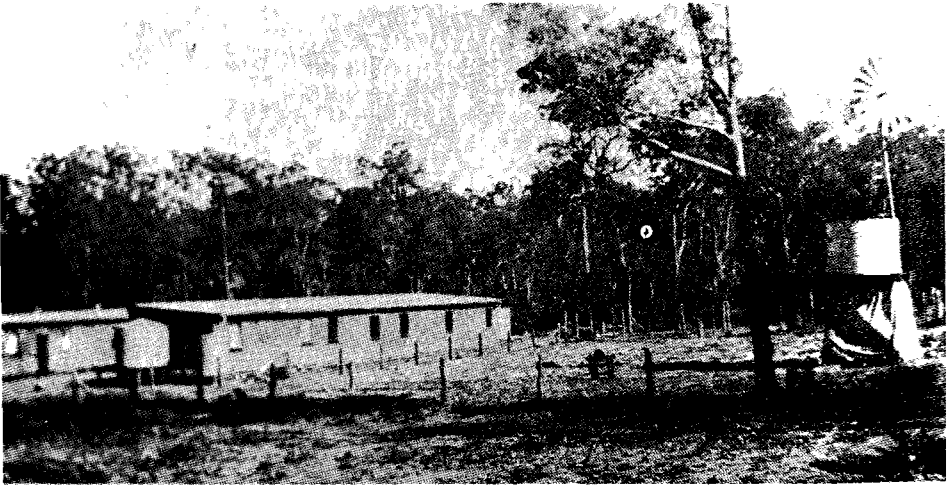
*In the heart of the Karri Country. Boys at  
Pemberton.*



*Mr. Jock Stewart (President of Lumpers' Committee) supervising the unloading of stores for holiday camp.*



*His Excellency Sir Charles Gairdner chatting with the camp cooks. Mr. Albert Stanton (facing) and Mr. Roy O'Byrne (at left).*



*Padbury Farm 1946. The first buildings and home garden.*



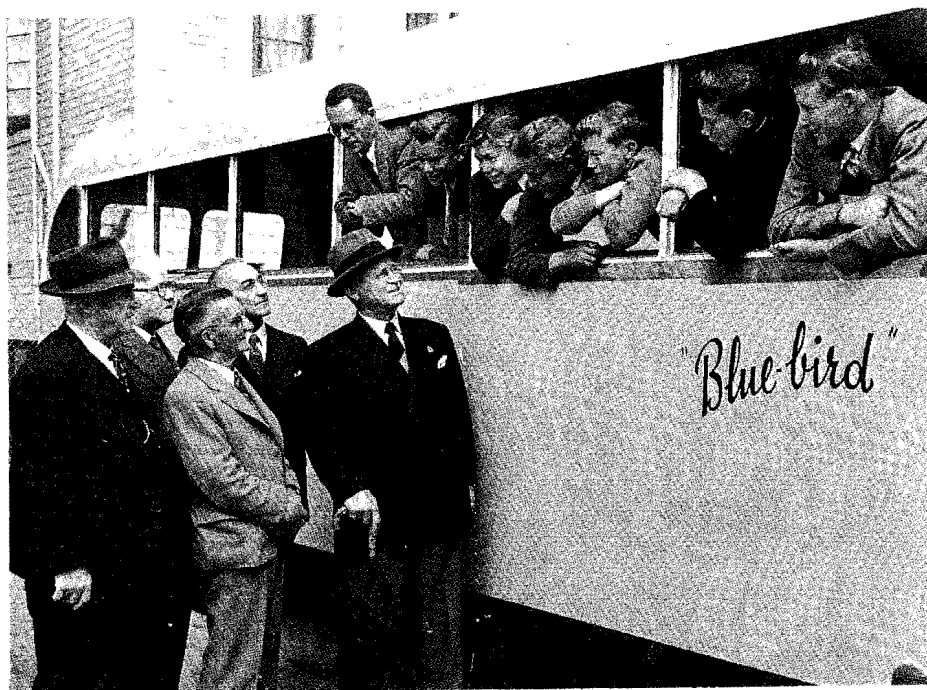
*Child migrants leaving London 1952. Adults in back row (L. to R.) Mrs. A.A. Robertson, Mr. G. Bennett (assistant on voyage), Mr. A.A. Robertson, Sir Thomas White (High Commissioner for Australia), the Earl of Bessborough (Church of England Council for Empire and Commonwealth Settlement). In front on right: Miss Enid Jones M.B.E., Secretary, Church of England Council and Organiser of its migrants.*



*Mrs. Ellen Logan with the Coogee Children 1950.*

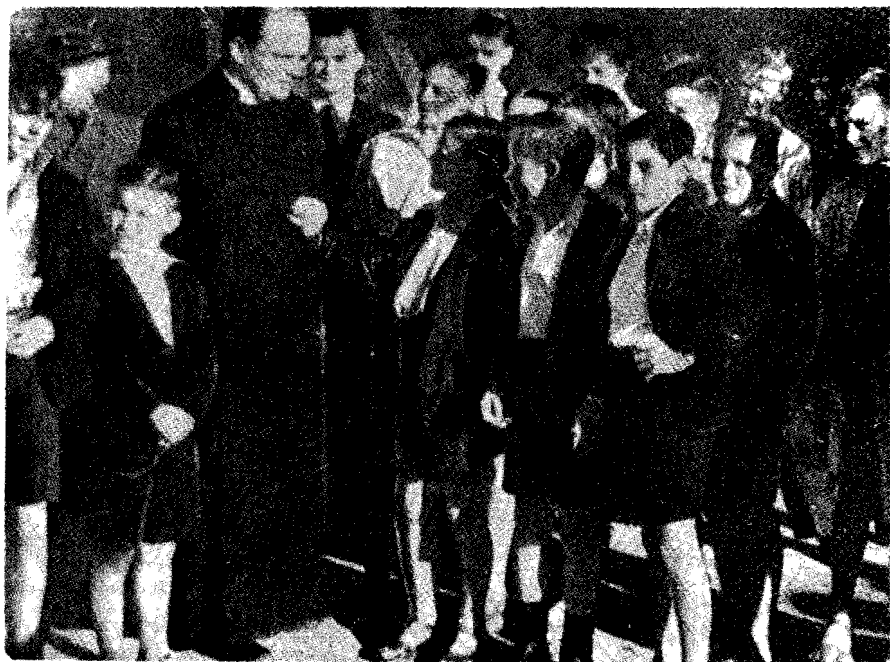


*The staff of the Swan Homes in late 1940s. (Taken at Lumper's Picnic). Back row: (L. to R.) Mr. C. Gartner (Farm Foreman), Mrs. Gartner (House-mistress, Cornwell), Mrs. E. Logan (Matron, Coogee), Miss B. Fletcher (Matron, Padbury Farm), Mrs. I. Parry (Matron, Waylen), Mr. W. Trigg (Deputy Director), Canon R. Hamilton (Chaplain), Mrs. Reiken (House-mistress, Boys' Kindergarten). Middle row: Mr. E. Cope (House-master, Waylen), Mr. J. Nugent (Superintendent, Padburys), A.R. Peterkin (Director), Miss E. Thompson (House-mistress, Stanton Boys'), Miss A. Harber (House-mistress, Forrest), Mrs. E. Cope (House-mistress, Hudleston). Front row: Mr. I. Parry (Cook) with four junior staff assistants. Absent Miss E. Ahearn (House-mistress, Lee Steere).*



*The Lotteries Commission and the "Bluebird" 1953. Looking out of the window - Mr. Nandor Antal and some of the boys. Mr. J.J. Kenneally (Chairman of Commission) at extreme left.*





*Canon R.W. Hamilton among the boys he loved.*



*Senior girls with Miss E. Ahearn (about 1953).*





*Early Hostel Days. New Hostel students mingling with former Swan Homes' students on the lawn at afternoon tea, 1960.*

*Prominent Board Members in mid Twentieth Century Years.*



*Mrs. R. Sundercombe, M.B.E.  
Member 1932 - 1973.*



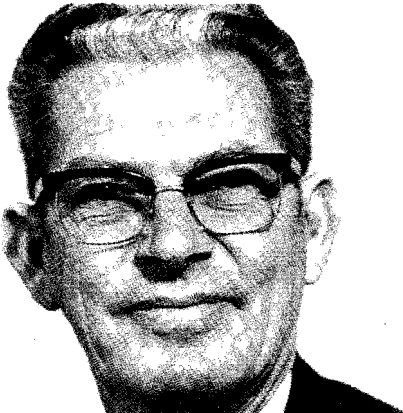
*Mr. D.H. Ferguson, M.B.E.  
Member 1925-33 and 1951-71. Life member  
1972-82. Chairman 1959-71.*



*Canon Jack Watts Member 1933 - 1936  
and 1954 - 1964.*



*Commander "Jock" Anderson  
D.S.C., R.D. and O.B.E. Member 1953 - 1955.*



*Mr Clem Booth Member 1949 - life member  
Founder of M.I.O.C.*



*Mr. A.A. Guy  
Member 1945 - 1965  
Vice-chairman 1953 - 1959.*

Anglican tradition of Parkerville which for so long I had strongly advocated, was safe. For I could not imagine the Diocesan Trustees ever giving or selling the institution to any other body — something which indeed was within their power under the terms of the new Incorporation.

In 1959 the Anglican Homes Board, facing the burden of detail that required attention in the conversion of the Swan Homes to a hostel, decided that it no longer had time in its meetings to do justice to the problems of management at Parkerville. It therefore requested that the Association relieve it of this responsibility, suggesting that as an alternative the existing Committee of Management be fully empowered to undertake the domestic superintendence of the Homes. Such a proposal was more acceptable to the Association when it was told that all the Board's representatives on the existing Committee — these included Mr. Guy (Chairman) and myself — were prepared to remain on it until the new arrangement was thoroughly stabilised. So this change was made. When, a few years later, Mr. Guy died, the Committee asked me to be its Chairman, which office I held till 1968. Then, with the pressure of the hostel management ever increasing, I decided to resign from the Committee. But my close link with Parkerville which had now lasted over twenty years, was not entirely broken. For while the Association accepted my resignation as Chairman of the Committee, it asked me to become the first honorary life member of it — an honour I was proud to accept.

Mr. Wales, whose first wife had died some years earlier, re-married about this time. Ably assisted by this very capable enthusiastic lady he continued his superintendence of the institution till his retirement in 1972. His had been a wonderful record of devoted service to Parkerville and its children - one which I have always felt was never fully appreciated by the church or the State. Mr and Mrs. Wales then returned to England to spend their declining years in a little Suffolk village where they had first known each other as children. They tell me that Parkerville and its girls and boys are never very far from their thoughts. \*

#### *H. HILLSTON:*

In 1953 Mr. A.R.G. Hawke M.L.A. became Premier of Western Australia, and among the portfolios he retained for himself was that of Child Welfare. In an earlier Labour Government he had been Minister in charge of this Department and now that he was leader of the Party, he felt that the time had come to introduce considerable changes in this particular area. But before embarking on any new measures he decided that child care in this State should first be investigated by an authority on the subject. Accordingly he invited Mr. R.H. Hicks, Director of Child Welfare in New South Wales, to visit Western Australia to report on conditions here, and to make suggestions for their improvement. Mr. Hicks had achieved very good standards of child care in his own State, some eminent overseas' authorities even affirming that New South Wales now led the world in such work.

Mr. Hicks accepted the commission and remained in Western Australia for several weeks, interviewing officials and social workers and visiting most of the child-care institutions. When his report was published it shocked the public, for with one exception the institutions and the Department all came in for considerable criticism. The establishment that escaped censure was the Swan Homes, to which he referred in the following terms: "The Swan Homes at Midland Junction are outstanding, with standards of both the physical and emotional welfare of children very good".

\* *F.N. Mr. Wales died in England in 1983.*

Mr. Hawke decided to implement two of Mr. Hicks' recommendations without delay. The first of these was that a Director of Child Welfare be appointed who would be head of the existing Department. The Premier, in an interview with me, told me that this position was being created and would shortly be advertised. He hoped I would apply. This was a tempting suggestion, for the post would be an important one with great opportunities for the introduction of new methods and the inauguration of a new era in child welfare. It would also carry a salary far in excess of that which I was receiving. Naturally I gave the matter a good deal of thought, but eventually decided not to make application. In my heart I did not feel drawn to such an administrative position. My real love was Swan, with its daily contact with girls and boys. There I felt we were creating an establishment that would forever retain something of us. Despite the difficulties and problems we were very happy in the life and work of the institution. "A man's work is his life", says David Conover in his splendid book "Once upon an Island". "He must love what he is doing or he can't be happy". To give up Swan to become the Director of a Department, but with little or no personal contact with institutional children, became increasingly unattractive the more I thought about it. So I did not apply and Mr. James McCall, a Superintendent in the service of the Education Department, was appointed to the position.

The second recommendation of the Hicks' report that Mr. Hawke decided to adopt was to remove the responsibility for the care and reformation of delinquents from the denomination which had been doing this work, and make alternative arrangements. Early in 1955 Mr. McCall visited me at Swan to have a "highly confidential discussion on the possibility of the Anglican homes undertaking this task". In the course of our talk the Director said he was most disappointed that the Premier had not asked the Department to establish its own reformatories. "I would dearly have liked the opportunity of doing so", he said. But Mr. Hawke seemed to have no confidence in the ability of the Departmental officers to do this efficiently. He would like to see the Anglican Homes Board undertake it.

I pointed out to Mr. McCall that if a new Reform School were to be established under the auspices of the Church of England one of the first decisions that would have to be made was where it was to be situated. I would not consider its being built at Swan or Parkerville where delinquents were never admitted except under very exceptional circumstances. Sometimes these did occur. I recall taking a boy highly recommended to me by the Headmaster of a Senior High School, who explained that the lad had a good deal of ability but was rapidly heading towards delinquency, so much so that the police wanted him out of the district. "Would I give him a chance at Swan?" After further enquiry I decided to accept him, and from the day of his admission he never gave us a moment's anxiety. He entered enthusiastically into the life of the institution, where I believe he was a happy boy. He passed the Leaving certificate, eventually becoming a highly-qualified engineer. Regrettably not every lad to whom such an opportunity was given proved so satisfactory, in which case he had to be returned to the Department. One very unusual case of a convicted boy coming to us was most interesting. He was found guilty of an uncommon offence, but as it was his first appearance in Court there would normally have been no conviction recorded, so that after a stern reprimand and warning from the Bench, he would have been returned to his parents. But Magistrate Schroeder was convinced that in this case the boy's misdemeanour was largely the result of unusual conditions in his up-bringing. The family belonged to a very strict religious sect under whose rules the lad had not been allowed to read newspapers, go to the pictures or play sport. As for any association with girls, such

as going to dances or parties — Heaven forbid! Mr Schroeder felt that to send this boy back to that environment would be disastrous for him. So he committed him specifically to the Swan Homes which was a co-educational institution with many activities. In the meantime we were informed that the boy's church, sitting in solemn conclave on his offence, considered his conduct was disgraceful and excommunicated him — a fifteen-year-old! So he came to us for the remainder of the year, participating in much of the institution's programme, proving in behaviour and attitude to be a thoroughly good lad. I remember he took the lead in the "Boy's Burlesque" in our annual concert. I told his father how well he was doing in rehearsals and urged him to come to the concert and see his son, of whom I felt sure he would be very proud. The father was really fond of his boy and would dearly have liked to have been present. But no, his church would never permit such an irreligious act. Instead he sent his secretary so that she could tell him all about it. After leaving us the boy got a good clerical position in Perth and has since become well-known and highly respected in the city in business and sporting circles and in community affairs.

But to return to my discussion with Mr. McCall on the question — "If the Board did undertake the care of delinquents where could these be accommodated?" Fairly substantial buildings would be required for their containment and these take time to build. Would the denomination now doing the work be prepared to continue doing so for the time being when it learnt that this responsibility was to be taken from it and given to another denomination? If it decided to close its reformatory before a new establishment was ready for occupation the Government would be very embarrassed by having delinquents on its hands and nowhere to send them. There was also the Anglican Archbishop's position to consider. He might well find his relations with the other denomination strained if the new arrangement were accepted by the Church of England without the prior knowledge of the Church which had been doing this work.

Then I had a moment of inspiration. We had just closed Padbury Farm School because of insufficient boys on our enrolment (see page 101) Its buildings were not very substantial but if it were considered suitable we had an empty institution available immediately. Mr. McCall and I then visited Stoneville, and I recall his comment as he walked through the buildings: "I like this place. Even though empty it seems to have a 'homey' atmosphere. I'd be most happy if you could persuade your Board to let us start here".

My next step was to discuss the proposal with the Archbishop. So, taking Mr. McCall with me, we had an interview with His Grace, who agreed that the idea of utilising the Farm School buildings had its advantages. But he had his friendly relations with the other denomination also to consider. Mr. McCall then told Dr. Moline that whatever happened Mr. Hawke was going to make a change, and he was advising the church concerned accordingly, which left the way open for the Archbishop also to discuss the matter with its leaders.

Finally the proposal had to be submitted to the Anglican Homes Board. A special meeting to be presided over by the Archbishop was called, to which Mr. McCall was again invited. At first the members were very lukewarm about undertaking such a project, but when Mr. McCall described the proposed venture as a challenge to the Church of England, and His Grace said he would like to see us enter this field, they accepted. An agreement was then drawn up in which the management was to be vested in the Anglican Homes Board. Two establishments were to be erected — one for senior delinquents which was to be situated in another locality, while the second, for the younger

lads, would be at Stoneville. Until these institutions were ready for occupation all delinquent wards would be accommodated in the Padbury Farm buildings. Legal ownership of the latter was to remain with the Board who would charge a rental for the premises and for the use of the developed farm area. An Anglican chapel was to be built and there was to be a part-time chaplain appointed by the Archbishop. The school was to be administered by a Committee of Management consisting of three representatives of the Board and three senior Departmental officers (Mr. McCall was most happy at their inclusion), with the Archbishop or his nominee as Chairman — an arrangement which, by voting strength, was to ensure that the reformatory was controlled by the Church of England. Necessary buildings and equipment were to be provided by the Government which would also meet all running costs. The general administrative oversight was to be the responsibility of the Director of Anglican Homes. Mr. Hawke accepted these conditions, adding his own very warm thanks for the Board's co-operation in making Padbury Farm available at such short notice. About six weeks later the first boys were admitted. So thirty-six years after it had closed its reformatory at Redhill (see page 36) the Board was again in the business of caring for delinquents as well as for destitute children.

The new establishment was named the "Anglican Farm School", but this was later changed to "Hillston". In its earliest years there was some dissatisfaction expressed by the Board because the promised erection of the new premises was not commenced immediately. Padbury Farm buildings were not really adequate, and the situation there was aggravated by an increased number of committals by magistrates now that a new reformatory had been opened. The result was that conditions became crowded and there was a wave of abscondings, resulting in the new establishment receiving much public criticism. It did in fact become something of a political football, with the Liberal and Country Parties attacking the Labour Government on the inadequacy of the premises.

In order to combat this hostility the Department introduced a programme of improvements. An amount of £75,000 was voted by the Government for the immediate commencement of a closed reformatory at Caversham ("Riverbank") for the reception of the older and more incorrigible delinquents. At Stoneville 300 acres of unimproved Padbury Farm School land was purchased from the Board and on this a start was made with the erection of a modern ablution section — the existing facilities being considered the least satisfactory part of the old institution. It was to be but the beginning of an extensive new establishment. A small branch of Hillston was opened at Point Walter, within the Immigrants' Reception Centre, where the trusted boys were sent for a trial period prior to their return to civil life. Finally the Committee made an attempt to improve staff efficiency by increasing the ratio of officers to boys and by the introduction of a course at the Technical College for the training of men desirous of becoming staff officers in the employ of the Department. The syllabus included an initial interview to determine the suitability of applicants, attendance at special evening lectures combined with week-end practical work at Hillston, and finally a written examination. For admission to this there was an encouraging number of applicants.

Later more buildings were erected at Hillston including a dormitory block in which the lads were accommodated in individual cabins which were locked at night, a dining room and modern kitchen, an activities and recreation hall, an administrative wing and several houses for staff accommodation. An unusual feature was that the institution had no surrounding walls or high fences. To the visitor it looked very like a big school in a bushland setting, which, in the main, was what it purported to be, because the

Committee's objective was the re-education of the boys rather than their punishment. In daytime absconding was relatively easy and there were frequent escapes, so that public criticism of Hillston, especially from local nervous residents, continued. Despite this the members of the Committee remained firm in their contention that Hillston should continue as an open-type institution. They believed that the absence of barriers and the consequent atmosphere of freedom was the best training for the boys. Those who persistently absconded were transferred to Riverbank where escape was well-nigh impossible, and discipline much stricter. In time the boys at Hillston heard about this and for most of them that knowledge became a restraining factor when they were tempted to run away.

One of the first of the new buildings to be erected was a school. This included a classroom for teaching general subjects, because many of the boys had poor educational attainments, while some were still of school age, which meant that under the Act, they had to attend school. Practical workshops for instruction in trades such as carpentry, metal-work and blacksmithing were also provided for the older lads. Every boy was required to spend part of each week day at school, the remainder of his time being occupied in farm, garden or orchard work or in domestic duties. Time was also allocated for physical activities, while in the evenings suitable organised occupation or entertainment was arranged, with an occasional social shared with a visiting party of young people from a church. It was the Committee's policy that each boy should participate in a varied programme that kept him occupied for most of his time. His health-care was closely watched, and treatment for any bodily ailments arranged. A psychologist regularly attended so that any boy who appeared to the staff to have personal problems was interviewed and decisions made or remedial action suggested which might help him overcome his difficulties. A points' system was introduced which largely determined his privileges, his home leave and his ultimate discharge. Personal cleanliness, a high standard of tidiness in his cabin, and smartness in appearance and movement were insisted on.

Of very great interest both to residents and to visitors was the chapel, a unique structure built by the boys using mostly local material — stone, gravel and timber. In its erection the walls were constructed on the ground and then cantilevered into position and fixed. The building was the brain-child of the chaplain, the Revd. Walter Churchill, and its erection was supervised by him. At the suggestion of Archbishop Moline it was consecrated "The Chapel of the Holy Redeemer". Services in it were not confined to those taken by Anglican clergy. Ordained ministers of other denominations were permitted to use it in services for boys of their particular faith.

Decisions on policy were made at monthly meetings of the Management Committee, with the Superintendent always in attendance. As time went on the discussions became increasingly dominated by the views of the Department's representatives, while in the background there was always Treasury control. Whereas at Swan the Board had long reached a stage at which, if there were a real need in any of our houses, I was usually authorised to take action to supply it at once. But this was not the case at Hillston. There, if a requirement could not be met within the annual budget allotment by the Treasury, it had to wait. This was most irritating to our members who liked to see necessary things done without delay. Some of them began to lose interest in it, and to feel that Hillston, though now included as one of the Anglican Homes, was this in name only. The situation was not improved when the Department introduced some changes in policy without even discussing these with our members, who then decided

that the time had come to have a confrontation with Mr. McCall.

First, however, we arranged for a discussion with the Archbishop to hear how he felt about the new situation. He listened to our views, but when someone suggested the church's withdrawal from this work His Grace replied that he did not favour our doing so. "I'd prefer that we were kicked out rather than we pull out", was his comment. Eventually he told us that he would have an exchange of views on the future of Stoneville with Mr. Hawke. This, however, would have to wait till after the State elections which were about to take place.

In the meantime news regarding the Board's dissatisfaction with the Stoneville situation had reached Mr. McCall, who promptly apologised to the Archbishop for departing from the spirit of the initial agreement between the Department and the Anglican Homes Board. He also expressed the hope that we might all meet, and on an amicable basis, discuss the restoration of friendly relations in the future working of the Committee. In this I am sure that Mr. McCall was quite sincere. I think he enjoyed the monthly association with our members, and, while it was obvious that he felt none of us knew much about the institutional care of delinquents, some of the members did know a great deal about farming, and had given of their experience and much of their time in the promotion of good husbandry at Hillston — something he was anxious to maintain.

After that we felt that our relationship with the Department was on a better basis. The conference between the Archbishop and Mr. Hawke, however, never eventuated, because in the election the Labour Government was defeated. The new Minister for Child Welfare, Mr. L. Logan, M.L.C., lost no time in visiting Stoneville and in having a meeting with the Archbishop and the Board representatives. From this we all left with the impression that the new Minister favoured Departmental rather than Church control, so that it was quite a surprise to us when, shortly afterwards, we received a letter from Mr. Logan requesting "that we continue in authority until he understood more fully the ramifications of the Child Welfare Department". Said our jovial Dick Chamberlain: "Now we're stuck with it for ever. He'll never live long enough to learn those!"

But all this time there was another matter concerning Hillston that was increasingly disturbing to me. The institution was nominally Anglican but the church took no real interest in it. True, its chapel was Anglican, and the Rector of Mundaring acted as Chaplain, conducting some services each month. But I would hear reports from the Superintendent about parties of young people from other denominations travelling to Stoneville to conduct social evenings with the lads, but never a group from an Anglican parish. In my Synod report there was always a reference to the work being done there, and I would urge that more interest be taken in it by the church. But I do not recall any question or comment ever being made about the institution by Synodsmen. I used to wonder if the clergy even included a reference to it in the intercessions in their church services.

When, in 1960, only two members of the Board offered to join the Hillston Committee the Archbishop decided that the church's responsibility in sharing in the management should pass from the Board to the Diocesan Council. Mr. Guy and I were asked to remain on the Committee to provide some continuity. We agreed to do so, and we were joined by the Council's nominees who included Mr. Wally Day M.C., a member of the Parkerville Committee and widely experienced in farming — especially in cattle-raising and the Rev. Stuart Good, then Rector of Armadale. Mr. Guy continued as



Chairman till his death in 1965, after which I was elected to that position. But the church still took no interest, so that eventually I wrote, as Chairman, to the Diocesan Administrator (Archbishop Moline having then resigned the See) stating that I believed that the institution's sub-title: "Anglican Farm School" was a misnomer and that it was dishonest to allow it to remain. My letter was considered by the Diocesan Council which agreed with my contention. Hillston officially ceased to be an Anglican establishment.

The Minister then thought that as it now had no external affiliation he ought to appoint "Official Visitors" representing the public, and independent of Department Officers, to make inspections from time to time and without prior notice, in order that they might satisfy themselves and him that all was well with the institution and its inmates. He invited the Ven. Archdeacon Ralph Thomas, who was a former chaplain of Fremantle Gaol, and myself to accept this position, which we did. We were still the "Visitors" when I retired in 1971.

In conclusion I would like to pay a short tribute to one of the Department's representatives on the Committee, the late Mr. Gwyn Hitchen, for I feel that a great deal of the successful establishment of Hillston (and also of Riverbank) was largely due to the zeal and ability displayed by him in those early years. His was the inspiration and the drive that raised standards in the school, which resulted in a degree of efficiency that was never appreciated by a public not familiar with the many problems and difficulties that have to be faced in institutions which exist for the reformation of teenage delinquents. To this should be added a word of praise and appreciation for the work of the early Superintendents — Mr. Colin Campbell at Riverbank and Mr. Gus Haye, Colonel Scott and Mr. R. Ridley at Hillston.

### *I. THE VISIT OF HIS GRACE OF CANTERBURY:*

One of the facts of life for the Director of a Children's Home is that he will have to receive a great many visitors — groups of people and individuals. Showing these around his establishment and extending hospitality to them is often so time-consuming as to turn what should be a pleasure for him into rather a chore. The head of a well-known institution in this State once said to me: "If I had known what a constant job the entertainment of visitors would be I would never have applied for the position of Principal".

It was not quite as bad as that at Swan, but many people, keen to see the establishment, did visit us, and I had always to be ready to drop whatever was in hand to show these round. I have vivid recollections of what happened one morning. I was working quietly at my desk when the Matron popped her head round the door and said: "Are you expecting any visitors today?" "No, I don't think so", I replied. "Well", she said with a twinkle in her eye, "there's a large trailer-bus of ladies just pulling up outside. Looks as though there'd be about a hundred in it". Hurriedly I looked at the diary on the desk. There it was: "Ladies from the ..... Parish at noon". "Action stations, Matron", I said. Glancing at my watch I added: "Most of the staff will be in the dining hall for lunch within the next ten minutes. Tell them I'll want it for the visitors by a quarter-to-one. You make all the necessary arrangements there". Then I went out to greet the guests telling them how pleased I was to welcome them. I went on to explain to them that as the staff were now at lunch, I would like them to come into the library where I would speak to them about the Swan Homes. Then they would go to the dining hall for their lunch, after which I would conduct them on a tour of the

institution. All this went according to plan. The visit was a complete success, and by the end of the day there was no doubt about the pleasure the ladies had experienced from their outing. (I've often wondered whether any of them had an inkling of how they'd caught us unprepared that day!)

Generally we had good notice of official visitors, for many of these were people whose time that they could spend with us was limited. Such occasions were mostly very pleasant and interesting, for over the years we entertained numbers of distinguished guests. Several times we had the pleasure of welcoming the then Governor, and each of these men showed keen interest in seeing what we were trying to do for needy children. Numbers of State and Federal politicians also paid us visits. It will be remembered that Mr. Calwell came twice, and among others from Canberra we even had one from the celebrated Mr. Eddy Ward, M.H.R. — not the most popular man in Australia at that time. I always regretted that I missed meeting him, because that day I had to attend a Board Committee in Perth. Mary substituted for me as host and said afterwards that he was one of the most charming men she had met.

Throughout our years clergy were common callers, so much so that on one occasion in our earliest weeks at Swan, while the Archbishop and Mrs. LeFanu were having afternoon tea in my quarters my five-year old Margaret — not then having seen many clergymen in her life — walked into the room to announce: "There's *another* of those churchmans at the door, Daddy". His Grace was very amused and remembered her remark long afterwards. We also recall that occasion very well, because it was Mrs. LeFanu's first visit to Swan and she had been married to the Archbishop only a few days previously. There was much surprise in Anglican circles when the Primate and Miss Whitely, who had been his housekeeper, were wed, and on the occasion Canon Walter Kirby, Rector of Fremantle, composed a witty limerick — one that I think is worth quoting:

A certain Archbishop named LeFanu —  
What he'd do next you neffanu.  
When one morning quite sprightly,  
He married Miss Whitely,  
The noise of the gossips would deafanu!

Some of the clergy who visited us were distinguished men from overseas. There was Bishop G. K. Bell of Chichester, highly esteemed throughout the Christian world, so much so that he was considered by many to be the most likely bishop for the next appointment to the See of Canterbury. He came to see how some children who had emigrated to Swan from the Chichester Children's Home were faring. Two other notable clerics who visited us were an Indian Bishop from the Church of South India and a Canon of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York. A bishop whose visit we remember with much sorrow was Bishop Murray from the Diocese of Riverina, New South Wales. The day he came he was in a very happy frame of mind, for, with the Dean of Newcastle, he had just completed a most successful mission in St. George's Cathedral and was returning home that night. But crossing the Darling Ranges the plane crashed and everyone on board perished.

Workers in the field of social welfare often came, for officials of the Child Welfare Department made no secret of the fact that they liked bringing such people to the Swan Homes. In this way we met many men and women associated with similar work to

our own, and we had interesting discussions on problems of institutional care. Because of my former association with Fairbridge Farm School, I was particularly pleased to welcome some members of the London Committee of the Child Emigration Society, including its Chairman, Sir Charles Hambro — then Governor of the Bank of England. Another prominent member of the party was the Earl of Scarborough who was the Lord Chamberlain. They were in Western Australia to arrange for the resumption of child migration to the Farm School now that the war had ended, and at Mrs. Fairbridge's suggestion they were most interested to see what we were doing at Swan.

But of all the visits the one we look back on with the greatest pleasure took place on October 17th, 1950, when we welcomed His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury and Mrs. Fisher. Up to almost the minute of their arrival at Swan there was considerable doubt as to whether such a visit could possibly be squeezed into Dr. Fisher's crowded itinerary. High officials in the Church Office were adamant that this was quite out of the question. But the Archbishop of Perth was really keen that His Grace of Canterbury should see our establishment, and more particularly that he should meet the child migrants from England who were in residence there. The actual arrangements for the visit then became nearly cloak and dagger, for almost on the pain of excommunication I was solemnly warned by Archbishop Moline that I must tell no man, but make ready for a visit. When the party left the city — and not till then — the Archbishop's secretary would advise me of its departure and of the expected time of its arrival. In Perth it was being officially reported that Archbishop Moline was showing Dr. and Mrs. Fisher something of the environs of Perth. At Swan the buildings had already been tidied and the children dressed in their best. Then came the joyful news that the party was on its way and would definitely be paying us a visit. Soon the car came in sight.

I recall that it was a lovely warm afternoon. The spring was later that year and the fields were still green. They had not yet acquired their brownish tinge which marks the approach of the West Australian summer. Mary, Canon Hamilton, Mr. Robertson and I met the party at the entrance to Waylen House, but before entering the building Dr. Fisher turned and looked across our paddocks towards the blue hills of the Darling Ranges. "Look", he said, "it's like a little bit of England — but with a difference". The beauty of the scene must have impressed him, because afterwards he commented about it in an English newspaper. Mrs. Fisher was greatly delighted with a display of West Australian wildflowers which our farm foreman, Mr. Ernest Cope, had collected and beautifully arranged for the visitors in his own inimitable way. These flowers grow in profusion on the slopes of the nearby Darling Ranges and are seen at their best in the months of September-October. Mrs. Fisher asked Mr. Cope many questions about the flowers, obviously attracted to them, and commented, as interested overseas' visitors so often did, on their unique forms and striking colours. (Later Mr. Cope and Mary collected more wildflowers and sent a box of them to Mrs. Fisher which she acknowledged with appreciation).

Afternoon tea followed, and our distinguished guests quickly put everyone at their ease. Completely relaxed, the Archbishop almost sprawled back into a large, comfortable chair in our lounge with the words: "How lovely to sink back into this chair for just a few minutes". But not for long. The afternoon tea was brought in and placed on the table, and a plate of something was offered to His Grace. But the Archbishop said: "You know with all this lovely food, I'd like to help myself". And he got up and made his own choice.

I recall two items of the conversation. The first was his pleasure and obvious delight at being provided with a police motor-cycle escort — “Something that had never happened to me before”. The other was a personal touch. When my little daughter, Judy, then aged eight, brought the Archbishop sugar for his tea he put his arm round her and told us all that one of his greatest joys was that when he stayed with his grandchildren they all arrived in his bedroom each morning to bring him a cup of tea. Each grandchild carried something. One had the cup and saucer, another the teapot, a third the milk and the youngest carried the teaspoon. To him it was a most pleasurable start to the day. It was a happy, homely touch, and in fact the strongest impressions we received of the Archbishop on his visit here were those of homeliness and kindly geniality. He was interested in all he saw and out to enjoy every minute of his tour. But above all he wanted to meet and talk to as many people as possible. And having got into conversation with them he refused to be hurried away from them.

Meanwhile the children and staff were waiting to welcome him. So, as soon as afternoon tea was over we adjourned to the gymnasium where all had assembled. Here Dr. and Mrs. Fisher were introduced in a short ceremony after which they met the staff and moved among the children, speaking to many of them, especially the child migrants. “What part of England do you come from? How long have you been in Australia? Do you like it out here?” These and other questions they asked many of the girls and boys.

Next a visit was made to inspect the recently-erected Lee Steere House which, it will be recalled, had been built under Migration Agreement for the accommodation of twenty senior girls. Dr. and Mrs. Fisher were most interested in the conditions here, and were very complimentary to the Board of Management for providing such comfortable and attractive living quarters. But for the Archbishop it was still the human interest rather than the building that really mattered. At every opportunity he laughed and joked with the girls. Then for a few minutes we lost him out of the official party. When I found him he was surrounded by an enthusiastic group of autograph hunters. Broad hints, glances at wristlet watches and even the frowns of officialdom were of no avail. He went on happily signing and exchanging pleasantries with the girls. In the end he had almost forcibly to be dragged away with a stern reminder that he was already late for an appearance at the Guildford Grammar School.

But even then there was a touch of humanity. Noticing a small group of girls with pieces of writing paper in their hand, looking dejected and disappointed because they had not secured an autograph, he quickly collected the sheets and promised that he would sign these and see that they got them. And he did so. Almost the last thing he did in this State was to hand to the secretary of the Archbishop of Perth the signed autographs for this group of girls. So, after a photo, which included Mrs. Fisher, Mrs. Peterkin, Dr. Fisher and myself and Judy — the Archbishop insisted that Judy should be in it — he left us to complete the rest of his programme before Evensong. It had been one of the great days in the history of the Swan Homes and one that those of us who were privileged to be present will never forget.

As a sort of aftermath of that visit I mention two other events. The first took place several weeks later. At the time I was in Sydney attending General Synod. After Dr. Fisher had delivered the opening address he fulfilled the remaining engagements of his strenuous tour and then the time came for him to leave Australia. That afternoon, as he drove from St. Andrew's Cathedral a great crowd had gathered to see the distin-

guished visitors off. I was a little late in arriving and could not get near the car. So in order to get a better view I climbed on the stone fence surrounding the Cathedral and waved. Both Archbishop and Mrs. Fisher were standing in an open car acknowledging the farewells of the crowd. It was then that Mrs. Fisher sighted me and she waved and called out: "Goodbye, Mr. Peterkin!" "And" — as Mr. Robertson later told Perth Synod — "all Sydney turned and gazed at me in wonder".

The other item was a paragraph included in an article which the Archbishop of Canterbury wrote for an English church-paper, describing his experiences on his world tour — and I quote: "Nothing more impressed me than the Swan Homes, near Perth, to which I was able to pay a short visit. There are 190 boys and girls in these Homes, admirably looked after with sympathy and imagination by Mr. Peterkin and his staff. The accommodation was good, the children themselves obviously happy and full of life. The Homes take about a dozen children a year from England, and I was glad to find that at this moment there are in the Homes 55 children who have come through the good offices of the Church of England Advisory Council for Empire Settlement. The Homes have a lovely situation and the scenery around them is very English — fields with their cows and horses, a stream meandering through them, and hills in the distance which might be the Chilterns. The children were being effectively trained to be good citizens and good Christians. I am very glad to pay this testimony to this most Christian and constructive work".

Such a tribute is a happy note on which to conclude this section.

# 4. WINDS OF CHANGE

## A. FALLING NUMBERS:

In the decade following the end of World War II there had been a steady increase in the enrolments at the Swan Homes. This had been due to an acute shortage of housing in the State and to the introduction of the Child Migration Scheme. The Board had met this additional demand for accommodation by building several new houses ("Hudleston", "Lee Steere" and "Freeman") and by establishing branch institutions at Coogee ("Seaside House") and at Stoneville ("Padbury Boys' Farm School"). In December 1942 the total enrolment in the Swan Homes had been 150, but by 1955 it had increased to more than 200.

But then there followed an equally steady decrease in the number of destitute children enrolled. By the end of 1959 this had fallen to 153, and halfway through the following decade there were only 51 necessitous cases on our roll. Three years later even this small number had reduced so much that it was quite impracticable to keep open even the small home at Coogee for their reception. Nor was this downward trend in the enrolment of needy children confined to our institution. It was widespread throughout Australia, and it was particularly marked in the United Kingdom. The "Seventh Report of the Children's Department of the Home Office", London, which was published in 1955 refers to it in some detail, listing some of its effects. On page 22 the report states: "..... about 130 Local Authority Homes (i.e. those established by County Councils) were closed, these being mostly large institutions or grouped cottage homes used for long-stay purposes". On page 25 it refers to the closing of many voluntary Homes (i.e. those established by churches or by charitable organisations): "During the last few years between 250 and 300 voluntary Homes have ceased to be registered".

The question naturally arises: "Why this fall in the number of necessitous children requiring institution accommodation?" So far as Swan Homes were concerned it was due to a combination of two simultaneous factors. These were the introduction of a new policy for the care of State wards by the Child Welfare Department, and a steep decline in the number of child migrants from the United Kingdom. Together they exerted such a marked influence on ours and some other voluntary child-care institutions in Western Australia that they must be examined more fully.

In the past the Department had preferred fostering to institution-placement of its wards, but there had always been a good many girls and boys for whom it had not been successful in obtaining foster-homes. As it had no large establishment of its own to which to send such children it depended on the voluntary institutions to accommodate them. State children had in fact come to us from the day we first opened our doors in 1868. But when Mr. McCall was appointed Director he determined that this was not to continue. He immediately commenced a pressurized advertising campaign to seek foster-homes for his wards, offering increased financial inducement to people to take a child. At every opportunity he stressed how much better off children would be in a private home than in an institution. "What a child needs", he said, addressing the Council of Social Science, "is socialisation not institutionalism". He then went on to say that

socialisation was possible only in a fostered or adoptive situation where children would enjoy "the cohesive affection of a family group".

In general I would agree with that. For children bereft of home life, adoption or a good foster home is normally best. But I always add the proviso that such home should take *all* the children in the family - not just one member of it. I think that to break up a family so that brothers and sisters do not grow up together, or at least have daily contact with each other, is inhumane. Had circumstances necessitated the placement of my own children I would have wished them to grow up together. Furthermore not every foster-home is a place of sweetness and light, so that foster-farming should be permitted only after thorough investigation had been exercised by departmental officers as to the suitability of the foster-parents for this responsibility. In our years at Swan we had a good deal of experience of children who at some time or other had been fostered. That these girls and boys were now in an institution showed that for some reason (not necessarily the fault of the foster-parent) the placement had not been a success. Frankly, I never found much enthusiasm among Swan Homes' children to be sent to foster-homes. I well remember one boy's answer when I offered him the opportunity of what I had been told would be an excellent home for him. "No thanks", he said, "I don't want to go to no foster-home. I've been in two already!" As I never found him to be a particularly difficult lad, I wondered about his antagonistic attitude towards being fostered. And then I think of a girl who proved to be very well-behaved and most satisfactory with us - a really likable person. I was asked by the Department on Christmas Day if I could admit her from the Receiving-Home to which she had been returned a few hours earlier by her foster-parents. Fancy returning a child to the Receiving-Home on Christmas Day!

Later in his administration Mr. McCall established a new departmental institution on cottage lines at Canning Bridge for the accommodation of destitute children who had been made State wards, including those for whom fostering had not been a success. At the time there was some public criticism of such an expensive project. "Why was it necessary to build an institution of grouped cottages when there were vacancies in the old voluntary homes such as ours?" The Department's reply was that the latter were institutional in character and were staffed by untrained people. Therefore they were unsuitable for child placement. They were conducted in the "orphanage tradition, in which long ago children were the objects of charity which brought merit to the giver rather than benefit to the children" - to quote from an address by the Director. I suppose it may be true that some orphanages were founded and supported by men or women with such an object in mind, but I think most were motivated by Christian ideals, and those responsible were far more solicitous for the welfare of the orphan and the needy than they were about getting themselves "pie in the sky by and by". Had it not been for people like Dr. Barnado and other philanthropists the lot of many destitute children even as late as Queen Victoria's day would have been hard indeed. In our own times I have often wondered how much those members of the public who scornfully denigrate people who devote themselves to humanitarian causes as "do-gooders" do themselves donate in money or effort to help the afflicted and the necessitous in the community. There are many (and some of them very wealthy) who show little concern or compassion for the afflicted in this world. "I'm all right Jack" is their philosophy.

Then there was the Department's criticism that the staff of voluntary homes were untrained. Now I would not wish to decry professional qualifications, for, other things

being equal, a trained person is better than one without training. Indeed it is pleasing to learn that in recent times in Western Australia a start has been made in providing a course of lectures and practical work for employees in voluntary homes, with the object of improving staff standards. But it also has to be remembered that a distinction in Psychology or a major in Sociology is not what really matters in home-making and bringing-up children. It is a general liking for girls and boys (and some in Homes are hard to like), a determined effort on the part of members of staff to promote the welfare of their charges - something which invariably means planning and effort and self-sacrifice on the part of house parents - coupled with qualities of personal character, common-sense in handling problems, and some ability in household skills and management - all these and a joy in the work that can't be destroyed by the disappointments that will surely arise - these attributes and not academic qualifications, are the basic requirements for good house-staff in a children's institution. Without them a member will never be a success.

Then there was the second factor contributing to the fall in our enrolments as we approached the nineteen sixties - the steep decrease in the number of child migrants. The reason for this is not far to seek. In England after the war it was decided that there were too many institutions for children and that some were out-dated in buildings and methods and therefore ought to be closed. So this was done and alternative arrangements made for their residents. For any child who could not then be readily accommodated or who thought he would like the adventure of going overseas, migration solved the problem of his future placement. From this source quite a number of our earlier arrivals had been recruited. But as time went on the supply of these became exhausted and later efforts to get English institution authorities to send children to us met with no response. Our other migrants were children of parents who made private application to our Miss Jones in London (see page 107) for these to be included in a party for the Swan Homes. In the presence of the child the parents always said that they would follow as soon as they could arrange to come - a sincere promise in many cases but regrettably not in all. In later years Australia House would not accept as child migrants to Swan Homes any applicants whose parents did not also apply to migrate to Western Australia. So ten years after our earliest arrivals had reached us there were very few child migrants coming to us. Of these most went to their parents soon after the latter arrived.

Earlier in the century there had been a good deal of enthusiasm for child migration in British circles. The Fairbridge Society successfully established four Farm Schools overseas and Dr. Barnardo's Home had included large numbers of its children in its own or other child migration schemes. But as time went on there was a growing concern in Britain about the morality of this practice. "Shouldn't England be looking after her own needy children in the land of their birth? Why should this responsibility be passed over to Canada and Australia?" Later there was more criticism that children sent to Commonwealth countries were not being cared for as well as if they had remained in Britain. The British Government considered that this needed investigation, with the result that a "Fact-Finding Committee" was appointed to visit Australia to enquire into the conditions under which child migrants were being accommodated.

The Committee visited many institutions in Australia and the general impression was that they made themselves most unpopular. They certainly did in Western Australia. The Principal of Fairbridge told me that if the members of his Board had not been present he would have ordered the Committee off the premises - they were so down-



right rude. When it came to Swan I was shocked by the opening remark of the Chairman which was a rather jeering sneer. I recall the comment made by one of my house-mistresses, Miss Eve Boulderstone, a gracious English lady: "I don't know what the old country is coming to, sending out people like these as its representatives!"

When their report was published it was rather milder in critical tone than had been expected. It could be summed-up in one word - "unenthusiastic". A member of the House of Commons said that parties interested in migration were generally perturbed by the report, to which the Minister for Immigration in Canberra, Mr. Townley, replied in strong terms, stating that Australian authorities did not regard the report as seriously reflecting upon standards of care in this country. Two years later when Mary and I were in Britain we visited some Council and voluntary homes in London and elsewhere. We thought that the reform schools we saw were particularly good, but we were disappointed with the larger establishments for needy children over which we were shown, considering them to be inferior to many homes we had seen in various parts of Australia. But then there are many institutions in the United Kingdom and we only had time to visit a few of them - too few to make any generalisation. (Most of those visited, however, were homes recommended to us by the Home Office). One establishment near Hammersmith we liked very much, returning to have a second look at it. It had only about six girls and boys, cared for by a well-to-do couple who took no salary, but spent the amount they would have been paid in buying amenities for the children. When in later years I saw the television show, "Bachelor Father", it reminded me in many ways of that home. But it could hardly be called a typical English institution.

While in London I had an interview with the head of the Children's Department of the Home Office to discuss child migration. He was most friendly, but he made it quite clear that there was no likelihood of its revival. "You see", he said, "the children in our homes mostly have at least one parent - just as they do in yours. In many cases that parent loves his or her child and would never give consent to its going twelve thousand miles away. Would the parent of a child in your homes do so?" Then he continued: "The idea of Britain having hundreds of orphans living in its institutions is not true today, any more than it is in Australia" - with all of which I had to agree. So many people still have the belief that a children's home is filled with orphans with no one to love or care about them. In all my thirty-years at Swan, during which I enrolled hundreds of children, a true orphan was an extreme rarity.

But it was not only the English authorities who now opposed child migration. At first, under the inspiring leadership of Mr. Calwell, the Australian immigration officials had been enthusiastic for it. With the passing of years this had waned. Said one of them in Australia House to me: "Child migration is too expensive. We have to pay the cost of the passage of your child migrants, help to maintain them while they're in your homes and pay out large sums to assist you to build accommodation for them. On the other hand if a child accompanies his parents we have to do little more than pay for his fare". So the time came when the Government ceased to provide building assistance or give any encouragement to this form of migration. Moreover when a parent followed his child our Homes mostly became a transit camp. We had what was often the difficult task of settling down the boy or girl after the excitement of shipboard life. Then the parent arrived, having been able to enjoy the voyage without the responsibility of having his children on the ship. Soon he came to claim them and we were left with empty beds. This became the normal pattern. Mostly it was good for the child

and good for Australia. But our foundation was for the care of children who through circumstances had been denied normal home life.

The number of children who comprised the third group on our enrolment - the private cases - remained fairly constant, although with improved housing, steady employment and the growth of a social conscience which frowned upon the placement of children in institutions there was even a slight fall in the recruitment of these. But the cumulative effect of the decline in numbers of all three types of resident, viz. the almost total non-placement of new State wards in our institution; the cessation of child migration; and the slight decrease in private cases - resulted in a marked reduction in the total number of children we were accommodating. Nor was our establishment alone in this. Across the river from us was the Presbyterian Home, "Benmore", standing empty and fast deteriorating. The Methodist Home for Boys at Werribee had also closed, as had our own Padbury Farm School at Stoneville. Word reached us that there were few boys in residence at Boys' Town, Bindoon, so that there was some doubt about its future.

I reported all this to the Board but the members were inclined to dismiss it as "just a passing phase". I was not so sure of that. I could see no likelihood of the Child Welfare Department changing its policy of no longer sending wards to voluntary institutions, nor could I hope for any change of heart in England's Children's Department or in the attitude of the Immigration Officers in Canberra and London. I decided, however, to have a talk with Mr. McCall about our numbers' situation. He knew what good accommodation we had at Swan and I told him of my concern at the increasing empty beds. His reply was brief, but its message loud and clear: "I am not going to send you State wards just to keep Swan Homes open. But", he continued, "if you were prepared to convert your establishment into a State Receiving Home" (this was well before he commenced his homes at Canning Bridge) "I would give that proposal serious consideration". I replied that I was sure that the Board would not agree to such a change. "Then", he said, "I think you'd better start and think about some alternative use for it".

I did consider the possibility of its conversion to an institution for afflicted children - the blind, the deaf and dumb or the mentally distressed. But the State already had establishments which cared for these. What about a home for the aged? I discussed this suggestion with Matron Norma Monger, a very experienced person in caring for old and sick people. But she was most emphatic that Swan was quite unsuitable for that purpose. "It is too scattered and there are too many two-storied buildings, so that stairs would be a problem", she said.

Now all this time I knew that I need not concern myself with the future of Swan at all. We had large endowments and we could continue for many years gradually using these up in meeting the excess of expenditure over the diminishing income, steadily closing up house after house as these ceased to be needed. We could adopt the Asquithian philosophy of "Wait and See" or console ourselves like Mr. Micawber that "something would turn up". But in some institutions nothing had turned up and they had become derelict. No, that policy was not for me. Swan was too good to stand by and watch that happen. There must be a better solution for its future.

## B. THE GREAT DECISION:

One day in the mid 1950's I was working in my office when there was a knock at my door. In response to my: "Come in!" there entered a young man named Mr. Ron Elphick. I had not met him previously but remembered being very impressed by a speech he had made in a recent Synod. On being welcomed and seated he lost no time in telling me the purpose of his visit: "*Would Swan Homes consider boarding farmers' children so that they might attend High School?*"

Such an idea had never occurred to me, and really I felt rather shocked at the suggestion. I remember saying to him: "I don't think that would be possible. But suppose it was. Do you think it at all likely that parents would send their children to an Orphanage?" He replied: "I think I know some who might. There are people in my district who are desperate to get their children to a place where they can receive higher education. Northam is out of the way for us, Geraldton more so. In fact private accommodation is hard to find in any town with a High School, and even when it has been obtained the parents are worried about the lack of proper supervision of their children out of school hours. Even in some of the hostels there appears to be room for a good deal of improvement in this respect. If you could take them", he continued, "your establishment would be very convenient for us, because we pass it every time we come to Perth"

We talked over the idea a little longer but I couldn't offer him any encouragement. I explained that included in our rules was an "Objects Clause" which stated that our homes were founded for necessitous children. The land on which the institution stood was given for that purpose and the buildings on it were erected from charitable benefactions. These would be the Board's objections to the idea, and I felt equally certain that parents would not send their children to an Orphanage, no matter how keen they were for them to receive higher education. I assured him, however, that I would give his suggestion further thought and would also discuss the idea with parents in other country districts when I met them on our tours. Later I did this and soon realized how widespread was the problem of getting suitable and supervised accommodation for adolescent school children. But send them to an Orphanage? No, they wouldn't go as far as that!

Two years went by during which I often thought about that suggestion of Mr. Elphick's. These were the years when our enrolments were steadily falling and our future began to look uncertain. On the one hand we had good accommodation - some of it now not being used, and with every prospect of more vacancies arising - while on the other there appeared to be a desperate need for board for country High School children. Surely the sensible thing would be to let the latter have some of our empty beds until such time as these were again required for needy girls and boys. If such an arrangement could be introduced there would be no danger of our having to close, so that there would always be a home for the destitute child. At the same time a country child could be given the supervised accommodation, so much in demand, with very good conditions. And how good those conditions really were! For in Midland, only three miles away, there was a Senior High School of excellent reputation, and there were medical, dental and even hospital facilities if required. Our establishment was only thirteen miles from Perth where the students could attend anything suitable that the City had to offer. Within the institution, so beautifully situated on the banks of the Swan River, the students would experience many of the features of Public School boarding life such as living under a "house" system, with supervised prep, regular chapel at-

tendance, team games on the extensive playing fields, recreational activities in the gymnasium and the like. Thus I reasoned to myself - and it seemed an ideal solution to the two problems: What to do with our vacancies and how country parents could get that necessary accommodation for their children of High School age.

But good as it sounded in theory there were serious obstacles in the way of its introduction - three in particular. In setting out to overcome these I had to tread warily for I did not want to present the proposal to the Board until I felt the time was most opportune. (What I did do frequently was to draw the attention of members to our falling numbers, reminding them of what was happening elsewhere because of this - with decaying empty "Benmore" across the river as a sort of spectre of doom. I would follow this up with a hint that if our enrolment continued to decline we might have to consider some alternative use for our establishment).

The first barrier to my scheme was the name - "The Swan Homes". That title must be changed to one which had no institutional association. I spoke to the Board on this subject, explaining that in more recent times many children's establishments throughout the world had changed to a name which in itself had no suggestion of a "Home" or an "Orphanage", and I recommended we did the same. Members liked the idea, feeling that this would be much better for the residents, though some wished to see the "Swan" retained in any alteration. Someone suggested I arrange a competition among the children, with the Board awarding a prize for the name that was adjudged the best title. This was done, and from one hundred entries I took twenty to the next meeting. Members were pleased with these, selecting from among them the name "Swanlea" for the prize. I also liked this best, but offered the suggestion that "lea" be changed to "leigh" (also pronounced "lee"), which modification was accepted. So the establishment became "Swanleigh".

The second obstacle to be surmounted was the "Objects Clause" in our rules, which would require amending before we could admit boarders. To do this it was necessary for any alteration to the rules to be passed first by the Annual Meeting of Subscribers and then by Synod. As the present clause stood we were limited to the admission of the orphaned, the unwanted, the neglected, or the destitute. But even before the turn of the century the Board had been accepting as paying or "private cases" a good many children who were not State wards nor could they properly be classified into any of the categories listed in the rule. These girls and boys all had at least one living parent and indeed many of them had two - living but separated. Such children were therefore not orphans in the usual meaning of the word. In most of these cases, because of the death, desertion or divorce of the marriage partner, one parent had been left with children, which necessitated his or her having to go to work to support them. If there were no relative to give them a home they were often placed in an institution where the parent paid a fee for their maintenance but retained the legal guardianship of them. As we have already seen such children constituted the majority of our enrolment towards the end of the 1950's. They were not destitute because in theory at any rate they were being financially supported by a parent. Nor were they normally either unwanted or neglected. Mostly there existed a strong bond of affection between them and at least one parent who had really tried to do his or her best for them, and was usually most unhappy at having to place them in an institution. For some years I had thought about this situation in relation to the rule. Now I decided to notify the Board of my intention to correct this anomaly by moving an amendment to the "Objects Clause" at the next annual meeting, which, if passed, would then read: "..... orphans, neglected, unwanted

and destitute children and such other children as the Board decided to admit". When I explained to the members that the majority of our present children were not included under any of the terms in the existing clause they agreed to support my proposed alteration, which was subsequently passed without dissent by the Subscribers and then by Synod.

I now felt that if I could persuade the Board to admit country boarders this could be done under the wording of the amended "Objects Clause". But there still remained the third and greatest obstacle to be overcome - that of making Swanleigh acceptable to parents as a place to send their children. For although its name had been changed it was - to the public - still a home for necessitous girls and boys, and therefore a place to which boarders would not come. But if it were a hostel that would be different. Then why not make it a hostel? Already the majority on our enrolment were private fee-paying children so what was the difference? It amounted to this - that the private case who was already enrolled usually had only one "active" parent who paid an accommodation charge according to his or her means, whereas the country boarder would come from a normal home and pay a fixed fee which would cover the full cost of his or her keep. The number of these boarders that we could take would depend on how many vacancies we had available after all the needy cases had been accommodated (with a safe margin for emergency applicants).

But what about those necessitous children already enrolled - the State wards and migrants still with us, and the private cases and any who would enrol after the commencement of the Hostel - what about them? How were they to be fitted into the scheme? There was only one satisfactory answer to that problem. They must no longer be just inmates. They, too, must become boarders. Within the new establishment all must be Swanleighans, equal in status and conditions, living together and sharing identical programmes - prep, sport, recreation, outings, discipline - even chores. In appearance? Well at certain times there was no problem, for on all official occasions such as at school, church and on some outings all would be wearing the School uniform. But at other special functions such as at school or hostel dances or on an outing to the theatre, when all were to wear individual clothing, the needy must also be well-dressed. Swanleigh must see to that. Reasonable pocket money and necessary school and sporting requirements must be provided, so that at all times they would be "up with the Joneses". It must never be possible for a stranger to distinguish between the two classes of boarder. In school holidays when the country children returned home the parents of the other children must try to arrange to have them for the vacation, but where this was impossible we must organize alternative accommodation for them at that time.

Such was my thinking in 1957. But throughout that year I felt that the time was not yet ripe for me to introduce the hostel idea to the Board. I was sure that Mr. McCall and the Child Welfare Department would not change their attitude on their decision not to place further State wards with us, but I was still not absolutely certain about the child migration situation. There was only one way to determine that. We must go to England, interview authorities there and find out for ourselves whether there was any likelihood of our migration scheme's continuing. So in 1958 Mary and I took long service leave and while in Britain we visited the Home Office and Australia House and numbers of institutions as described in the last chapter. Nowhere did we receive any encouragement that child migration other than that of children with their own parents would continue, which meant that Swan's future enrolments would be confined almost entirely to private cases. Now there were less than a hundred of these on the roll, including boys and girls. So unless some alternative source of necessitous child-

recruitment could be found much of our large establishment was bound to become redundant.

All this I pointed out in a letter to Mr. Guy, then Chairman of the Board, describing our London interviews and English experiences. Then I told him of our hostel proposal, asking him if he would read my letter to the members, discuss it and ask them to think about it. On our return I would ask the Archbishop to call a special meeting to consider its adoption.

The day after we disembarked Mr. Guy told me that the hostel suggestion had not been favourably received by the Board, the main objection being that the Orphanages had been established for the care of destitute children. If we departed from that we were not keeping our trust. Further it was felt that such a change would lose our charitable appeal, public support and bequests. Some of the members did think that the time might come when we might have to change our policy, but the time for doing so was not yet. When I asked him where he personally stood in this matter, he replied that he was opposed to the hostel idea.

Naturally I was very disappointed at the rejection of my proposal but I was not altogether surprised, for I recalled that my own reaction to Mr. Elphick's suggestion had been one of shock at anything so radical. But now I was firmly convinced that the hostel was the only practical solution offering real hope for the future of Swanleigh. So I wrote a memorandum to the members, setting out the details of the scheme more fully and with special reference to the objections mentioned by Mr. Guy. The moral one was fairly easily answered. In the first place, by the adoption of the scheme not a single genuine needy child would be excluded, and in the second, since the boarder would be required to pay the full cost of his keep, none of the endowments would be used to reduce his fees. Certainly we would lose public support, for we could not ask for subscriptions to help meet the cost of country boarders. Probably we would no longer receive Lotteries' assistance other than its per capita grants for any necessitous children still enrolled. It was likely that bequests would also cease, though not necessarily entirely so, for generous benefactions were sometimes made to Public Schools, and the unusual nature of our establishment might attract an occasional testator. As for postponing the introduction of the scheme I could see no reason for doing so. I had no doubt that once the hostel was established and became known we would have plenty of applicants, but this would take time and we had a good many vacancies at present. Because of these our endowment capital was draining away every year and the only way to end this was to fill the empty beds with fully-paying boarders. I therefore urged that if the scheme were accepted there be no delay in its commencement, recommending the venture be launched at the beginning of 1960, i.e. the following January.

The special meeting which I had requested was held in the Diocesan Library on March 6th, 1959, and was presided over by the Archbishop, with all members present. I felt that my memorandum had been of some effect because there was not the hostility to the proposal which I feared there might be. Now that the Board was aware that no necessitous children were to be excluded to make room for the boarders and that endowment funds were not to be used to lower fees for country children, the members were much more enthusiastic. After a full discussion Canon Jack Watts moved and Mr. Guy seconded "that the hostel idea be accepted in principle, and that a Committee be appointed to investigate relative details inherent in the adoption of the proposal, including the financial implications involved". This motion was carried unanimously.

support he replied that it whole-heartedly had - a stand he was to maintain to the end of his episcopate. After the retirement from the meeting of Mr. Blanckensee and Mr. Broad a resolution calling for the adoption of the Committee's report was carried unanimously, which meant in effect that provided the project received the approval of the Subscribers at their Annual Meeting, and of the church at Synod, Swanleigh would become a hostel on January 1st, 1960. A statement setting out the new proposal was included in the Board's annual report to these two bodies which was adopted by them without dissent.

But though on those occasions no one publicly opposed the change, the Board was to receive much criticism during the years ahead. Archbishop Sambell who was enthroned in St. George's Cathedral in Perth in 1969 - ten years later - told me that "he had been here only five minutes when he was informed that what had been done at Swanleigh was morally wrong". Indeed one of the Bishops was heard to say: "Up there" (meaning at Swan) "they're doing what they've no right to do" - and a great deal more was said. So I am concluding this chapter by re-stating the Board's case in a series of statements - some of them axiomatic. These are followed by a quotation from an article by Sir Arthur Bryant, one of the foremost historians of this century. I think that together these adequately answer the Board's critics.

Here is the case:

1. With the changes in policy made by the Child Welfare Department and the Commonwealth and State Immigration Departments, whereby the placement of wards and migrants in Swanleigh would steadily come to an end, the institution's enrolment must fall to well below its present capacity unless some new form of recruitment were introduced.
2. The Church of England did not now require its three existing establishments, viz. Swanleigh, Parkerville and Coogee, to care for the steadily diminishing number of children needing institutional care.
3. It was better for Swanleigh to continue as a useful establishment than for it to empty and perhaps become largely or entirely derelict as had happened with some other institutions in Western Australia and elsewhere.
4. If only the vacant beds were given to country boarders no needy child-applicant was being denied a refuge.
5. If the country boarders paid the whole cost of their keep then the endowment funds were not being used to maintain them.
6. If circumstances changed so that the hostel had to revert entirely to a children's home or other charitable establishment, the improvements added in the hostel years would enure for the benefit of the necessitous inmates in that future institution.
7. It was better for a needy child's personality that he be classified as a hostel boarder than as an Orphanage inmate.
8. If no necessitous child were being denied a refuge; if the fabric of the institution (its grounds, buildings and equipment) were being maintained and improved; if the endowments were not being used to provide reduction in the fees of boarders or to supply facilities not shared by the necessitous; if the needy children on the enrolment enjoyed happier, better lives as hostel boarders than they would have done had they been Orphanage inmates - then the Board was being faithful to its trust.

And here is the quotation:

Writing in the "Illustrated London News" of June 21st, 1969, Sir Arthur Bryant had this to say about a contentious current English proposal: "This is the point that

The Committee - known as the Committee of Ways and Means - held several meetings to discuss matters necessary for the commencement of the project. For instance a decision had to be made on the amount of the fee to be charged to the new boarders. It must cover the full cost of their keep, but it must be reasonably comparable with that paid by students attending the State-subsidised hostels already in existence. To determine our fee we had to settle on a probable enrolment figure and budget on that. We thought that by the beginning of the fourth year there might be 160 boarders and perhaps 80 necessitous cases, including those at Coogee. Budgetting on these numbers we estimated that by charging country children £60 per term (which was more than the fees of any other hostel) there would be a profit of about £1,350. We thought it probable that in the first three years there would be a loss, but as the primary aim in establishing the hostel was to save Swanleigh, we hoped that the Diocesan Trustees would advance endowment money to meet any deficiency, on the understanding that this would be repaid when we reached financial stability.

The Committee also decided that some sections would need some upgrading to meet the new situation. For instance Hudleston House which had received little maintenance since it was built by boys in the mid-forties had originally been erected for the accommodation of kindergarten and lower primary girls. Now it was to have adolescents in residence, so that some alterations, particularly in the bathroom area, would be necessary. In Cornwell the kitchen and bathrooms required re-modelling for there was little change in them from the Mission days early in the century. Waylen would need more dormitory and study furniture and additional bedding. These were but typical of the many details discussed and recommendations made.

When the Committee had completed its report another special meeting of the Board was called at which the Archbishop again presided. There were also in attendance Mr. Alan Blanckensee representing the Diocesan Solicitors, and Mr. Richard Broad, the Diocesan Secretary. The former said that in the opinion of his firm it would be improper for the hostel to use any of the endowments, because these had been left for the benefit of destitute children. He also considered that country boarders could not be admitted under the amended "Objects Clause", because according to the "ejusdem generis" rule the words "and for such other children" implied that such children must also be in a state of need. He believed, however, that the Board's proposal could be achieved by a further amendment to the rule which would state the objects of the institution more specifically, and he offered to help us with its wording in time for the next Annual Meeting and Synod. "You have already been breaking your 'Objects Clause' for almost a century", he said. "One more year will hardly matter".

The Diocesan Secretary opposed the proposal on the grounds that it was morally wrong to admit other than necessitous children, and that by doing so this would harm the reputation of the church. But he said that he also saw the commonsense of using the vacancies and he wished to put forward an alternative proposal for consideration. His suggestion was that a portion of the Orphanage be rented at a reasonable figure by "Swanleigh Hostel" for the accommodation of country students. But his idea received no support. I think everyone realised that while the hostel stood on orphanage property parents would not send their children to it, so that the whole project would be doomed to failure from the start.

There followed a long discussion with many questions asked and answered. When enquiry was made of Archbishop Moline as to whether the hostel proposal had his full



the critics missed. One can be so careful of the letter of the law that they miss the opportunity of the greater service while still fulfilling the old. ....For these reasons reliance on law, and law alone, may not bring about the results that the British Government is, out of the highest motives, seeking. That insistence on law and the letter of the law, which has been so beneficial an influence on our historical development, has its dangers. For in times when political passions run high, it is apt to be seen by stubborn Britons on both sides as an end in itself, instead of what it really is - a necessary end to the great ends of peace, justice and the common weal. Some wise words of Burke are not without bearing on what might become the position of those acting in the name of law, and those depending on what they regard as their liberties and rights: 'The question before me is not whether you have the right to render your people miserable but whether it is not in your interest to make them happy. It is not what a lawyer tells me I may do, but what humanity, reason and justice tells me I ought to do.... *Show the thing you contend for to be reason, show it to be common sense, show it to be the means of attaining some useful end, and then I am content to allow it what dignity you please*', - Edmund Burke, one of England's greatest legal authorities, warning and pleading with the House of Commons about the time of the American War of Independence.

### C. THE END OF THE SWAN HOMES:

With the acceptance of the hostel proposal by the Subscribers and the church in the middle of 1959 the remainder of that year was an exciting period of planning and activity. Everything must be ready for the reception of the boarders we hoped would arrive the following February at the commencement of the new school year. Two major matters required special attention. First we must advertise for students. Secondly we must up-grade parts of our establishment and add some improvements in furniture, furnishings and equipment. The Committee compiled an attractive illustrated prospectus which it sent to the headmaster of every country school other than those adjacent to a High School, together with a request that he draw the attention of parents to the availability of our hostel if board were being sought. We also posted the prospectus to all Anglican Clergy not resident in or near the city, and to every branch of the Country Women's Association. Advertisements were placed in all country newspapers and in the journals published by the various stock firms. Finally the general public was informed of the change in a special article published in the "West Australian" after one of its best known journalists had discussed the new project with Archbishop Moline. As a result of all this publicity we began to receive enquiries and visits from parents, numbers of whom, when they had seen over our buildings, made immediate application for the future enrolment of their children. Entry forms also began to trickle in from such distant places as Esperance, Leonora, Meekatharra, Wyndham, Koolan Island and even from a settlement on the Trans-Australian railway. Most were for admission in 1960, but there were also quite a number of applications for enrolment in later years. We all felt most encouraged at the response.

Then there was the matter of improving some parts of the establishment. Since most of the applicants were going to be First or Second Year High School students, it was decided that some of these girls would be domiciled in Hudleston while the boys would be accommodated, some in Waylen and some in Cornwell. Up-grading parts of the latter was long overdue, and a tender was let to modernise the kitchen and bathrooms, improve the toilets and lay new water mains and sewerage lines to it. Orders were placed for the supply of additional dormitory and study furniture for Waylen House, while

alterations to bathrooms, and the enclosing and lining of the verandah at Hudleston were scheduled to be carried out during the Christmas vacation. The bedding and beds in every house were carefully inspected, with replacements made where considered necessary. Some new equipment to improve standards in several other sections was also purchased. In total the cost of all these items amounted to several thousands of pounds, for the tenders for the various Cornwell improvements alone totalled about £3,500.

Then the Swanleigh Council - the new name taken by the governing body of the hostel - received a shock. When application was made to the Diocesan Trustees to lend endowment money to meet this expenditure it was refused on the grounds that they would not do so until finality had been reached on the legality of using any of this money now that Swanleigh had become a hostel. Here was a quandary indeed! We had incurred expenditure. Now we hadn't the money to meet the debt. The Council discussed the situation in angry debate. Never in almost the hundred years of our existence had the Trustees refused our request for an advance from our Endowment Fund. We believed that since the majority of children in the hostel were still of the necessitous class - a situation that was expected to last for quite some years - and remembering that the primary object in founding the hostel was to save Swanleigh so that there would always be a place for the destitute child, we felt that there should be no problem about using endowment money at present, provided it was not spent on anything that benefited only the boarders and that it was re-paid. A strongly-worded memorandum was sent to each Trustee after it had first been shown to the Archbishop. But those who did reply said (in so many words): "We haven't denied your application. We have delayed making a decision". When pressed for this to be made as quickly as possible the reply was that the Trustees had much business to attend to and they had to postpone their discussion on the memorandum.

When this answer was received the Council grimly decided on a new plan of action. In the past whenever a bequest or capital gift was received at Swan it was immediately forwarded to the Diocesan Secretary to be banked and credited to our Endowment Account - at this time standing at over £70,000. Members now agreed that any further capital amounts received at our office would no longer be forwarded to Perth, but would be banked at Midland in a special interest-bearing trust account on which we would draw for approved expenditure until such time as the Trustees did make a decision on the endowments question. It so happened that by most fortuitous circumstances for the Council several large amounts were received at Swan in the immediate period that followed. The Government sent us a cheque for £4,147 for the amount owed us for Freeman House (see page 111) while the Lotteries Commission paid us the balance of a grant they had promised towards the cost of the erection of Hamilton House and other projects - a gift of £5,805. The Commission also responded to an appeal for assistance with the cost of the improvements at Cornwell House, making us a donation of £2,000. When making application for this I had discussed the hostel project with the Chairman of the Commission, Mr. Triat, explaining the reason for it and how it would function, to which he replied: "A very sensible idea". We also received several bequests at this time, one of which amounted to £3,500. So with deposits of over £15,000 available in our new account we knew we could face the future with confidence. Later we forwarded the total amount received as bequests to the Church Office so that a record of these would be kept and the amount included with other legacies. The remainder we used in capital expenditure over several years.

The annual financial statements received from our auditors (Messrs. O.L. Haines) clearly show that the total profit made by the hostel in its first five years was well in excess of the capital expenditure incurred by the Council in preparation for the opening.

Because of the Council's action in this matter there are some who might cry: "I smell stinking fish!" I would remind any such that in 1960, out of a total enrolment of 226 in our institutions there were 161 necessitous cases - far more than most of the voluntary Children's Homes in this State were accommodating. The boys and girls at Swan were the ones who were going to benefit most by the hostel scheme and by any improvements in the institution's buildings, grounds and equipment. No expenditure was being incurred specifically for the boarders or which could not have been justified had there been no hostel at all. In all aspects of life at Swanleigh it was to be a case of "share and share alike". To make emotive suggestions that we were "robbing the orphans" was sheer nonsense. They were to be much better off than under former conditions.

It should be repeated that from the outset it was the Council's intention that preliminary capital expenditure should be re-paid into the Endowment Fund when the hostel began to make profits. We never thought of using it other than as a loan, and as our security to meet our creditors' demands should we make a loss in our working account in our earliest years. Fortunately this latter never eventuated. Every year we made a profit.

So on the last day of December, 1959, the old Orphanage ceased to exist as such, and the following day Swanleigh commenced its history as an establishment believed to be unique in Australia, with necessitous children and fully paying boarders living together and sharing a common programme. Already there were a number of High School hostels in Western Australia, but these enrolled only paying boarders. Most of them had been built by the Government, and all were subsidised and mostly maintained by it. In all major decisions those establishments were subject to a Government instrumentality entitled the "State High Schools Hostels' Authority". Swanleigh was an independent hostel, Anglican in tradition but with a Managerial Council, partly elected by Synod and at that time partly by Subscribers, which made all policy decisions, reporting them to an Annual Meeting of the latter for endorsement, and later informing Synod of what was taking place. Though there had been times during the ninety years of its existence when the Orphanage had been subjected to criticism, its record of service to needy children had, in the main, received a good measure of public commendation both for its standards of child care and for its efforts to promote the residents' future welfare. While it would be false modesty to disclaim that many of the new features introduced during the Swan Homes' years originated in the thinking and planning of Mary and myself, it is equally true to say that we could not have progressed to the extent we believed we had done if it had not been for the enthusiastic support of the Board and the co-operation and efforts of numbers of the staff. In earlier chapters I have referred to a number of people in our time whose fine record of service to our children made a great difference to the life and progress of the establishment. I feel that there were some others, too, whose names should be mentioned for their contribution in later years. Some were Board members while others were on our staff.

Among the former was Mr. W.A. Saw, who had joined the Board some years before my appointment. He was a quiet unassuming gentleman, but unyielding on any matter

of principle. He it was who earlier had taken up the cudgels with the Trustees when at first they refused to pay the proceeds of the sale of the Orphanage's land in Middle Swan to the institution's Endowment Fund. I think that the fact that he was so well-known for his integrity, further strengthened by the strong case that he presented to the Trustees, which ultimately led to their decision to recommend the payment of the interest on the proceeds of the sales to the Orphanage because "it has strong moral claims to this land". After his death our members named the Coogee Branch after him "The Willie A. Saw Seaside Home". Unfortunately it proved rather a cumbersome title and the institution was mostly referred to as "Seaside House" or, more colloquially "Coogee". I feel sorry about this because Mr. Saw's long service in the cause of needy children deserved commemoration.

In 1932 Mrs. Roy Sundercombe was elected to the Board. She was well known in church circles because of her long and active role in the work of the Girls' Friendly Society, so that it was felt that her wide experience of welfare work with girls would be beneficial to the Board in its discussions. And so indeed it proved. Her membership was to be the longest in the institution's history, lasting for forty years, throughout which she rendered devoted service to our children. I have already mentioned that she was mainly responsible for the introduction of some of the social activities of the girls in the later years of the Adelaide Terrace Orphanage, and had been keenly interested in the development of the delicensed hotel at Coogee to become the girls' holiday home. (In later years she frequently reminded me that the building "belonged to the girls"). After 1942 she became a regular visitor to Swan and its branches and a member of most sub-committees set up by the Board from time to time to report on a wide variety of problems. She was also very active on the Parkerville Committee. Two of her associations with us were of special importance. The first was that as President of the Girls' Friendly Society Hostel in Perth she made opportunities for Orphanage girls working in the city to board there at a reasonable cost and receive supervised accommodation. The other was that for nearly thirty years she was on the Finance Committee which examined the establishment's monthly accounts with their accompanying cheques before these were posted. After his retirement as Paymaster and Receiver of the West Australian Government Railways, Mr. Sundercombe also joined the Board, and became Chairman of the Finance Committee, carrying out his duties with meticulous thoroughness. The Board was very delighted when Mrs. Sundercombe received a well-merited M.B.E. decoration for her voluntary services to the Girl's Friendly Society, the Swan Homes and Parkerville. Later the Swanleigh Council commemorated the contribution made to our establishment by Mr. and Mrs. Sundercombe when it named one of the boys' houses: "Sundercombe" House.

In 1945 the Board was greatly strengthened by the election to it of Mr. Alfred Guy. I well remember the circumstances of that election. I was very keen that someone who lived in the Swan should be on the Board for I felt that in this way more local interest in our establishment might be aroused - an earlier feature of Orphanage life which had largely disappeared. Mr. Guy was both well-known in the district and very popular. He was an army officer in World War I and had been badly wounded in an engagement when sprayed by a burst of shrapnel. Actually he had been laid out to be buried, believed killed, when a stretcher-bearer noticed his eyelid flicker. After some years in hospital he had been discharged partly paralysed and not able to return to the bank position he had held prior to his enlistment. Despite his disabilities he took up the arduous work of a vigneron and for the next forty years he continued his vine culture. But

he also actively participated in many communal activities. In World War II he captained the Swan Company of the Home Guard; he was Secretary of the Anglican Vestry and a keen churchman; and he was a member of the State Executive of the Country Party. In my enthusiasm to have him join the Board, I nominated him, whereupon Archbishop Lefanu, who was chairing the annual meeting, promptly retorted: "Peterkin, it's not for you to nominate your employers!" So I apologised, but one of the Subscribers then proposed Mr. Guy and he was elected. He was to remain a member of the Board till his death almost twenty years later. For part of that time he was its Chairman whenever the Archbishop was absent, and he also chaired both the Parkerville and the Hillston Committees. In 1958 when Mary and I were overseas he gave enthusiastic support to Mr. Ray Garside, the Deputy-Director, who was in charge during our absence. After Mr. Guy's death the council named the kitchen-dining-room-store block the "Alfred Guy Memorial Hall" in his honour.

Reference has already been made to the great contribution made by Mr. Stanton and his committee of lumpers in bringing happiness to the children in the Swan Homes. In 1959, while working on a list of requirements for the coming Christmas camp, he suddenly died of a heart attack. So in the last hour of his life he was planning further enjoyment for the children he loved. Later we were to commemorate his remarkable record of devoted voluntary service in naming a newly-erected house in his honour. But his work will best be remembered in the hearts of the girls and boys. He often talked about the hard days of his own boyhood at Swan, and he made it his life's ideal that present day children in the Home should have as much as possible of the things he had missed. Nothing gave him more pleasure than to see the faces of the children light-up with delight at something he had provided. His work was never officially recognised by a public award, but at the opening of the new house in 1969 the Minister representing the Premier mistakenly referred to him several times as "Sir" Albert Stanton - to the great amusement of the lumpers who attended the function. But the fact is that Royalty has bestowed many knighthoods in its time for less meritorious records than his. Be that as it may, he did gain a title from the girls and boys, for he was known and loved by them as "Pop" Stanton. I think he would have preferred that title to any other.

Early in 1959 Mr. and Mrs Allen Brown joined the staff as Housemaster and Secretary respectively. Theirs was to be a most fortunate appointment for Swanleigh, for not only was each very efficient, but they both had exceptional gifts in public relationship. They came to us from the country, from a district where the local children of High School age had to board away from home when they reached the upper forms. So the Browns were very understanding of the farmers' need for supervised accommodation for their children. Both proved particularly helpful in getting our initial enrolments for they were able to inspire confidence for the new hostel in the hearts of anxious parents not sure whether they were doing the right thing in sending their son or their daughter to a place that had been an Orphanage. In World War II, Mr. Brown, a D.F.C. of World War I, was well known throughout Australia as a Chief Administrative Officer at several of the major Air Force Stations, and I had no hesitation in appointing him to the position of Deputy-Director of the Hostel when this position became vacant. Behind his friendly approach to students, staff and parents he had a quiet firmness that commanded respect. Mrs. Brown proved most capable in her office management, and was responsible for the relatively smooth change from Swan Homes to Swanleigh Hostel by the efficient way in which she grappled with the many details and secretarial problems that arose in those years. In another area of service Mrs. Brown

commenced a company of Girl Guides which was to provide a useful and happy activity for many of our students, especially for some girls not very interested in sport. After her resignation the leadership of the Guides was taken over by Mrs K.I. Sparks who maintained the high standard of Guiding of her predecessor.

While writing appreciatively of the secretarial work of Mrs. Brown, I must also mention that of two of my earlier secretaries, each of whom joined our staff almost straight from school and remained with us till her marriage several years later. They were Miss Doris Blackley and Miss Audrey Neal. The former came in my earliest years when we were transforming Swan Boys' Orphanage into the Swan Homes. The latter joined us about the time when, in tragic circumstances I lost my Deputy, Mr. Charles Roberts. He had suffered constant and often intense pain caused by the ailment known as "Trench Feet", which he had contracted when fighting in France in World War I at the early age of eighteen. One day during a severe bout of the disease he decided to end it all, and he drowned himself in the river. For a fortnight the staff and senior boys at Swan conducted an extensive search for him, patrolling all the roads in the Swan District day and night believing that it was possible he was suffering from amnesia. When his body was eventually discovered we were all greatly distressed, for he was a most likable gentleman. Because of his sickness his clerical work was in arrears and this probably caused him much mental stress. I had just appointed Miss Neal to assist in the office, and she and I worked many extra hours until all our accounts were tidied up. It was a relief though not a surprise to find that there was no money shortage. I cannot speak too highly of the efficient service rendered to Swan Homes by these two young ladies. They were both very popular with staff and students alike, but kept the latter in their place, and while polite and friendly towards the former, all of whom were older than they were, each proved to be the soul of discretion where confidential matters were concerned.

The Swan Homes' years were an arduous but mostly a happy and interesting period for us. Largely through the support of the members of the Board and the co-operation and efforts of the nucleus of very efficient staff (we had plenty of the other sort) we were able to raise standards which gave the establishment a reputation for quality of service to necessitous children. But lest any think that the years were all smooth and successful the tragedy of Mr. Roberts is a reminder that this was not always the case. In one year death visited the institution so often that we began to wonder when he would leave us. It opened with the tragedy of Mr. Roberts. The evening of his funeral there was a ring from a leading doctor in Perth to advise me that Canon Hamilton had collapsed and died. Not long after that my own son had an appendix operation which turned septic and a second operation was necessary to save his life. Fortunately this was successful but it was a traumatic experience for his parents. A month later an old boy of the Home whom I had employed on the staff and to whom we had grown very attached, decided to leave and get a change of employment in the Eastern States. But the following night at Kalgoorlie he murdered his mothers' de facto husband after she had told her son of the ill-treatment she had received at the hands of this man. It was an example of what brooding with an unforgiving hate can do. The murdered man had been responsible for the breakdown of the parent's marriage and the home life of the family, causing the children to be placed in Orphanages - something which permanently embittered our young man. Now he believed that in addition to the harm already done the man was ill-treating their mother. So in a moment of quick temper he decided to kill him and he did so - as he told me when I visited him in his cell the next day - "to put an end to it all". After the ghastly murder he walked straight to the Police

Station, told the officer on duty what he had done, and he was arrested.

Later there followed one of the most sensational trials in the history of Kalgoorlie. The jury first returned a verdict of "Guilty of Murder" but added a rider that they believed there was "mental provocation". The judge heatedly addressed them, stating that in his opinion there was no provocation, but that if they thought there was then the correct verdict was "Manslaughter". The jury requested leave to reconsider its verdict which was granted and they soon returned the expected decision - "Guilty of Manslaughter". The lawyer defending the prisoner promptly asked permission for me to address the court to plead for mercy, which the judge reluctantly granted, growling that he thought the prisoner had received mercy enough as it was. So I nervously entered the witness box to speak to the crowded but hushed court, all enthralled with the human drama they were witnessing. My impression was that the judge was paying no attention to what I was saying, but when I told the story of how the prisoner had won the Silver Medallion of the Royal Humane Society for bravery in swimming with a rope to try to save a man marooned in a tree in the midst of the swirling waters of the Swan River, swollen by one of its greatest winter floods in modern times, His Honour did look up. In the end the sentence was ten years hard labour.

But even before the day of the trial of that young man a more serious tragedy had occurred at Swanleigh. On a hot February night in 1952 three girls decided that "as a bit of a lark" they would go to a neighbouring vineyard and steal some grapes. With bravado they said: "We're as daring as the boys!" So a little after lights-out they left their dormitory and set off on their escapade. After crossing the Middle Swan Bridge they ran down the slope of one of its steep approaches, at the bottom of which one of them became entangled in an electric light wire which had been blown down by the high summer wind that evening. Terrified the other girls ran back for help. When this arrived the girl was dead - it was the doctor's opinion that she had died instantly. Her matron, Miss Ahearn, and Mrs. Parry who lived nearby, were first on the scene, and with great bravery in the dangerous circumstances had managed to extricate the girl from the live wire with the aid of a rubber mat which the former, with commendable presence of mind, had taken with her as she rushed from her house. Both ladies suffered burns and later received citations for bravery. I came in for some public criticism for not taking better security measures. In later years we always locked girls' dormitories so as to give the girls a greater sense of security against anyone getting *in*. But at no time did we imagine that any measures we took would prevent girls or boys from getting *out* if they were determined to do so. In any case there always had to be a way of escape from the inside in case there was a fire. I remember with appreciation the late "Mary Ferber", a widely-read "Daily News" columnist, defending my attitude at the time of the tragic electrocution, writing that locking girls up to keep them in was neither good training for them nor did it necessarily ensure their safety.

But we were not yet done with tragedy in that awful twelve months (July 1951 to June 1952). "When is it going to end!" they asked in Church Office - and we echoed - "When!" The night of the inquest on the girl the Parry's only son, Kevin, who for years had resided with his parents at Swan, and consequently had mostly grown up as one of our boys, was returning home on a motor bicycle when he crashed into the back of a stationary vehicle and was killed. The circumstances were particularly tragic. Kevin had only that day completed his apprenticeship as a fitter and was leaving next morning for the Eastern States, where he hoped to get employment and further experience in his trade. He was a very likable young man, and all who knew him

grieved for him and for his father and mother, both of whom had done so much for necessitous girls and boys in the years since they joined our staff.

After Kevin's death the tragic year ended. With all that dreadful experience behind us we knew only too well how serious a responsibility the Principal of any institution carries. We had experienced the death of children in our care before that time - a girl had died in hospital of Rheumatic Fever, a boy had drowned in the river and another had died of burns at one of the Coogee camps when he wandered from the beach and fell into an unguarded ash-pit at the nearby meatworks. Nor were we to avoid it in later years when a little lad died of cancer, a girl at Seaside House was struck and killed by a car as she ran in front of a stationary bus, and a girl at the Hostel died of asthma. We learned what a terrible thing it is to have to tell a mother that her child was dead. We knew what it meant to stand in a Coroner's Court as the person in whose care a child "who now lies dead" - to quote the foreboding words on the summons - had been placed. In the case of a fatality had we done everything we reasonably could to ensure the safety of that girl or boy? If we had contributed to the death by reason of neglect the consequences for us could be very serious. In the case of a sick child dying had there been any lack of attention so that if this had been received the patient might have lived? I am greatly relieved to be able to say that no court ever suggested that the Swan Homes were in any way culpable. Nor did any grieving parents ever blame us for the death of their child. The mother of the deceased asthma sufferer said to us as we met her at the plane: "My husband and I hold you in no way responsible. Our daughter had this complaint since she was two. In the Hostel you not only gave her every care but while boarding there she enjoyed the happiest year of her life".

With such a large number of children in residence the problem of sickness was a fairly constant one, so that, together with conscientious staff, we experienced a good deal of anxiety because of this. In our surgeries each morning and evening attention to sores, injuries and complaints occupied a good deal of staff time, while in the girls' and the boys' sick bays there were nearly always at least a few cases requiring prescribed treatment or nursing. In times of epidemics there were often a great many. I recall Mr. Birch's ninety cases of mumps! We knew quite well that among our patients there could also be the occasional malingerer. We even knew of rare cases where a child deliberately brought on sickness in order to be sent to hospital where we knew that kindly nurses often made a fuss of the "poor kids from a Home". My advice to staff was always the same. "If he says he's sick put him into sick-bay under observation and get a doctor. You may not think he's sick but he may be. Let him deceive us rather than take any risks". Earlier in this book I expressed appreciation of the great service we received from a number of doctors. But there were a good many others either in private practice or in hospitals, and numerous nurses, who gave the children from our establishments their skilled attention when these were ill or injured. I must add a particular word of gratitude to Matron Baker and Sister Wren of the Beaufort Hospital at West Midland for the wonderful co-operation and support they extended to me in my earliest days whenever I had a child suddenly taken ill. "Bring him (or her) in, Mr. Peterkin. Do this if ever you are worried. There'll always be a bed here, and with doctors coming and going much of the time we can always get your child special attention if we feel that this is necessary." These two ladies were a byword on the Swan for their care and kindness to patients. As for me, I can still feel the burden of responsibility dropping from my shoulders as I drove our van back to the Homes after placing a sick child in their charge. For I knew that if anyone could nurse a girl or boy back to health they could.



It will be recalled that one of our earliest problems was to try to overcome the financial straits in which the institution had been when we arrived, and that one thing which had helped us greatly was the receipt of some generous donations and benefactions. These continued throughout the Swan Homes years and two of the largest have already been mentioned, viz. those from Canon Hamilton and from Mrs. Freeman. Other large legacies were received from Mrs. Jane Moffat (£31,297), Mr. J. McCallum Smith, Mr. C.B. Fowler, Mr. T.L. Roberts, Mr. H.R. Knapp, Mr. W.J. Winterbottom, Mr. J.C. Spice, Mr. S.B. Rudduck, Miss Mabel Hutchings, Mrs. E.A. Urquhart, Mr. F. Dartnell, Mr. F.B. Wittenoom, Mr. E.J. Denny, Mr. A.M. Margerson, Mrs. E. Cowton, Mr. B. Barrington and Mr. H.A. Lee Steere, while a good many left smaller amounts, and some made bequests of property or fractions of an estate or its residue, the values of which are still uncertain but in some cases may be considerable. Again we record gratitude to all benefactors and donors for their generosity. These, together with much support from the Lotteries Commission, and with financial support from the State and Commonwealth Governments towards the accommodation of child migrants enabled us to make Swanleigh the attractive establishment so many visitors found it to be, and to improve greatly our standards of child care.

After the 1959 Christmas High Tea and "Break-up" party the usual Coogee holiday was arranged, with the late Mr. Stanton's friends making a special effort to make this camp a very successful one, both in his memory and because it would probably be the last. And indeed it proved a happy holiday for all who attended, with Roy O'Byrne, Jock Stewart and Mrs. Johns from the Lumpers' Committee in charge, ably supported by Clem Booth and the Meatworkers' Committee. Then we returned to Swan to await the Hostel opening day - now only a week away. We were all very excited, and - including the children - just a little nervous. How would the change in status, to which our establishment was now committed all work out? And how many country students would come? At a Board meeting early in 1959 the Archbishop had asked me: "How many boarders do you think you'll get?"

"I've no idea, Your Grace", I replied, "but I think with luck we might get ten!"

**PART (3)**

**The Hostel 1960 - 1971**

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# 1. Behold Swanleigh!

Sunday, February 7th 1960 was a day long remembered by those of us at Swanleigh. It was the opening of the new hostel - the day on which we admitted 65 country boarders under our new scheme. In addition to these we welcomed back after their school vacation 113 of our former girls and boys, and there were 15 new necessitous cases to be enrolled as well. To have everything ready for the reception of all these had been a desperate race against time, particularly in Hudleston House, where some building alterations had been necessary because of the change from little-girl residents to High School students - work that we could not commence till all the former children had left for holidays. This had called for a special effort by our maintenance man, Mr. Vic. Davis, who often worked till midnight at that time to get the job done. It had been decided that all primary girls at Swanleigh should be accommodated in either Forrest or Freeman Houses, and that the High School girls were to go to Lee Steere or to Hudleston. The youngest boys would remain in Hamilton, the older primaries (including a few new primary boarders) would be placed in Cornwell, leaving Waylen and Brown for High School boys.

In subsequent years there were further re-distributions. First Year boys were eventually all accommodated in Cornwell House, where, under the supervision of a married couple, they enjoyed much more "homey" conditions. There, with the devoted "parentage" first of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Cope, and later of Mr. and Mrs. Bill Brown, they settled in much more quickly than if they had been in the constant company of a large number of older lads. Both couples rendered most commendable service in this way, and the great success of the arrangement ultimately decided us to place our Second Years under a married couple as well. Second Year High School students in a hostel are often a most difficult group to manage. They have got over the nervousness of entering a new establishment and they are also at that period of their lives when they are changing from childhood to adolescence. As a result they are at varying stages of physical and mental development. Some are becoming adults while others are still childish in outlook. So the supervision of them is no easy task. A few years later it was decided to build a new house in which it was planned to accommodate all First Year girls so that these might also be together rather than with older students. By the time that building was completed there were no primary scholars left on the Swanleigh enrolment.

In addition to the boarders and other new arrivals on that opening day we had also to prepare for 12 migrants then on the high seas but due to reach Fremantle any day. This was to be the last group we were to receive from the United Kingdom, because our English Organization found further recruitment of parties of children to Australian institutions an impossible task. Nine of these new migrants were placed in Swanleigh, the other three going to Coogee.

So at the commencement of the Hostel, and including these twelve migrants, our enrolment was:-

	Swanleigh	Coogee
Former children returned (all necessitous)	113	19
New necessitous ...	15	2
New Migrants (necessitous) ...	<u>9</u>	<u>3</u>
Total Necessitous ...	137	24
Country Boarders (new scheme) ...	<u>65</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Enrolment	<u>202</u>	<u>24</u>

Thus of the 226 children on our total enrolment 161 were necessitous, these being made up of 10 State wards, 56 child migrants and 95 private cases. At that time we had 247 places available (Swanleigh 217 and Coogee 30), so that we still had vacancies for 21 necessitous children should the need arise.

The striking statistical picture for the next few years shows the mushroom growth of the Hostel during that time:-

Year	Necessitous		Boarders	Total
	(Swan and Coogee)			
1960	161		65	226
1961	120		140	260
1962	107		179	286
1963	74		216	290
1964	67		227	294
1965	51		258	309
1966	46		272	318

In 1967 we passed the "300 boarders" mark. With the erection of the new house for First Year girls referred to above and with building extensions we were able to increase further our Swanleigh enrolment till in 1970 it reached 333. At that point we decided that our accommodation was at the maximum which could be boarded satisfactorily, and that no further applicants other than cases of destitution would be accepted. If required, a home must always be found for them, for that was our foundation.

Of our total student population in 1970 there would be only about a dozen classified as necessitous. The change whereby such children who in 1960 had out-numbered the boarders by two to one, but were now only a very small fraction of the enrolment, was due to a combination of two factors. The first was the continued decline in applications for the admission of needy children through-out the Hostel years, thus enabling us to fill more and more vacancies with boarder applicants. Again it must be emphasised that the fall in numbers of the former class was none of our making. Till the end of 1968 any case of genuine necessity was enrolled at Swanleigh or Coogee, but that year, because of circumstances to be examined later, we reluctantly had to close our small branch establishment. Since Swanleigh then no longer enrolled primary school chil-

dren, we made a special arrangement with the Superintendent of Parkerville to take any younger children for us, at least till they reached High School age, for he had plenty of vacancies.

But this continued fall in numbers would not alone have accounted for the remarkable growth in Swanleigh's boarders, though it did make it possible. Their startling increase must be due to something else. By 1970 we were not only the largest Hostel in the State. We probably had more teenaged resident students of mixed sexes than any other Hostel or boarding school in Australia! As we did not advertise after 1959 it was undoubtedly the good reputation earned for Swanleigh by its students, and the recommendation of the Hostel by their parents which was responsible for the increased enrolment. In assessing the worth of any educational establishment the most important criterion is: "What sort of students is it producing?" Is their conduct in public, in their own homes and in school of commendable standard? Have they a reputation for good manners, good sportsmanship, conscientious study efforts, cleanliness and neatness in appearance? Are the academic results of students attending the Hostel praiseworthy? Are its girls and boys already showing evidence of growing into good citizens? In these matters Swanleighans were apparently measuring up very well in public estimation, for though the Government continued to establish a good many High Schools in the country, and to build additional Hostels to serve their students, our numbers continued to show the remarkable increase referred to above. Most parents expressed themselves as pleased with the development and progress of their children in Swanleigh; of its care and supervision of them, and of its leisure-time programme of activities, and they told others of these things. They in turn observed the students themselves and talked with them about the Hostel. They liked what they saw and heard - and proceeded to enrol their own child.

Sometime after writing that paragraph I came across the following in a book written in 1943 by the Headmaster of one of England's famous Public Schools: "Good wine needs no bush. No amount of advertisement and un-accustomed caperings by a headmaster will fill a school unless its products are sound and good, and its parents satisfied. One satisfied and enthusiastic parent is worth all the advertising space and all the agents in the world. It is the headmaster's business to see that the product is good and parents are satisfied, and if he wants to be as reasonably sure of this as may be, he will conceive his responsibility on broader lines than a narrow attention to their academic progress and spiritual welfare. For he will realize that these have their basis in feeding and housing, in physical fitness, in amenities that start from the work of builders, plumbers, decorators, have odd roots in drains and water closets, filter through rays of sun and artificial light, lurk unsuspected in kitchens and store cupboards, owe something to ventilation and necessary warmth. His eye and hand should be on all that makes his work complete".\*

From our earliest experiences we learned a great deal. One thing was that we must endeavour to conduct initial interviews with parents and children prior to opening day. February 7th, 1960, was very hot, and for most of it we had a crowded foyer with perspiring fathers, mothers and their nervous or bored children waiting their turn to meet me and discuss problems or enquire about organisational details of Hostel life. Some indeed, after waiting a long time, found out from the general office where their child was to reside and proceeded to hand him or her over to the staff in charge, say-

\* "Freedom in Education" by E.H. Partridge (Published Faber and Faber Ltd).

ing: "We really can't wait any longer. We've come a long way and we must get back tonight. We'll see Mr. Peterkin next time we come to Perth."

The second thing we learnt was that all beds must be allocated and made up before the students arrived. That first night in Waylen and Brown dormitories the scene was chaotic, with beds being allocated, and new boys who probably had never made a bed in their lives now trying to do so, amid exciting yells and laughter and a flurry of sheets, pillow slips, blankets and pyjamas, and with some stealthy exchanges of mattresses and pillows with those on unoccupied beds. At the same time I was constantly bombarded with queries: "Please Sir, where do I sleep?" "Please Sir, you haven't given me a bed yet". "No, Sir he can't sleep in that bed. That's Bill Smith's" - and so on. All the time the old hands were stretched out on their beds with a supercilious expression on their faces as if to say - "What a helpless mob!" But eventually all were bedded down and peace reigned once more. In subsequent years I arranged for staff to make up all beds during the holidays and these were allocated prior to opening day.

Another thing we learned was always to prepare a programme of activities for after-school and evenings for the first week. Without this the students were homesick and bored - no homework and nothing to do. So organized sport and swimming parades were arranged and were most helpful in filling in the time till dinner, while for the evening we screened pictures in our open-air auditorium, with Vic. Davis' mobile tuck-shop doing a healthy trade prior to the commencement of the programme. (All profits to the scouts). Some nights we would have a feature film, while on the others we would show something educational. If the season happened to be Lent - it often was in February - our Chaplain, the Revd. Alex Bateman, would conduct a mid-week open-air service, with Bible readings and prayers, after which we screened a "Faith and Fact" film. The latter are superbly produced and intensely interesting, effectively presenting the Gospel message. On these occasions some of the adult parishioners also attended and I am sure they enjoyed the out-of-door service on the hot February nights.

On the first Saturday in the term there was always the "Welcome Dance". At first many of the new boarders were shy and wanted to be non-participants. But when they saw all former boys rush for partners - the race was to the swift - they were more interested. Then when I admonished them with: "Everyone dances here. Off you go and get a partner. Look, there's some girls sitting-out over there", each one walked hesitantly and stood in front of a girl who accepted this as an invitation to get up and dance. But after a couple of "Flirtation" Barn Dances the introduction stage passed, so that by the end of the evening most students, old and new, knew most, and the boarders had commenced joining in the race for partners when the next dance was announced. Taking a girl into supper in the dining hall completed what was for many of the new boys a novel experience and a good finish to what had turned out to be quite an enjoyable evening.

The next day, Sunday, introduced the new boarders to what I think was for many yet another "first time" experience - going to church. Again they followed the example of former students, so that when they saw that these joined in the hymns and participated in the service with reverence they did the same. In time, and as numbers grew, the singing was usually most inspiring, especially when the service was held in the Assembly Hall so that all could be present at the same time. To hear over three hundred adolescent voices raised in grand hymn tunes such as the Welsh "Cwm Rhonda" - Guide me O Thou Great Redeemer" or Helmsley - "Lo! He comes with clouds

descending” or the Merfield version of “Stand up, Stand up for Jesus” or the Swanleigh Hostel Hymn - “Soldiers of the Cross Arise!” - to name four out of many favourites of the students - was an exhilarating experience. There was no other denominational church in Middle Swan, so that the Council decided that on Sundays all students should attend the Hostel’s morning or evening services as arranged. The Archbishop gave his approval for any non-Anglican students to receive the sacrament of Holy Communion if they wished to do so, provided that they were in the practice of taking Communion in their own church. A good many of these availed themselves of the privilege of sharing in the Lord’s Supper with their fellow Swanleighans. My daughter, Judith, received a surprisingly enthusiastic response to an appeal to the older girls that they assist her by taking classes in the Middle Swan Sunday School, the volunteers far exceeding the number required. Those selected obviously enjoyed the teaching opportunity, preparing their lessons most conscientiously. The Rector of the Swan Parish for the time being continued to be the Hostel Chaplain, but with his co-operation we often had a visiting priest to preach. When Archbishop Sambell came he preferred to meet the seniors informally after the service rather than preach to them. He did so, and he asked and was asked many questions. He was delighted at the students’ response and very amused when I told him next day that one of them had said to me in an awed voice - “What a lot the Archbishop knows!”

One of the things which attracted parents towards sending their children to Swanleigh was that while in residence their son or daughter had the opportunity of learning pianoforte or Art of Speech from highly qualified teachers - something that was often impossible in their own isolated locality. As a result of enquiries from several parents I discussed the possibility of students learning the piano from a very well-known musician and teacher, Mrs. P.B. Ashton. She was able to give us some of her time, but the demand for lessons exceeded that which she could spare, so that it was necessary for me to engage additional teachers. Later Mrs. Ashton was joined by Miss Lucy Favas and Mrs. Waveney Hart, and all three continued with us for years, achieving some excellent results in music examinations. Art of Speech also attracted a good many students, so that our teachers - first Miss Margaret Erneste and later Mrs. Priscilla Broadbent - were giving lessons for the greater part of every Saturday. Organising music practice for so many proved quite a business and involved a considerable outlay for pianos; for to give everybody a reasonable amount of time we had to purchase an additional ten instruments.

The Hostel was fortunate in its location in that two of the State’s Highways passed through Midland Junction, while both the South-West Highway and the Albany Highway were at no great distance from Swanleigh. Parents travelling to or from Perth thus had to go very little out of their way to see their child when they came to the city. The proprietor of one of the more popular Midland tea rooms told me that Swanleigh had brought him a lot of business, and that the busiest days of his year were those at the beginning and end of our Hostel terms.

But probably one thing which counted most in the minds of the parents was the reputation Swanleigh achieved for its service and its supervision. The Hostel was three miles from Midland - “three glorious miles”, I used to say - and as public transport past our property was very infrequent, any student going to the town without leave had a six miles walk ahead of him (or her) to get there and back - rather a daunting ordeal. (Of course students often went to Midland for an approved purpose, but in such cases transport to and from the town was arranged for them). As a result of this distance

factor parents could be reasonably confident that their child was not wandering town streets but would be at Swanleigh where someone was in charge and responsible. When one's child is far away it is a relief for a parent not to be worried on that score.

Parents also knew that we were particular about the appearance of students whenever these left the premises. The rule was that if they were using public transport in going to Midland or the city, they were to wear school uniform. There was a reason for this. The uniform was a sort of protection, in that it stamped wearers as of school age - a fact which is widely known. Many Swanleighans, however, resented this rule and some used to carry a set of ordinary clothes with them and change in the conveniences at the railway station. I got word of what was taking place and on one occasion decided to accompany the bus to the station when a large group of Swanleighans was leaving for the mid-term exeat. On arrival at Midland I also went on the platform, standing near them till the arrival of the train. If black looks could have killed I'd have been dead long ago. None of them spoke to me. No fraternisation with the boss! I had been well and truly sent to Coventry by them. But just as the train was entering the station an old man walked over and spoke to me - "Where in the world would you find finer specimens of youth than these girls and boys. Look at them. Clean, well-groomed, well-dressed, bright and alert. They're a credit to Australia!" I turned to him and said: "Friend, you've made my day! Those girls and boys are in my charge."

At the Hostel the two groups - the necessitous and the country boarders quickly mingled and accepted each other. If anything the boarders tended at first to treat the others with some respect because they knew their way about and how things were done. But soon any trace of distinction disappeared. So far as we could see the country children were indifferent as to why the others were there, accepting them as no different from themselves - all prisoners in Alcatraz! It was similar to what happens in cases of colour in schools. After a period of close association one doesn't really notice it. Such children become regarded as girls or boys like everyone else present. Each is popular or unpopular, accepted or disliked, for what he or she is as a person. So with the necessitous and the boarders on the enrolment.

Writing of colour at Swanleigh it was the Council's policy that no student was to be excluded on such grounds. We had numbers of them and they mixed very well. I recall one student whose former headmaster had phoned me in support of the boy's application as a Fourth Year boarder, at the same time informing me that the lad had some colour but was really an excellent type. In fact he was his Head Boy. I explained that his colour would be no barrier to his enrolment, but I asked if he would be all right for pocket money, and for school and clothing requirements. I was assured that these things, and his fees, would be no problem. "Personal cleanliness satisfactory?", I enquired. "Particularly good", the headmaster replied. Then he added: "Only the other day he came to me and said, 'You know, Sir we'll really have to do something about some of our older boys. They're so untidy and careless about their appearance. They're a disgrace to the school!'" So, his Junior results proving satisfactory, he came to us the next year where he was respected and admired by all. Next December he was elected by his fellow students as Deputy Head Boy for the following year, in which office he acquitted himself admirably. (Another interesting feature of that election was that though the boarders were far in the majority, they elected one of the necessitous lads as Head Boy).



The unexpected size of the intake in the opening year presented us with two further problems. One of these was the matter of transport to school. We already had a bus but the number now attending Governor Stirling was more than one load. For a time we sent some of the boys by truck and I felt that this was not very satisfactory and would be even worse in the winter. So using some of its new trust-fund deposits as a loan, the Council decided on the purchase of a second bus. A few years later the number attending High School was so great that a third bus was bought, and even with this we still had to make double trips to and from school. I had tried to make arrangements with the Metropolitan Transport Trust (the Authority controlling public transport) to help us with our problem, but it had no buses available before 9 a.m., though in later years it did assist us with the transport of children back to Swanleigh in the afternoon.

The second problem was very serious - one which in fact threatened to close the Hostel in its first year. In March 1960 - a month after it opened - I had called at Governor Stirling to discuss some matter concerning Swanleigh students with the Headmaster, Mr. Mcleod. In the course of the interview he told me that the Education Department was very angry because it had not been informed about the Hostel scheme which had upset the enrolment situation at the school, necessitating overflow classes having to be arranged in the old Midland Primary School building - something which had incensed the parents of local children placed in these classes.

In the previous year I had called at the Education Department seeking an interview with the Director in order that we might discuss our proposed Hostel scheme. I thought that this would be preferable to a letter, for we would then be able to talk over any problems and reach decisions without lengthy correspondence. Unfortunately he was away when I called, but I did see the Assistant Director to whom I spoke about the project and to which he raised no objections. His attitude was that more hostels were needed for country scholars. I returned home very much encouraged by the interview and immediately rang Mr. Ferguson to inform him of this favourable discussion.

After my disturbing conversation with Mr. Mcleod, I went back to Swanleigh and wrote a letter to the Director of Education, informing him of my interview with the headmaster, and explaining that the cause of the numbers problem at Governor Stirling was the unexpectedly large intake of boarders at the Hostel. This was because of the difficulty experienced by parents in getting supervised accommodation for their children in order to attend High School. It was much more serious than we had believed it to be, or perhaps than the Department realized. I also told him of my visit to the Department the previous year, and of my interview with the Assistant Director.

The Director's reply was lengthy and hostile, the gist of it being that the Government had built High Schools and High School Hostels in the country for the country children; that the Assistant Director did not confirm my view of the interview with him, maintaining that he had been far from enthusiastic about our proposal, and that now the Minister would have to give serious consideration as to what action was to be taken with regard to future years, and whether a more rigorous restriction of country children to the nearest local High School would be enforced. His letter also included a couple of nasty barbs by referring to "the unfortunate children attending your boarding house". I don't think many of the hundreds of students who went to our Hostel regarded themselves as "unfortunate" because they did so. (In later years some even enrolled their babies at birth - Eton style). I also recall the succinct comment made

by one of the Council when I read the Director's letter to the members: "Some Boarding House!" (See Frontispiece).

At the meeting the Council decided that as the future of the Hostel might well be in jeopardy if the threat in the Director's letter were carried out, we must lose no time in discussing this with the Minister - the Honourable Arthur Watts, M.L.A. Accordingly a deputation to him was arranged and in due course we presented ourselves at his office, where the Director was also in attendance. Mr. Watts was Minister for Child Welfare as well as for Education, and in earlier years had visited Swan Homes, where he had expressed himself as being very impressed. On another occasion he had told me that he had recently visited numbers of Children's Homes in the Eastern States, including some of the State Homes in New South Wales, and having seen these, his opinion was - and I quote - "I think we do things just as well over here". Now as he listened to our representatives on the deputation, some of whom he knew well, and we told him why the Hostel project had been commenced, and of the response of country people towards it, I sensed that his attitude to us was not unsympathetic. Perhaps he remembered that he, too, was from the country and knew about the problem of distance from High School, and of parents' anxiety for the welfare of their children, and of the great need for supervised accommodation out of school hours. Perhaps he also realized that the scheme had great possibilities inherent in it for the welfare of needy children, for they also came under his Ministerial care. "Where do your applicants come from?" he asked. I mentioned several localities, including among these that we had three from Payne's Find (a very small mining centre about 300 miles north-east of Perth). "I passed through there just the other day", he replied. "We must do anything we can for children who live away out there in that Godforsaken place".

After further discussion the Minister suggested a compromise, viz. that the Hostel be permitted to continue, provided we restrict our intake to children who had to live away from home or were at a considerable distance from where secondary educational facilities existed. This was agreed to by the Director who then shook hands with me, and later wrote confirming the decision taken: "The Department welcomes your promise of co-operation and is quite happy that your institution should undertake this important work". He went on to tell me that in order to overcome accommodation difficulties in the Midland School he was building new High Schools at Mt. Helena and Kalamunda, and that in the near future another would be built at North Bayswater ("John Forrest High"). Subsequently new High Schools have also been built at Bassendean, Bullsbrook, Morley, Beechboro (Hampton), Lockeridge, and at the present time (1979) one is being built at Swan View - all districts which were sending students to Governor Stirling when it first opened. During the first decade of our Hostel a good many country teachers sent their own children to Swanleigh, and a later Director of Education told me that if he lived in the country he would certainly have selected Swanleigh as the place where he would wish to board his children.

When in 1959 I first discussed the Hostel project with Mr. McLeod he was very enthusiastic about it, believing that a nucleus of country students, some of whom would enter at the Fourth Year level, would be beneficial to the school population. When the crisis with the Department occurred early in the first year he gave us support when discussing the situation with his superiors. I am sure that their high regard for him helped us at that time. The friendly co-operation that had existed between us in earlier years continued until his retirement and I hope that the confidence he had shown in Swanleigh at the time of its foundation was rewarded by the record of our students

on his enrolment. It was indeed quite a creditable one, for our academic results were generally satisfactory, with some of them very good, while there were a host of our athletes in Governor Stirling teams and we were well represented in school activities such as the cadets and musicals. In fact, in whatever the school undertook, its staff could always depend on good support from Swanleigh. In time two of our students were Captains of the School, two were Head Girls and there were several deputies. In its first ten years twenty-six others were prefects.

Because of the overcrowding at Governor Stirling - something for which we must assume partial responsibility - our 1966 First Years were directed to a new High School about four miles further away from Swanleigh named after Governor Hampton - Hampton High School. Thereafter each successive new group of First Year Swanleighans entered there. At first the Council was unhappy with the change, both because of the break with Stirling and also because it meant that we now had students at two schools. But there was also one important advantage in the new arrangement, viz. that our girls and boys going to Hampton were among the *foundation* students and played an important part in building up its traditions. In each of the school's first five years a Swanleighan was Head Girl and for the first four years the Head Boy also came from the Hostel. In school teams our students predominated, and both in academic achievement and in appearance, conduct and co-operation they contributed to the school's high reputation. Once again we were fortunate in the appointment of Mr. Eric Beckwith as the school's first headmaster, and also in that of his senior staff - Miss Deidre Weston and Mr. William Cohen. All three remained at Hampton for its first five years, which provided for continuity of administration - something so often lacking in country High Schools - and each displayed a genuine interest in Swanleigh and its students.

Before concluding the topic of the Hostel's relations with the schools which its students attended I would like to add a word of appreciation to yet another headmaster. When in 1963 Mr. Mcleod retired, he was succeeded by a man whom I had known well in my younger days - Mr. John Macaulay. He was of a different disposition to Mr. Mcleod - quiet, more reserved, studious and rather less dynamic in personality. It is always difficult to follow in the steps of an outstanding man - and I doubt if there were any more outstanding headmaster than Mr. Mcleod in the whole of the Department at this time. But I did not detect any falling away in Governor Stirling standards when the reins passed to Mr. Macaulay. He possessed a quiet firmness of manner and a gentle sense of humour that often surprised his associates. To those who really got to know him, an altogether likable man - and perhaps to us the more so in that he was particularly interested in Swanleighans. Years before he had taught some of our Orphanage boys at Midland Central, which had given him an interest in the institution that he had never lost, and which was maintained in our establishment's new role. He had a remarkable memory, often referring to Swan Boys he had taught thirty years earlier. I remember, too, an example of his humour. Both school and Hostel had been having a good deal of trouble with a particular boy, and I called on the headmaster to discuss this. "Did you say this lad's father is a bank manager?", asked Mr. Macaulay. "Yes", I replied, "he manages a country branch". "Then that explains it", he said. "I've often found that there is a close affinity between country bankers and country bushrangers! Haven't you noticed?"

So, through the good co-operation we received from each of these headmasters and the members of their respective staff, our students had the benefit of attending good schools. Our relations with the Education Department, which had got away to such

a bad start, improved, until the time came when the Hostel was paid one of the happiest tributes it ever received, and this from a later Minister for Education. One day he enquired of me whether it would be possible for us to take a further hundred boarders, adding: “You know, Mr. Peterkin, I wish there were *TWO* Swanleighs in this State”.

## 2. Troubled Waters

In 1960 Mr. Alan Blanckensee, a member of the firm who were the Diocesan Solicitors, re-worded the "Objects Clause" in our rules for us, as he had previously promised to do, and in due course this amendment was passed by the Subscribers and by Synod. It now provided for the admission of three groups of children. First there were those included under the original types of destitution in the 1868 rules - the orphaned, the neglected and the unwanted. Then there were those girls and boys whom we classified as "Private Cases" - the partly-orphaned and the children from broken homes whose maintenance was supposed to be paid for by a parent. Finally there were the country boarders. These could now be admitted under a new-clause which read: "(iii) *and for the hostel accommodation of any children whom the Council in its absolute discretion saw fit to enrol to enable them to further their education*".

The Chancellor of the Diocese, Mr. Ernest Tindal, was a supporter of the Hostel project. He considered it to be a sensible move under the circumstances, for as a member of the Fairbridge Committee he was familiar with the problems that institutions were facing because of falling numbers. His close friend, Mr. Fred Godfrey, also a lawyer and Chairman of Synod when in Committee, had always shown a great interest in the Swan establishment, and he had long felt that Swanleigh ought to become an incorporated body or better still, get itself a constitution under a private Act of Parliament - a recommendation Mr. S.H. Parker K.C. had made to Diocesan Secretary Canon Garland in an "Opinion" he had given him as long ago as 1897 (see page 59). On several occasions Mr Godfrey had pressed me to get such action undertaken, for he believed that legally the real ownership of the establishment and its endowments rested with the Subscribers and not with the church. He was concerned that if amendments to the rules that had been passed by Synod were ever put to the test, they might be found to be ultra vires. "Get yourself a constitution properly ratified by Act of Parliament and that will stabilise Swanleigh and put an end to any criticism", was his advice, and with this Mr. Tindal entirely agreed.

Accordingly in 1961 I submitted a proposal first to the Diocesan Council and then to Subscribers that we do this, both these bodies giving their approval. I then moved the following resolution in Synod: "That this Synod approves of the proposal of the Swanleigh Council to try to obtain a constitution by private Act of Parliament". I explained to the assembled members the reasons for such a move, and I told them that provided Synod gave its approval to the resolution a Minister of the Crown had agreed to submit a draft of such a Bill to the Cabinet for Government backing. I added that our proposal had the support of the Archbishop, the Chancellor, the Trustees and the Diocesan Council. If the Bill were passed by Parliament, it would include three very important things. First the ownership of the establishment would be placed unequivocally and entirely in the hands of the Church of England. Secondly, the "Objects" of Swanleigh would be those which had been approved unanimously by Synod in the previous year. Thirdly, the membership of the Swanleigh Council would be filled partly by persons elected by Synod and partly by persons nominated by the Archbishop, the Diocesan Trustees and the Diocesan Council - all Anglican Church instrumentalities.

The resolution was carried unanimously, so that one might now be excused for believing that by its passing without dissent it was the will of Synod that the Bill be drafted and submitted to Cabinet. *But this never happened.* At the conclusion of Synod the Swanleigh Council, at the suggestion of the Chancellor, made a formal request to the Attorney General to have the Bill drafted. He conferred with Mr. Tindal who assured him that Synod had endorsed the proposal, after which the Parliamentary Draftsman, Mr. Walsh, was instructed to proceed with the preparation of the Bill. At the latter's request we supplied him with such information as he required for incorporation in it. That was in September. Then we waited expectantly for the preliminary Draft. But nothing came to us from his office for several months, till one day in December I received the following letter from the Attorney General and Deputy Premier, the Honourable Arthur Watts, M.L.A.:

“Dear Mr. Peterkin,

RE PROPOSED BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO SWANLEIGH.

You will recall at the end of August last that I was approached to promote and put before Cabinet for its approval the above Bill and, if Cabinet so approved I was requested to introduce the Bill into the Legislative Assembly.

As you are now aware the Bill has not been prepared, and I feel that perhaps you should be given some reason why the matter was not proceeded with.”

(Here the Attorney General described what steps he had taken to implement our request). He then went on:

“The Chief Parliamentary Draftsman, Mr. Walsh, discussed your proposed Bill with the Chancellor, Mr. Tindal, who advised him that the matter was not urgent and should wait till he returned from a vacation approximately in the middle of October.

On October 17th a Diocesan Trustee \* telephoned Mr. Walsh informing him that he had heard about the proposed Bill; and that the Council of Swanleigh had no authority from the Diocesan Trustees to proceed with the Bill; and that as the property was vested in the Trustees he should not proceed with its drafting. Mr. Walsh subsequently reported these matters to me. In view of the uncertainty of unanimity amongst the people concerned with regard to the introduction of the Bill into Parliament I felt it was not safe for me to cause a Bill to be prepared and submitted to Cabinet.

If and when at a later stage, the parties concerned are *ad idem* on the proposed Bill you may care to again approach me, when the matter will receive my full consideration.

Yours faithfully

(signed) A.F. Watts  
ATTORNEY GENERAL”.

This letter was a very great shock to everyone on the Swanleigh Council, more particularly because in the first place it was the Chancellor who had advised us to approach the Attorney General, and also, on Mr. Watts' admission, Mr. Tindal had confirmed that Synod had given its endorsement for the Bill to be drafted. I protested bitterly to the Archbishop who took some time to reply. When he did so he said that we

F.N. \* Mr. Watts named him in his letter but as he is now deceased I prefer to withhold it.

were under a misapprehension; that neither he nor the Trustee named in Mr. Watts' letter, nor any church body was opposed to the Act; that in fact all were most anxious to see Swanleigh get a constitution through legislative action.

I thanked His Grace for his assurance and trusted that everything possible would be done to expedite the submission of the Bill to Parliament. But for some unexplained reason this never eventuated.

So much for the maxim I had often heard quoted that Diocesan authorities were committed to endeavour to carry out a decision made by Synod! An interesting aftermath was a letter I received three years later. It was written by the Chancellor and was dated July 1st 1964.

“Dear Roy,

I must apologise for not preparing the Draft of the Bill to be submitted to Parliament, but I have been too busy to even look at the file. Please let met have a resume of what you think should be in the Bill.

With kindest regards

Ernie T.”

With renewed hope I wrote to Mr. Tindal, once more setting out the features which the Swanleigh Council wished to see incorporated in the Bill. But again nothing happened.

Shortly after this Archbishop Moline retired, and later the Most Reverend George Appleton, formerly Archdeacon of London and now consecrated Bishop, was enthroned in St. George's Cathedral as Archbishop of Perth. He was a saintly man, greatly beloved by his clergy and people, and held in high esteem by the public of Western Australia, especially for his keen desire to help the unfortunates of this world - the unwanted, the unloved, the down-and-outs and the destitute. It was something of a shock to members of Swanleigh Council to discover when he attended his first meeting as President that he showed no enthusiasm for our establishment. The reason for this, however, was not far to seek. Some of his early advisers had probably told him of the Council's “wickedness”. We had given the heritage of the orphan to the child of the wealthy farmer. By establishing the Hostel we were denying the destitute.

But though apparently we had done those things we ought not to have done - or so it was alleged - it could not be added that there was no wealth in us! Not so long after the Archbishop's first meeting I received a letter from him inviting two members of the Swanleigh Council to his office to meet the new Diocesan Chancellor (Mr. Alan Blanckensee), the Diocesan Secretary and Mr. Godfrey and himself to discuss “*the right use of funds and property held by Swanleigh for the care of orphans*”. He went on to say that this matter had been raised by the Chairman of the Lotteries Commission ‘in a very vigorous way, and he claims that the Anglican Church has no right to divert funds to other uses. The matter has also been raised by Crown Officers’. The Archbishop's letter concluded by saying that the conference could sort out the problem in such a way that Swanleigh could continue its excellent work as a Hostel and yet assist Parkerville with such help as *might rightly go to them*.

To charge a person or a group of responsible people with misuse of trust money is a serious allegation, because if publicly proven the consequences can involve disgrace and even imprisonment. Some members of the Swanleigh Council were very upset by the Archbishop's letter - one even resigned there and then. I was not so greatly perturbed about the charges for I knew these could not be substantiated. There was far more money in the Endowment Fund than was the case when the Hostel commenced. The fabric of the establishment had been greatly improved. Every year the Hostel had paid its way out of income. No necessitous applicant had been denied a refuge, and those enrolled were enjoying better conditions as a result of the new arrangements. What did concern me, however, was: Where had the Chairman of the Lotteries and the officers of the Crown Law Department got the information that led to their making such allegations? People in responsible positions must have made statements to these men, for they could not have known them by intuition. How could Mr. McDonald of the Lotteries Commission or the Crown Law Officers be able to allege diversion of Endowment Funds if someone had not been talking to them? Obviously a person closely associated with Parkerville had been conferring with Chairman McDonald, and someone in Church Office with the Crown Law Officers, both with a view to denigrating Swanleigh and those associated with it. To make such serious allegations beyond the immediate circle of church officials was in the nature of betrayal. Where there were doubts and dissensions these ought to have been resolved within the family.

As one of the delegates appointed by the Swanleigh Council to attend the Archbishop's conference I thought it might be a good idea if I got some legal advice on the nature of the Orphanage Trust. So I approached Mr. Tom Louch Q.C. then widely regarded as the best man on trusts in Western Australia. In particular I asked for an opinion on the legality of the Hostel project and for answers to a number of questions mostly relating to the Endowments. I found him to be interested in the development which had taken place at Swan, and he was both frank and friendly in his attitude. Though the son of a former Archdeacon he was not over-enthusiastic about Anglican Synods and officials, stating in the "Opinion" he gave me that: "In my experience not only in the Diocese of Perth but in other dioceses Synods are apt to consider that they can do anything they like with what they regard as 'Church Funds' irrespective of the trusts upon which endowment moneys are held".

In handing me his "Opinion" and the answers to my questions he assured me that the Swanleigh Council had done nothing seriously wrong. We may have committed a slight breach of trust, but even on that point as the endowment money used so far was for the purpose of building improvements, a good case could be made by the Council that part of its trust was to preserve and improve the fabric of the institution; and that, as any such additions and improvements would enure for the benefit of needy children if at some time in the future it were found necessary to close the Hostel and use all the accommodation to provide a refuge for some form of child-destitution, such expenditure would not be a breach of trust. No one would ever take legal action against the Council for what it had done. He added that we ought to get ourselves an Act of Parliament which would set ourselves right for the future, and he could not understand why this proposal had been dropped. If we included Parkerville (I had told him that I personally would like to see Swanleigh and Parkerville amalgamate) that institution would be helped and our application for the Act immeasurably strengthened. As things stood at present it would indeed be a breach of trust for the Diocesan Trustees to hand over Swanleigh endowment - land or money - to Parkerville. A very good case could be



made for the Hostel plan provided sufficient accommodation was reserved to provide for all orphans and destitute children put in the care of Swanleigh, and that none of the endowment funds or income was devoted towards the running expenses of the Hostel. But as the country boarders paid for their keep then ex hypothesi the trust funds of the establishment were not being drawn on except for the expense of maintaining necessitous cases at Swanleigh, and for the whole cost of conducting the home at Coogee.

The Swanleigh Council was very re-assured by the Louch opinion and in due course, armed with the information given in it, Mr. Ferguson and I attended the Archbishop's conference. As it proceeded it seemed to us that rather than a round table affair it was more like an inquisition, with us the two heretics facing the Archbishop with his men seated alongside him - "my Chancellor at my side" to quote his own words. Whenever we ventured to speak one of them immediately replied in opposition, and as far as I can recall we only scored two points, both of which were quietly ignored. The first was made in reply to the Archbishop's introduction: "Mr. McDonald had said 'Why should the Commission help Parkerville while the Church of England was misusing funds left for orphans?'" His Grace then went on to say that a lot of people in the Diocese were also worried about the misuse of Swanleigh endowments. I replied that in fairness to Swanleigh the first thing that ought to be investigated was whether in fact any money had been mis-spent. His Grace admitted that this was a point, but then he ignored it. He was on a crusade to right the wrongs committed against "orphans". He was obviously under the impression that all the children at Parkerville were orphans. I told him that ever since the Hostel commenced we had been accommodating a good many children classified as "necessitous" - as many as 161 between Swanleigh and Coogee in the first year (which was much higher than the Parkerville enrolment). "But they're not Orphans", snapped His Grace. "Sir", I replied, (and this was the second point) "those children are in exactly the same categories as the girls and boys at Parkerville, very few if any of whom are orphans. They mostly come from broken homes. Today the Child Welfare Department makes any orphans committed to its care into wards of the State, and either fosters them or sends them to its own establishment at Canning Bridge".

But we made no progress. "A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still", says the old jingle. Parkerville's "orphans" needed help and the Swanleigh endowments could provide that help. I think that the Archbishop's legal men ought to have explained to him that as things were the trustees could not just take endowments left to one institution and give them to another. Probably Mr. Godfrey saw through the dilemma when he suddenly offered the suggestion that Parkerville and Swanleigh might amalgamate under an Act of Parliament. With the exception of Mr. Ferguson all present thought it a good idea, and the conference closed with a decision that the amalgamation suggestion be placed before the Swanleigh Council and the Parkerville Association for early consideration.

In due course this was done. Some members of the Swanleigh body led by Mr. Ferguson were not enthusiastic for the idea because they were not confident about Parkerville's ability to manage its finances. I urged that there were enough Swanleigh Councillors on the Parkerville Committee of Management to exercise control when the increased endowment wealth that would result from the amalgamation became available to our sister establishment. Parkerville could at last reach financial stability; the Archbishop's worry about his "orphans" would be set at rest; the amalgamation would be welcomed by many Anglicans, and we would have a much better chance of getting

our Act through Parliament, with a constitution that would enable us to continue the Hostel system without criticism. In the end the proposal was accepted in principle by the Council.

At its meeting the Parkerville Association came to the same decision. Some members, however, were not happy about my idea that under the Act the income of both establishments should be pooled and out of this the working expenses of each institution paid. Similarly the total endowments of each establishment (and any subsequently received), should also be pooled, and out of this any capital expenditure at either establishment financed. As an arrangement it seemed reasonable to me, but some of the Association wanted Parkerville to keep its own bequests and have the use of the Swanleigh endowments as well - an arrangement unsatisfactory to Swanleigh, for it felt that the time might come when it would have to revert from being a Hostel to become entirely a charitable establishment once again. Should that happen and it then had no endowments, it would be greatly disadvantaged.

In finally agreeing in principle the Parkerville Association requested that attention be given to two matters, viz. that all trusts belonging to either institution first be carefully investigated so that if there were any bequests that had been left for specific purposes (as opposed to those left for the general benefit of the institution) these could be carried out. Secondly, that some assurance would be obtained from the Lotteries Commission that it would continue its financial support for Parkerville after the amalgamation.

The Archbishop then called a combined meeting of the members of the Parkerville Association, the Parkerville Management Committee and the Swanleigh Council to make a joint decision on the proposed amalgamation by Act of Parliament. At the end of a lengthy and cordial discussion His Grace summed up by saying that after hearing the views of the those present he had formed the impression that there was strong support for this proposal. He then asked Chancellor Blanckensee and Mr. Godfrey, both of whom had taken a prominent part in the conference, if they would be willing to undertake the task of drawing up the details that would be incorporated into such an Act - to which they agreed. It was decided that when these details were available they should be submitted to the Parkerville and Swanleigh Councils separately for consideration by these bodies. When complete agreement was finally reached, the drafting of the Act for submission to Parliament would then proceed.

The rest is silence. Four months later I received a letter from the new Diocesan Secretary, the Revd. R.J. Greenhalgh, requesting me to advise him what progress had been made towards the proposed amalgamation, so that he might inform the Archbishop. I replied that so far as I was aware no progress had been made towards furthering the proposal. Nor did anything ever come of it. About that time Mr. Godfrey became seriously ill and retired from holding Diocesan office. With his resignation the idea was dropped.

Perhaps it is not completely right for me to say that nothing came of all this, for from that time a strong friendship developed between the Archbishop and myself. He seemed appreciative of my effort to bring about the amalgamation, and while he continued to evince a strong sympathy for Parkerville and its children, he also became very enthusiastic for the work at Swanleigh - an interest he was to maintain for the remainder of his episcopate.

### 3. The Centenary of the Establishment 1968

A centenary is an event which occurs only once in the lifetime of those interested. They should, therefore, make every effort to celebrate it worthily, for the opportunity to do so will not come to them again. This thought was uppermost in the minds of members of the Council when they were considering how the centenary of the Swan establishment should be observed. It was decided that in formulating a programme, there should be three basic ideas. First there ought to be an atmosphere of joyfulness and thankfulness, so that the events arranged should be happy memories for those participating. Secondly the origin and history of the institution should be made known to the present-day students and their parents. Thirdly the celebrations ought to include some worthy and lasting achievement.

All three of these objectives were attempted. To encourage the first - the act of joyfulness and thankfulness - it was decided that there should be two feasts, a holiday and a Service of Thanksgiving. The first feast was a "High Tea", held on the evening of the actual centenary date - June 1st, 1968. This was attended by the staff and students, the only visitors being the Chairman and his wife - Mr. and Mrs. Don Ferguson - because they were regarded by Swanleighans as being members of the family. They lived on the adjoining property, came to all Swanleigh functions and had a life-long interest in the establishment. Mrs. Ferguson's father had been a Manager of Swan Boys for a good many years, during which time she had lived at the Orphanage. Mr. Ferguson was in the third generation of a family, \* all of whom had rendered great service to the institution and its children. It was a connection that went back to its earliest days when the Chairman's grandfather, Dr. Ferguson, was Colonial Surgeon and attended the children in the foundation Orphanage in Perth free of charge.

After the tea, the Director told the story of the founding of the Orphanage in 1868, and how it came to the Swan. Then Mrs. Ferguson cut the huge birthday cake, shaped and iced to represent the Swanleigh badge. After all present had received a piece of it, they left to prepare for a barndance - an event always popular with Swanleighans. It proved a very jolly affair, with the students dressed in "country attire" and the hall decorated with farm produce and illuminated with lanterns.

Next day - the Sunday nearest the centenary - the Special Service of Thanksgiving was held in the Hall, St. Mary's Church being much too small to accommodate all the students, staff, parishioners and visitors. The form of the Service was what the Chaplain, the Revd. Laurie McIntyre, described as "Hashed Matins", with appropriate hymns, lessons and prayers. The Occasional Sermon was preached by Canon Lyn Brown, grandson of the founder.

*\* Mrs. Margaret Roe, nee Ferguson, now for some years a Swanleigh Councillor, is of the fourth generation of this family.*

The second feast was the Centenary Dinner. It was held in the Dining Hall on the evening of June 28th. Over a hundred guests accepted the Council's invitation to be present and these included two of the grand-children of Archeacon Brown. The Diocesan Administrator, Bishop T.B. Macdonald, represented the Archbishop who was overseas; and the Hon. James Craig M.L.A., Chief Secretary and the Member for the district, represented the Hon. the Premier who was in Canberra. The rest of the gathering comprised past or present members of the Swanleigh Council, staff, voluntary workers, associated officials and representative students, all meeting together in what proved to be a very joyous re-union. What memories there were that night! For among the guests were some whose association with the institution went back over half a century.

After the loyal toast had been honoured, the Chairman (Mr. Ferguson) called on Mr. Craig to propose the toast of "Swanleigh". Response to this was made by the Director, after which Bishop Macdonald proposed a toast to "Founders, Benefactors and Voluntary Workers". Mr. Clem Booth responded to this. He was a Life Member of the Council and the founder of that very active group of voluntary workers - the Meat Industries' Orphanage Committee. Then came the final toast - that of "Residents - Past and Present". This was given to Mr. A.A. Robertson to propose. And who better? For his connection with the institution went right back to 1923. Thousands of past residents knew him as "Mr. Robbie", and one of the boys' houses had been named after him. Two responses to his toast were arranged. The first was by an old boy who had been on the enrolment in the last years of the Swan Homes and the first years of Swanleigh. After leaving the Hostel he had gone into residence in St. George's College at the University where, in his last year, he was awarded the Georgian Medal for the student considered to have rendered the outstanding service to the College that year. At the University he gained First Class Honours in English, and he became a Senior Editor of the Australian edition of "Reader's Digest". \* His brilliant speech that night was recorded, and a part of it in which he refers to his years in the institution prior to those in the Hostel where he eventually became Head Boy is quoted: "They called us 'under-privileged'! But what child went to a football match every week or a Shield cricket match when it was in Perth? What child had either pictures or a dance almost every Saturday night? What child had a seaside summer holiday every year? What child was encouraged in all sports, or had a swimming pool in his backyard? And, Bishop Macdonald, the grapes that Hostel students now have gratis, in my day if you saw a bundle of grass floating down the river, underneath that bundle of grass was a boy with a bunch of grapes. (Laughter). What child could learn gymnastics from a former Hungarian Olympic representative? What child could go on week-end hikes, or see the latest in live entertainment that the city had to offer - and so forth. I tell you this child could and did - and so did many others". The other response was made on behalf of students then in residence by the Head Boy for 1968. His speech was well applauded, for it was a particularly mature effort for a lad still at school.

The evening was a great success. The hall was tastefully decorated by Mrs. Peterkin and Mr. Cope, and their efforts, combined with the candle light illuminations, made the scene one of great beauty. An old-time kerosene lamp on the piano symbolised the past. Speeches, though at times a trifle long, included much of interest to all present, and were well received. The happy greetings and exchanges of reminiscences between old friends and associates in the work was a great feature of the evening. Altogether a night to be remembered by everyone privileged to be present.

\* 1980

The dinner was arranged to coincide with the students' Occasional Holiday. This, too, was a joyous event, for the extra day added to the weekend made it possible for a large number of them to get home. The holiday from school while the non-Swanleighans had to attend gave our girls and boys gleeful satisfaction.

Then there was the historical objective. How could this best be presented? After discussion, the Council decided that there ought to be a Pageant - one which would depict the origin of the establishment and some of the events which had occurred over the hundred years. Since each year many parents made a special effort to come to the Annual Concert, it was decided to incorporate the Pageant in the programme. This was done, and though it made the evening rather long, it did help the audience of well over a thousand towards a better understanding of how the institution developed from an Orphanage of less than a dozen destitute children to become the largest Hostel of its kind in the Commonwealth. Every boy and girl in the upper school participated, and some of the Council, too.

Finally there was the practical centenary effort. What form should this take? By 1968 some fine buildings had been erected at Swanleigh. These included Brown House, Waylen House, the A.A. Guy Memorial Block comprising the Dining Room and the Kitchen, the Assembly Hall (the gym.), the Technical Workshop which commemorated the work of Mr. Birch, the Staff Quarters, three new stately houses for girls and one originally designed for little boys - Hamilton House. But a good deal remained to be done, and nothing more so than the replacement of Forrest House, which, though homely, was sub-standard by modern architectural designing, and had weak foundations. It was decided that this old house should be demolished, and in its place a new one erected. The project was not commenced till fairly late in 1968, but by the time the girls returned from the Christmas vacation, it was ready for occupation. On March 29th, 1969, after it had been blessed by Bishop T.B. Macdonald, it was officially opened by Mrs. Stanton, and was named "Stanton House" in memory of her late husband, Mr. Albert Stanton, an ex-Orphanage boy, who for thirty years had rendered magnificent voluntary service to the institution. Built at a cost of over \$60,000, it accommodated thirty lower school girls, with four seniors as House Prefects. It was an elegant structure and its erection was a fitting climax to the Council's programme. With its official opening the centenary celebrations ended. The dawn of Swanleigh's second century was breaking!

## PAST CHAIRMEN PRINCIPALS AND PRESIDENTS. 1868 - 1968

### CHAIRMEN:

The Ven. Archdeacon J. Brown  
Bishop M.B. Hale  
Bishop H.H. Parry  
Bishop (later Archbishop) C.O.L. Riley  
Archbishop H.F. Lefanu  
The Ven. Archdeacon C. Hudleston  
Mr. M.T. Padbury  
Archbishop R.W.H. Moline  
The Ven. Archdeacon R.H. Strugnell

Mr. H. Adie  
Mr. A.A. Guy  
Mr. D.H. Ferguson

PRINCIPALS:

The Ven. Archdeacon J. Brown (Perth Orphanage and later Swan Boys')  
    The Very Revd. Dean J. Gegg (Perth Girls')  
        Canon D.J. Garland (Swan Boys')  
The Very Revd. Dean (later Bishop) F. Goldsmith (Perth Girls')  
    The Ven. Archdeacon D.G. Watkins (Perth Girls')  
    The Revd. (later Canon) A. Burton (Swan Boys')  
    The Ven. Archdeacon C.E.C. Lefroy (Swan Boys')  
    The Very Revd. Dean H.G.D. Latham (Perth Girls')  
    The Very Revd. Dean H. Mercer (Perth Girls')  
    The Ven. Archdeacon C. Hudleston (Perth Girls')  
The Revd. (later Canon) J.W. Armstrong (Swan Boys' and later Perth Girls')  
    The Revd. R.W. Needham (Swan Boys')  
        Mr. A.M. Birch (Swan Boys')  
Mr. Roy Peterkin (Swan Boys', Swan Homes, Swanleigh)

PRESIDENTS SWANLEIGH HOSTEL COUNCIL:

The Most Revd. Archbishop R.W.H. Moline, M.C., D.D.  
The Most Revd. Archbishop G. Appleton, M.B.E., M.A.

## 4. Further Developments

Swanleigh's first decade was an exciting period for all officially connected with the establishment. Not only was it saved from possible closure, but the very remarkable increase in enrolment necessitated the undertaking of a series of interesting projects to cope with the accommodation problem. The earlier changes were less spectacular than those which were to come later, for at first we felt insecure about our future. Would the Hostel's popularity continue? But applications for admission in later years increased rather than decreased so that in time we could accept these only as "Subject to Vacancies". More students all paying higher fees gave us a financial stability which we had not previously enjoyed, and because of this the Diocesan Trustees felt more confident that whenever they made us a capital loan it would be repaid. They were still worried about the legality of their lending us money against the security of the endowments, but they continued to do so, till a new Diocesan Secretary introduced an alternative formula. In future any loans to Swanleigh were not to be made from our endowments but from the "Diocesan Trustees' financial resources". Interest was to be paid by Swanleigh on such loans, and the endowment capital was not to be touched. The income from the latter source, however, was to be paid annually to Swanleigh as in the past. From 1968 onwards the Diocesan Trustees were at no risk because all major building projects to provide additional accommodation were then financed under a scheme which included substantial assistance from the Government.

In the first two years only a few minor alterations in some of the buildings were necessary. The kindergarten wing in Hudleston and the large sewing room in Lee Steere were now no longer required for their original purpose, and were converted into dormitories. Similarly the small upstairs dormitory in Waylen became the senior study. In time every residential building standing at Swanleigh prior to the commencement of the Hostel received small modifications in order to take a few more boarders. Even so, by 1963 it was obvious that a good deal more additional accommodation for older boys would be required. The arrangement whereby Cornwell House was limited to about thirty First Year boys who transferred to Brown House for their second year, and from thence to Waylen, was not being balanced by a sufficient annual exodus from the latter House. More and more boys were remaining at school for higher education, while the number entering at the Fourth Year level also increased, with the result that sleeping and study conditions began to be overcrowded. Something had to be done to meet this situation, and the only way to accommodate the larger numbers was to erect a further building. So it was decided to dismantle the playshed at the northern end of Waylen, re-erecting this near the oval, and in its place build a cubicled dormitory for 22 boys - an extension to which the lads gave the name "New Dorm" - a title soon adopted by everyone. The former downstairs dormitory was then divided, one section continuing as sleeping accommodation, while the other became a study for the Third Years. Another big improvement introduced at that time was that with the exception of those on verandahs all Waylen students were now to sleep in cubicles. This necessitated the erection of much partitioning and the purchase of a good deal of furniture. The cost of this whole project was about £10,000, which we borrowed from the Trustees, to be re-paid out of income over a period of twenty years.

But the steady increase in numbers over the Hostel years necessitated more than additional sleeping and study accommodation. There had to be extra dining space, more bathroom and toilet facilities, and provision for further recreational activities. There were also problems associated with such things as transport, chapel-seating, laundry, additional office space - to mention some of them. During the first decade the Council gave much attention to each of these needs. In the five years between the erection of New Dorm and the commencement of the centenary year (1968) the kitchen, the dining-room and the assembly hall (gym.) were all extended; a wing was added to Brown House to provide a recreation-cum-prep room for the Second Year boys; additional bathroom and toilet accommodation were provided in several houses; a new bus was purchased and the offices were enlarged. Two hockey fields were laid down, the football oval was extended, and an extra netball court and four tennis courts were constructed. Serious consideration was given to a suggestion that St. Mary's be enlarged, but eventually the idea had to be abandoned because of the risk of collapse to this historic building and also the cost of such a project. The Trustees refused to consider the use of endowment money for this purpose, maintaining that to do so would be a breach of trust. The purchase of the bus and the cost of the major building extensions were all financed by repayable loans from the Trustees, whereas the other alterations, improvements and purchases were met out of fee and other income, the exception being items not attributable to the introduction of the Hostel such as re-roofing the eighty-year old Brown House, the deepening of the sub-artesian bore, the purchase of implements for the farm and the like. Such costs were charged against the endowment income, which also maintained the Coogee establishment and the necessitous children at Swan.

Just as in 1963 we had found it necessary to provide an additional building for boys, so a few years later we undertook three major projects to accommodate the increased number of girls. Reference has already been made to one of these, viz. the erection of Stanton House as part of our centenary celebrations. (See page 196). But a year earlier we had converted Hamilton House from a building originally designed for little boys to one for adolescent girls - a project undertaken with great reluctance, for in its initial planning and furnishing, it had been an ideal house for its purpose. But that purpose had steadily disappeared as the number of necessitous primary boys dwindled to a mere handful - too few to justify the retention of such a large house for their accommodation. The boys still in residence were sent to Coogee, with a promise that when they reached High School age they could return to Swanleigh if they wished to do so - a promise which was kept. Then we carried out a programme of alterations similar to those in Hudleston before our original intake. Hamilton's former open dormitory was now set-out in cubicles, using specially constructed wardrobe and dressing-table units as partitions. Study facilities were provided in the recreation room, while there were extensive changes in the existing glamorous bathroom in order to render it suitable for older girls.

The third project was to build an eastern wing on to Freeman House to balance that on the west. It was a two-storied structure which enabled us not only to increase our enrolment but to transfer to it some girls from Hudleston and Lee Steere, so making conditions less crowded in them. With the completion of the Freeman project all girls were then living in modern houses that provided adequate accommodation for the boarding of a total of 165 girls - boarders and necessitous - which number we decided should be our maximum.



But we were far from satisfied with some of the conditions in the boys' section. There the principal weaknesses were the crowded verandahs in Waylen and Brown Houses, the inadequate study facilities and the lack of comfortable indoor recreation rooms. The sewing-mistress needed more storage space for the boys' clothing; the sick-bay required upgrading, and as for the bathroom - we were downright ashamed of it! A changing room for sport, with easy access to the bathroom, and a place for the storage of sporting gear, were other urgent requirements, while the laundry, mostly equipped with worn-out or out-dated machines procured secondhand for us long ago by Jock Anderson (see page 122), and where Mr. and Mrs. Reid had toiled for years in Swan Homes days, ought to be re-built and modernised. The need for that project was accentuated by the impending retirement of our present ageing laundryman, Mr Bennie Pearl, after fifteen years of devoted service. As our numbers had grown, so had the problem of getting the laundry finished in time for the following week. By working longer hours - often Mr. Pearl started at 3 a.m. - it was always ready, summer or winter. But where in the world would we find a man prepared to give such devotion to the job as he had done?

To try to supply all these requirements we commenced what we described as the "Waylen-Brown Project" - a comprehensive undertaking which took two years to complete, but when it was finished the conditions in the boys' section were vastly improved. The major part of the work was architecturally very interesting, involving the erection of a dormitory at upper-storey level above "New Dorm" and an extensive study-area over the whole of the space between the two houses. In this section nearly every boy in either house had his own study carrel, with its table, chair, bookshelves and his own light. Here he was permitted to continue his studies after supper and lights-out if he wished to do so. The oldest boys had access to their carrels from their own house, so that their sitting room was no longer required for evening prep. Conditions in Brown House were also improved by the building of a northern extension to provide these lads with a dressing-room and clothing-storage facilities. A small flat was provided for the married couple in charge.

As the Third Year boys now did their prep in the new study, we were able to convert their former homework room into one for recreation purposes for all Waylen lads. Into this we transferred the billiard table and the easy chairs from the library, and we also furnished it with a television, a record player, small tables and additional comfortable seating. It had easy access to the spacious covered-way where more recreational facilities were provided. At one end of this, however, was a quiet foyer where parents or visiting friends might sit and talk with a boy. Now that the library room was no longer also required for recreational purposes, it was planned to convert it into a reference library for girls as well as for boys. Most of the books still on the shelves were removed, for the works of Ballantyne, Edward S. Ellis, W.H.G. Kingston, G.A. Henty and other beloved authors of my boyhood are seldom read these days. As for so many other books which had found their way into the library as donations for the edification or education of orphans such as volumes of sermons, text-books on Norweigan grammar, etc. etc. - they all went to the pulp mill. Because the Commonwealth Government was generously supplying many Australian schools with imposing and well-stocked libraries I hoped that it might make us a small annual grant for the purchase of reference books - I didn't want a building - but unfortunately my application was rejected. We were not a school! I understand, however, that the Swanleigh Council has proceeded with this project, which is pleasing, because ready access to reference books in out-of-school hours is highly desirable for students living in a residential situation.

So far as the laundry problem was concerned it was decided that sheets and tablecloths should be sent to a commercial laundry, and a new building erected in which modern machines and a smaller boiler would be installed. When this was done we were able to handle the balance of the work with reduced staff. The cement floor of the old laundry was covered with a wooden one and it became a gymnasium and games-room for boys. It was close to the former clothes-room which was converted to the sport changing-room, while the sewing mistress was provided with new facilities for her work. In these she and the Matron were handily placed to the surgery and up-graded sick bay, which was particularly convenient. In Archdeacon Brown's day this hospital ward had been the boys' dining-room, with his school-room adjacent. Now this latter became a room for small meetings and classes. With its platform and blackboards it looked as though a hundred years later it had reverted to its original purpose. The conversion of the dreary bathroom to a glamorous place of coloured wall-tiles, mirrors, showers, basins and red floor tiles completed the Waylen-Brown Project.

Our last big undertaking - it was completed only a few weeks prior to our retirement - was one which gave us tremendous satisfaction. This was the construction of a swimming pool. For ten years I had urged the Council to provide such an amenity, but with one exception I did not receive much encouragement for the idea from the members. I think they thought that with the river so near it was an unnecessary extravagance. But though children from the establishment had swum in the river for ninety summers there had latterly been some doubt as to the advisability of this being continued because of alleged pollution in the water. At times doctors had asked us to discontinue swimming because of the number of children suffering from earache. When the Hostel commenced some of the girls would not swim in it because they thought the brown-coloured water was dirty. But apart from such objections I wanted the pool for four reasons. First it would provide an amenity in which all could share. Even the non-swimmers could enjoy themselves in the shallow half of the pool, whereas at our river spot the children went straight into water over their depth. Secondly with its clear water and the pool being only twenty-five metres long it was more easily supervised. Thirdly, it provided an activity for the latter half of the third term - the time when most of the organised sport for the year had finished. In "cram time and exam time" a late afternoon swim was relaxing. But previously we always had to delay river swimming in the third term till almost the end of the year on account of the water having to settle and be "snagged" after the winter floods. Fourthly, pool-training is essential for competitive swimming.

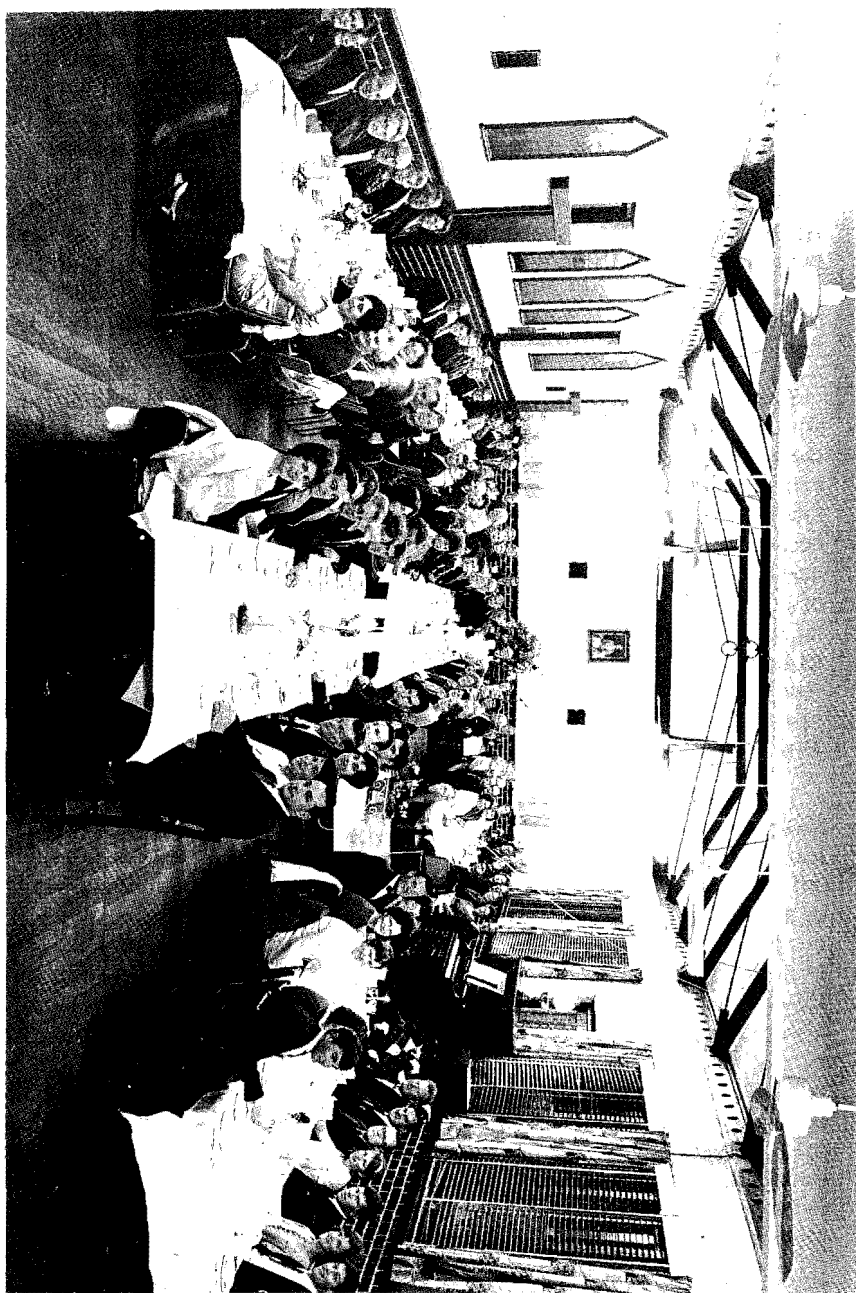
The member who consistently supported me in my advocacy for the provision of a pool was Miss Norma Monger, who had joined the Council in 1955. At meetings she would frequently remind Councillors of the project: "Don't forget the swimming pool. Remember we've got to have that pool". When in the late sixties we sold some land at Coogee I reminded the members that this property had originally been purchased for holiday purposes. Was it not reasonable to spend at least some of the proceeds of the sale in providing a much-needed recreational facility? There was general agreement with the suggestion, and the Council metaphorically took the plunge and arranged with the Trustees for the project to proceed. So there was great rejoicing at Swanleigh - but especially by two of the Council - when, on Saturday, November 13th, 1971, in a simple ceremony I invited Miss Monger to declare the pool open. This was followed by our first Swimming Carnival in our own pool. Something else which gave me satisfaction in building that project was that the honorary engineer for it was a young man who had been a boy resident in our Swan Homes days.

It may be recalled that in our earlier years at Swan we received much helpful advice on building from one of the members of the Board - Mr. Harry Adie. Right up to the time of his death in 1956 he continued to take a great interest in all the institution's activities. Shortly after his passing I was approached by one of his friends, Mr. Harry Hyde, a local builder of repute, who told me that he had been a great admirer of Mr. Adie, and knowing of his long association with Swan Homes and the great pleasure the old man had derived from this, he had come to offer his services as our building adviser. He added that he was not seeking contracts, for if his offer were accepted he would not be tendering for any of our work. I reported this at the next meeting of the Council, and members then invited him to be our "Honorary Building Adviser". At the same time they hoped that he would not hesitate to tender for any advertised building job at the institution, for several members knew the quality of his work. On one occasion Mr. Forbes, our architect at that time, had said to me: "Contractors capable of doing work to our standards are not easily found in your area. Hyde is one of the few of them".

Soon afterwards Mr. Hyde did tender for the erection of Hamilton House, but he was not successful. Our next big project was "New Dorm". This time his tender was the lowest - several thousand pounds less than some. He was awarded the contract, and after completing it, was congratulated by Mr. Forbes on a very fine job. From then on the Council was happy for Mr. Hyde to undertake all its major building projects, because all members felt that his estimate would be a fair one and that there was no question as to the quality of his work. I recall that in 1968 we had a visit from one of the senior Architects of the Public Works Department who had come to examine the site and plans for Stanton House, for which cost we were to receive some financial assistance from the Government. He was very happy with the plan and enquired how much it was going to cost. When I told him that Mr. Hyde's quote was \$60,000 he exclaimed: "My goodness! What a good price! I would have thought \$80,000 would have been a more realistic figure". (The amount actually paid to Mr. Hyde was \$60,274).

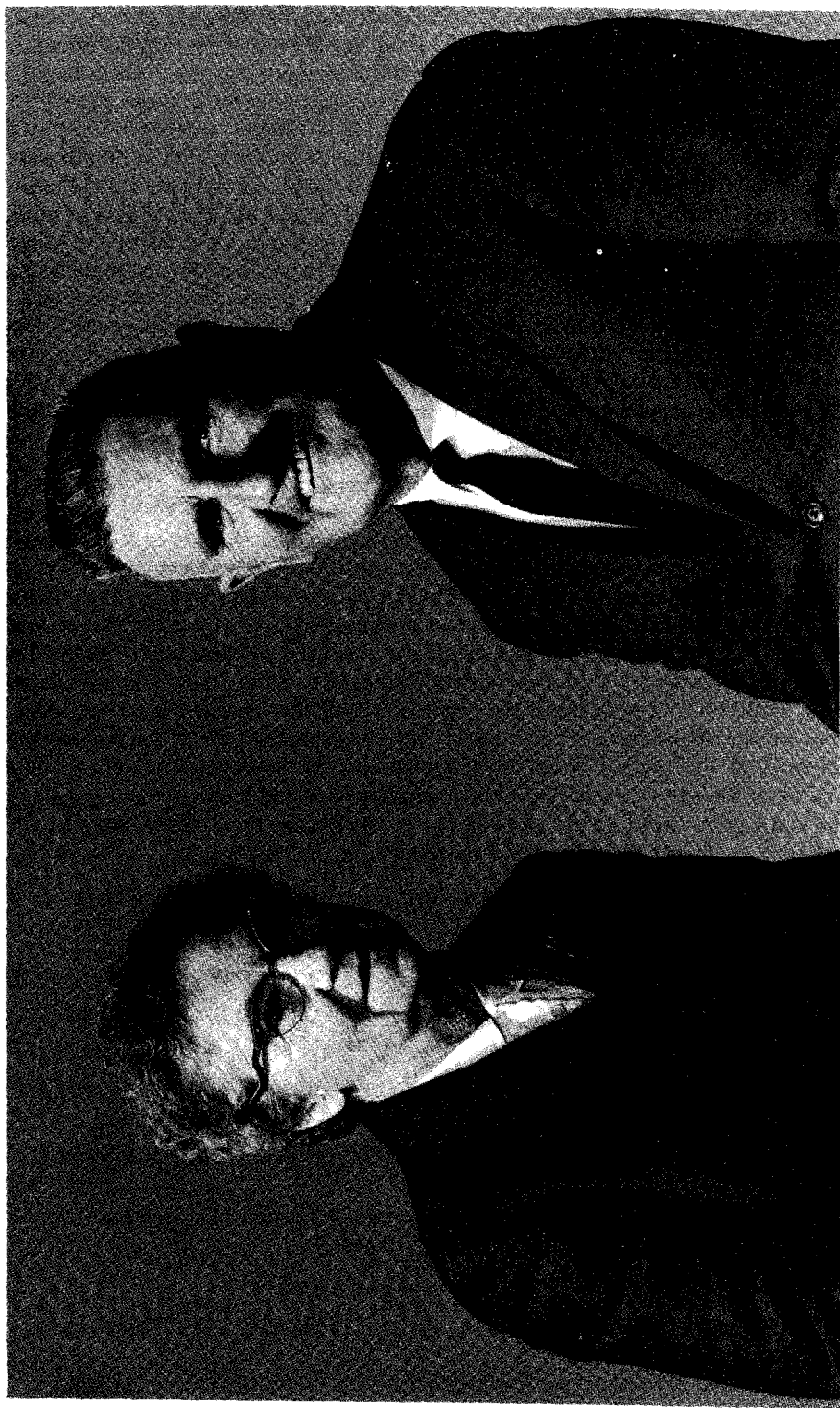
Through Mr. Hyde we became associated with another man who was also to render Swanleigh valuable assistance in our building work. This was Mr. Stanley Hewitt, who held a senior position in the Public Works Architectural Division. On several occasions he had accompanied Mr. Hyde to the Hostel and he, too, became very interested in it. Because of this he offered to prepare plans and specifications for Mr. Hyde for our major projects and would accept only a very small honorarium for so doing. Jointly the two built the westward wing of Brown House and then in succession Stanton House, the eastward wing of Freeman and the Waylen-Brown Project. Mr Hewitt also drew the plans for the swimming pool which Mr. Hyde supervised. Mr. Hyde carried out the extensions to the kitchen, the dining hall, the assembly hall and numerous small jobs as well, but I am sure that the one which gave him, and Mr. Hewitt, the greatest satisfaction was the Waylen-Brown Project. Words cannot adequately express the debt of gratitude the Swanleigh Council owes to these two for their contribution to the Hostel's building programme over the years of their association with it, both in the vision shown in their planning, the quality of their workmanship and in the thousands of dollars saved by the generosity of their charges.

We had financed the building of the swimming pool out of land sales. The last three accommodation projects, viz. Stanton House, the extension of Freeman House and the Waylen-Brown Project had also been expensive undertakings. How did we get finance for these? The answer is that initially we borrowed their full cost from the Diocesan



*The Centenary Dinner, June 28th 1968.*

*For key see page 235.*



*Mary and Roy Peterkin*

Trustees, but in the repayment of those capital debts we were assisted by the Government. Late in 1967 I had written to the Premier, Mr. (later Sir) David Brand, asking him if the Government could help us with the cost of projects for the boarding of more students and the up-grading of some of the living conditions in those already in existence. I explained to him the nature of our establishment; that we were now by far the largest Hostel in the State, with more applicants than we could accommodate; that unlike the other High School Hostels ours was not built nor maintained by the Government; and that by taking country boarders we had lost our charitable appeal, so that we could no longer receive assistance from the Lotteries Commission. I pointed out that although we did have endowments these had been given for the benefit of needy children and were unavailable. Our only means of getting new buildings was to try to borrow from the Trustees, and such loans had to be repaid with interest. Our fees were already higher than those of any other Hostel, and were required to meet our working costs and to provide improvements and replacements. We were rendering a service to the country people of the State. Could the Government help us with the expense of a building programme?

Mr. Brand replied that the State's capital resources were fully committed, but he was prepared to consider Swanleigh coming within the scope of the Government's scheme to help the independent schools meet the cost of similar projects. Such assistance to the schools took the form of an interest subsidy of up to 5 per cent of the amount owing at the beginning of each year for the erection of an approved building. This would be payable provided the school made an annual repayment of 5 per cent of the original capital cost. In our case it meant that if we borrowed say \$60,000 from the Trustees (from their resources - not from our endowments) to build Stanton House we must repay \$3,000 (i.e. 5 per cent of the capital cost) off that loan at the end of every year. But we would also have to pay interest charges to the Trustees for lending us the initial money, at the rate of 5 per cent per annum or thereabouts on the amount still owing at the end of each year. The Government would then pay us 5 per cent of the unpaid capital debt to assist us with our costs. In case this sounds rather involved, I will try to set out the transaction more clearly:-

- A. At the beginning of the 1st year Swanleigh's capital debt to the Trustees for the project Stanton House was \$60,000.

At the end of the 1st year Swanleigh was required to reduce the capital debt by 5 per cent of the amount owing i.e. 5 per cent of \$60,000	\$3,000
Swanleigh also had to pay an interest charge of 5 per cent per annum of the amount actually owing to the Trustees	<u>\$3,000</u>
Total owing to the Trustees at end of 1st year	<u>\$6,000</u>

This was paid by:

1. The Diocesan Trustees retaining \$3,000 of the endowment income they would normally have paid to us	\$3,000
2. Swanleigh then received the Government subsidy of 5 per cent of \$60,000 and paid this direct to the Trustees	<u>\$3,000</u>
Total received by the Trustees at end of 1st year	<u>\$6,000</u>

- B. At the beginning of the 2nd year Swanleigh's capital debt to the Trustees had reduced to \$57,000.

At the end of the 2nd year Swanleigh again had to further reduce its origi-

nal debt (i.e. \$60,000) by paying back 5 per cent	\$3,000
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At the end of the 2nd year Swanleigh also had to pay the Trustees 5 per cent interest on the \$57,000 it then owed	\$2850
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Total due to Trustees at end of 2nd year	<u>\$5,850</u>
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This was paid by:

1. The Trustees retention of \$3,000 of the endowment income	\$3,000
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2. Swanleigh paying to the Trustees the Government subsidy received, viz. 5 per cent of \$57,000	<u>\$2,850</u>
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Total received by the Trustees at the end of 2nd year	<u>\$5,850</u>
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C. At the beginning of the 3rd year Swanleigh's capital debt to the Trustees had reduced to \$54,000, etc. etc.

D. At the beginning of the 20th year Swanleigh's capital debt to the Trustees had reduced to \$3,000

At the end of the 20th year Swanleigh had to reduce its original capital debt by \$3,000, i.e. 5 per cent of \$60,000	\$3,000
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Swanleigh had also to pay the interest charge of 5 per cent on the amount it still owed that year, i.e. 5 per cent of \$3,000	<u>150</u>
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Total owing to the Trustees at the end of the year	<u>\$3,150</u>
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This was paid by:

1. The trustees retention of \$3,000 of our endowment income	\$3,000
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2. The Government subsidy received and then paid direct to the Trustees	<u>150</u>
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	<u>\$3,150</u>
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Short-circuited: We paid the Government's subsidy cheque to the Trustees.

The Trustees reduced the amount of endowment income they had to send us each year by \$3,000.

It must be emphasized that so long as Swanleigh continued charitable work in accordance with its "Objects" clause under its rules, the Diosesan Trustees were obligated to pay the endowment income to the establishment. In turn it was the moral responsibility of the Swanleigh Council to see that such income was devoted to the cost of caring for the needy children enrolled in its institutions and to the maintenance and improvement of the establishments in which such children resided. At this time the endowment was being used for both these purposes. The Seaside Home at Coogee continued to function up to the end of 1968.

No money received as endowment income was ever solely used for the benefit of the paying boarders. But some of this income was used for the improvement of the fabric of the institution - such improvements being shared by the paying boarders as well as by necessitous cases. This arrangement was continued until 1979 when a new situation arose and conditions were again changed, this time under an Act of Parliament (see page 229).

So Stanton House was to be paid for by expenditure of \$60,000 endowment income over twenty years. As a result of this project, Swanleigh had the use of the building for that time and for far into the future. By 1989 it would be free of that debt and the establishment's endowment capital would have remained intact throughout all the time earning endowment income. The Freeman extension and the Waylen-Brown Project were financed similarly.

This assistance with the cost of buildings for accommodation was not the only financial help the Government gave us at this time. Near the end of 1966 I had written to the Minister for Education, the Hon. Edgar Lewis M.L.A. , asking whether the Government subsidy to hostels would be payable to us. This was an amount of 3/- (35 cents) per head per school week, which was a maintenance subsidy that all the State High School Hostels received. He replied, saying that the subsidy was payable to organisations which provided accommodation as a service. He considered that there appeared to be no reason why the subsidy should not be paid to Swanleigh, and advised that we now make formal application to the Education Department for it. We did so, and in due course it was paid to us. It was very much appreciated assistance, for at that time it amounted to about \$4000 a year. By 1979 the subsidy had been increased to \$3.00 per week per student, which for a 40-week school year is worth about \$40,000 to Swanleigh!

But while the Hostel had been steadily developing in size and importance, what was happening at the branch establishment at Coogee? Had it also grown in numbers? This was not the case, for like the majority of children's homes there were now fewer girls and boys applying to it for institutional care - particularly after the cessation of child migration and the introduction of the new fostering policy by the Child Welfare Department as described earlier. In the middle 1950's the Seaside House had averaged about 20-25 children, but a decade later the numbers were dropping.

It may be recalled that after the death of Matron Logan in 1951 the management of the Branch was taken over by her son and his wife, Mr. Don and Mrs. Ruth Logan. They remained in charge till the end of 1958 when they received an appointment to be Warden and Matron respectively of St. Christopher's High School Hostel at Northam. In their place at Coogee the Board appointed Mr. and Mrs. Guy Brockman. Both couples did splendid work in caring for the children in their charge and in maintaining the happy atmosphere that had been characteristic of the institution from its commencement. One cannot write too enthusiastically of the devotion of all Coogee staff to the welfare of the children in their charge. The Meat Industries Committee, still under the leadership of Mr. Clem Booth, maintained its active role in providing entertainment and amenities for the children. Friday evenings continued to be the "Uncles and Aunties Night", too. What a happy association it was for all of them!

The Branch still attracted other supporters as well. Very special mention must be made of the voluntary efforts of Mr. Bill Wilkinson, who, despite serious physical disabilities gave much assistance to Mr. and Mrs. Brockman, while the members of the Fremantle Brief Club - a local Businessmen's organisation - adopted "Help to Seaside House" as one of its objectives, raising money to provide equipment and improve conditions in the institution. When, on account of falling numbers, there was some uncertainty among members of the Swanleigh Council as to the future of Seaside House, the Brief Club decided that, rather than supply further improvements to the building, it would spend the proceeds of its fund-raising efforts in sending six of the children on a trip to the Eastern States, where they would be guests of local Brief Clubs. It proved a wonderful holiday for the fortunate girls and boys selected.

Early in 1967 the Brockmans informed us that they were considering retirement, but were in no particular hurry to do so. We were sorry to receive notice of their intended resignation, but appreciated their willingness to continue for a time. Then the Main



Roads Department dropped a bombshell! It advised us that in 1969-1970 it would require the land on which the Coogee building stood in order to construct a high-capacity road to Kwinana and Rockingham, and it would be resuming the whole of the front half of our property to a depth of two hundred feet. This would involve the demolition of the present Coogee buildings, so that the Council would now have to resolve a future policy for the Branch. There were three courses open to it, viz. rebuild Seaside House on the unresumed rear portion of our Coogee land; or establish a new branch in some other locality; or discontinue the branch altogether. In the end the falling numbers decided the question. It was already uneconomic to conduct the institution, and there was nothing to suggest that the demand for accommodation would increase if we re-opened elsewhere. In Parkerville there were plenty of vacancies for needy primary and high school children and as for any older Coogee girls and boys without younger brothers or sisters, we would enrol them at Swanleigh. Mr. and Mrs. Brockman kindly agreed to continue at Coogee till the end of 1968, at which time, amid very great regret from all associated with it, Seaside House was closed. Another sad event shortly after this was the sudden death of Mr. Brockman, a man who, with the help and co-operation of his wife, had worked so hard for the welfare of the children enrolled during his management. We greatly regretted that he was not spared to enjoy much more time in happy retirement.

With the establishment of the hostel in 1960 the Christmas camps conducted by the Lumpers' Committee for Swan Homes' children had been discontinued. But we still had a good many necessitous girls and boys in the early Hostel years and we decided to hold an annual holiday camp for them at Coogee. As there was now plenty of room at Seaside House at that time we thought it might also be an idea to offer a holiday to any other children who might like one, charging an accommodation fee for this. I had a good many applications, including a number from the country, and also some recommended to me by the Almoners at Princess Margaret (Children's) Hospital and at Royal Perth Hospital. With help from the Lotteries Commission, the Daily News Christmas Cheer Fund, from the members of our former Lumpers' Committee and the M.I.O.C., we were able to give these girls and boys a very happy time, and at the end of the holiday, return the fees to the Almoners which they had paid to us for the children on their lists.

In subsequent years the number at the holiday camp steadily increased till we had an average enrolment of eighty each week, and my staff found this work very strenuous. Most of the children were quite unfamiliar with institution routine. The girls and boys were up with the sun, and the older ones usually went off to bed at the end of the last television programme each evening. In order to try to give staff some rest during the day, I introduced "Siesta" from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. but with many of the children this was very unpopular and it took policing. "Grandad", said my five year old grandson to me: "I hate siesta!" Miss Monger came down to one camp to give some voluntary help, but at the following Council meeting she reported to the other members: "I loved every minute of it, but it nearly killed me. It was so strenuous". When for the same reason many staff asked to be excused from helping at camp, I tried to get volunteers through the church, but there was surprisingly no response to my appeal. So with great reluctance I had to discontinue the scheme.

When in April 1955 Padbury Farm School closed and its premises were taken over by the Government to commence the Hillston Reform School, the Board also agreed to lease the orchard and the farm to the new establishment, so that there would be facilities immediately available to provide daily outdoor occupation for the lads. For sever-

al years they cultivated the fruit trees and grew fodder crops. But with fairly frequent changes of staff - some of whom were not experienced in husbandry - our farm and orchard deteriorated rather than progressed. Careless ploughing killed numbers of fruit trees, so that members of the Orphanage Board became increasingly dissatisfied as they watched the situation continue to degenerate. When after a time there was still no sign of improvement Mr. McCall was advised that at the the end of the following year the lease would not be renewed.

So in due course the farm reverted to Swanleigh and no time was lost in commencing a rehabilitation programme. Replacements for dead fruit trees were planted, drainage and irrigation were improved, the dam was enlarged to provide additional water for the summer season, and pruning, fertilising and cultivation were carried out by an experienced orchardist. The result was soon apparent in the marked improvement in the appearance (and later in the production) of the trees. At the same time more clearing, fencing and cropping were undertaken and beef cattle-raising was introduced. Padbury Farm became a place of which we again felt proud. As its fruit crop steadily increased this also began to yield some financial return in addition to the many boxes of apples and pears sent to the Hostel.

Two men were responsible for this progress. One had grown up in the orchard business, so that he was very practical in all aspects of fruit production. He was Mr. Frank Mauger - a man both energetic and ambitious to make a success of the project. We were most fortunate to be able to secure his services at that time. He was ably supported in this work by Swanleigh's Mr. Cope, who was equally anxious to see a flourishing farm property at Padbury's.

The Council was delighted with the improvement it now saw on every hand. It enthusiastically adopted my suggestion that twice a year - in autumn and in the spring - it hold its monthly meeting at Stoneville, following a picnic afternoon tea under shady gums near the banks of the dam. In the autumn visit Mr. Mauger gave each of the members an empty box and suggested he or she pick themselves a case of apples - a task into which they entered with great zest. At the spring meeting there was no fruit, but at that time the dam extended back from the retaining wall for about 300 metres and in appearance resembled a lake, with water rushing down the spillway at the side of the wall - a beautiful scene. These outings were greatly enjoyed and the visits enabled members to see what was being done to develop the farm, and to observe the progress made.

At this time we still owned about 1,700 acres at Stoneville, of which 300 acres had been leased to Parkerville at a peppercorn rental to assist that institution with its farming expansion. We had about 140 acres under established pasture, orchard, or poison-free bush grazing, while the remainder - about 1,200 acres - was still virgin and unfenced. Now it was felt that the time was ripe for us to introduce a development programme for this property. There is a good deal of public criticism levelled against non-rateable owners who merely hold on to unimproved land, but if we could show that we were steadily bringing the property into more and more production there could be little cause for complaint. For this project we made application to the Lotteries Commission and the H.V. McKay Trust for financial assistance and each responded generously. The latter gave us \$1,000 towards the cost of a diesel tractor while the Commission made a grant of \$2,000 on a \$1 for \$1 basis to help meet the expense of clearing and farm establishment.

By the late sixties the farms at Parkerville and Stoneville were valuable assets to their respective institutions. With my approaching retirement, and also that of Mr. Wales, I felt that it might be of advantage to both establishments if their farms were worked in conjunction by a common manager. We had plenty of excellent land at Stoneville some of which was cleared and fenced, and there was an orchard in full bearing, while Parkerville also had some farming land and a very good herd of cattle. Mr. Hyde had just completed a pleasing residence for the farm manager at Parkerville, situated not too far from the Stoneville boundary, which would be an advantage if the scheme were adopted. The more I thought about it the more I liked it. I knew from my own experience that my successor would be fully occupied with the management of the Hostel, and it was unlikely that a man competent both in child care and in farming would be found for Parkerville. Each of the farms needed experienced management, but given some staff assistance, the development of the two properties would not be too much for a capable man. I mentioned this to the Archbishop who seemed to think the idea a good one, so that I was not surprised when I learnt soon after I left Swanleigh that a new development known as "P. and S. Farms" - Parkerville and Swanleigh Farms - had been created, which managed this department of both establishments. I hope it is functioning for their mutual financial benefit.

In this book many references have been made to members of Council and to staff, who, in their time rendered special service to the establishment. In these later years there were also men and women whose interest and effort contributed greatly to its progress and whose co-operation and advice was particularly helpful to me. Such a man was Mr. Don Ferguson, M.B.E., who was Chairman of the Council from the inception of the Hostel in 1960 till 1972. He had become a member of the Orphanage Board as far back as 1925, i.e. early in Mr. Birch's time, and had remained on it till 1933, when the pressure of his growing business made it too difficult for him to attend meetings. In 1951 he was persuaded to rejoin the Board, and he retained membership of the governing body from that date, being made a Life Member in 1972. He died in 1982. His was a long association, but throughout had been one of quality and service. He was born on the adjoining property ("Houghton"), and as a boy he attended the first Middle Swan School. To do this he had to pass the Orphanage twice every school day and, as he once said: "I saw most of the things that went on there". Later he continued to pass it daily as he rode his horse to Guildford Grammar School. After leaving there he worked with his father as a vigneron and wine producer; became a leading cricketer in the district; joined the A.I.F. in World War I and saw active service overseas; married Mary Burton, daughter of a former Orphanage Manager, and eventually managed the family's wine-merchant business. He was always well-respected and highly popular in the Swan District, where after serving for years as a member of the Swan Road Board, he became the Shire President in its most expansive years, eventually receiving the honour of becoming its first "Freeman of the Shire".

Mr. and Mrs Ferguson were regular in their attendance at all important Swanleigh functions and at St. Mary's Church. In our thirty years on the Swan there was seldom a Sunday at which they were not present at worship. In Swanleigh Council meetings he gave the closest attention to matters under discussion, especially those involving expenditure or questions of major policy. He showed great leadership at the time of commencement of the Hostel, for, having made up his mind that this was the right solution to the problem of the Swan Homes' falling numbers, he never swerved from that conviction.

In 1962 Mrs. R.D. Langley retired from the Council after a membership lasting twenty-five years. She had already been a member of the Orphanage Board for five years before I arrived at Swan, and together with two other members - Miss Gwen Hansen and Mrs. Bremner - had been particularly active in efforts to raise money to provide amenities for the children and improvements in the staff's living conditions both at Swan and at Adelaide Terrace. To Mary and me she was always most kind, and we felt very sorry when she decided to resign because of her failing health.

Later members of the Council with years of active association with our establishment were Mr. and Mrs. Reg. Mackintosh, Mr. and Mrs. Norman McLeod, Mr. "Dick" Chamberlain, Mr. Herbert Hamersley and Canon Jack Watts. Mr. Mackintosh was a retired bank manager who always gave close scrutiny to my financial proposals. Together with Don Ferguson he was very conservative in his attitude towards the spending of any money. But it is not a bad thing to have such a man on the Council, for it ensures that the costs involved in suggested projects and changes of policy are critically examined. Mrs. Florence Mackintosh (now Mrs. Wade) had been made a Life Member of the Council as a tribute to her long membership of it and in recognition of her work on its Committees over the years. Recently Council set up the Mackintosh Memorial Trust Fund for the purchase of books of excellence for the library, as a tribute to the work of this couple for Swanleigh.

Mr. McLeod needs no introduction to readers. I was eager for him to join the Council, not only for his past interest and support, but because in debate he was an astute and clear thinker, with a wide experience of students and their parents. He was very well known in educational circles and was highly respected throughout the whole of Midland and its environs. Mrs McLeod knew a good deal about Swanleighans, too, - especially the girls - from having taught many of them at Governor Stirling, and she was very interested in the development of the establishment. Once she was elected to the Council we lost no time in appointing her to the Finance Committee where she assisted Mrs. Sundercombe in thoroughly checking the details of our expenditure each month. It was a tedious business for them but a most valuable one for the Council, for this, together with regular audits, ensured that we should never again be faced with an unsatisfactory situation in our accounting such as had occurred in our year of tragedy (1951). Right from that time I had asked every Finance Committee to insist that there be no "Accounts Rendered" on the monthly statement of any firm which traded with us. If any did appear I wanted it investigated to find out why our office had not paid it earlier. "The bills have to be paid. Clean up as you go", was my instruction to staff.

Both Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Hamersley were experienced farmers, especially in stock-raising. The former joined us when Mr. Padbury resigned, while the latter became a member on the death of Mr. Chamberlain. Between our farming operations at Swan and at Stoneville there was still a good deal of husbandry being practised which required competent direction, so that I was very glad to have the advice of these practical men. Especially was this the case after Mr. Cope's retirement. He had given almost thirty years' service to the establishment, latterly combining housemaster duties with farm and garden management. He had built up a splendid herd of dairy cattle and introduced modern dairying methods. Several times his pigs fetched top price in the Midland market and he had done much to improve pasture and fodder-cropping and irrigation. He was also very interested in poultry raising so that there were always chickens and bantams scratching in the region of the hayshed. I recall that at one time the birds

appeared to have gone on strike - no eggs anywhere! This puzzled Mr. Cope till one day he discovered the explanation. Two of the farm men were driving our cart along the road when suddenly the horse took fright and bolted. Then the cart struck a boulder and overturned, tossing out the workmen. Fortunately neither was seriously hurt, but when help arrived, they were found to be covered with scrambled egg which had oozed through their shirts.

Mrs. Cope died in 1965 after a short illness and Mr. Cope decided to retire. The loss of these two valued members of staff within a short time was a serious one for us. Mrs. Cope had rendered great service for twenty years, having first been matron of the older girls; then, after her marriage, house-mother to the little girls in Hudleston. In her last years she had been the housemistress of the older boys and latterly of the first year Hostel lads. We were saddened to think that after such a splendid record of service she was not spared to enjoy a happy retirement with her husband - something to which they had both looked forward. With the departure of Mr. Cope I was particularly grateful to have had Mr. Hamersley to give me the benefit of his farming experience.

Canon Jack Watts had been chaplain both of Parkerville and of Padbury Farm School. When he then moved to an inner suburban parish he was elected to the Orphanage Board of management, where he continued that interest in the welfare of Swan children and the progress of the Homes which had begun long before my arrival. Elsewhere I have spoken of his great co-operation in conducting socials at Swan and "Padbury's" with members of his own Youth Fellowship. He, too, became a strong supporter of the Hostel project, actually moving the resolution that brought it into existence. About 1963 he had a severe heart attack, and on his doctor's advice he resigned from the Council though he never lost interest in the establishment. Synod later elected the Revd. Michael Keeling as its clerical representative. He was most enthusiastic for the introduction of improvements to the living conditions of the boys and the staff, being especially interested in the Waylen-Brown Project. The Centenary Pageant was his idea, and in it he played the part of Canon Dick Hamilton. Prior to his arrival in Australia he had been a schoolmaster in England, and I understand that since my retirement he has returned to the United Kingdom to resume a teaching career.

In 1968 the Council decided that it would be a good idea if one of our country parents could be made a member. It was felt that such a person would be able to give the other Councillors some insight into the attitude of people living in the country towards the Hostel conditions and its policy. Mr. Ron Elphick's name was suggested as one whose experience was particularly suited to such an appointment. Four of his children had been in residence at Swanleigh so that he already knew a good deal about it from listening to them and visiting them while they were boarding. He was a Synodsmen from the parish of Moora and a prominent member of the Country Party - later to become its General Secretary. All his life he had farmed so that he was well informed about rural conditions. He also had what was perhaps a special qualification for membership in that the first suggestion of the possible admission of country children to the establishment came from him (see page 162). So when the next vacancy on the Council arose Mr. Elphick was appointed. He has always been a keen supporter of progressive proposals, and recently the Council has named its new sports pavillion after him.

Reference has already been made to the fine contribution made to the Hostel in its earliest years by its first Deputy-Director, Mr. Allan Brown. His successor, Mr. Peter Morton, was very efficient but was not with us for long before Church Office asked

me to release him to become Warden at St. Michael's Hostel, Merredin. Though not anxious to lose such a capable assistant, I felt I could not stand in the way of his promotion, for most men prefer to be captain of their own ship. So he went to his new appointment where, I am informed, he did very good work.

In my remaining years at Swanleigh there followed two other Deputy Directors each of whom rendered valuable service. Each showed considerable administrative ability, great enthusiasm for the establishment, possessed attractive personalities and had a well-developed sense of pastoral care. To me they were loyal and co-operative, and they also earned the respect of the students, the parents and their fellow-members of staff. The first was the Revd. Laurie McIntyre, who had already been appointed Rector of Swan and Chaplain of Swanleigh. Prior to his ordination he had been a teacher in New South Wales but had resigned to become an Organiser for the Scripture Union, first in the Eastern States and latterly in Western Australia. He had then entered Wollaston Theological College and after ordination had come to Swan as parish priest. It appeared to me that he had a combination of talents that made him particularly suitable for an administrative post in an establishment such as ours, and since he had favourably impressed the members of Council, they agreed to my suggestion that he be invited to become Deputy as well as Chaplain - an offer he accepted. At the same time it was decided that he also continue as Rector of the Parish - a combination of duties which must seem an impossible task till it is remembered that at that time Swan Parish was very small numerically and could not afford a full-time Rector. It was a case of sharing a clergyman with Swanleigh (with the Hostel meeting most of the cost) or becoming an outer area of the Midland Parish and so losing its identity as a parish - one which it had held from colonial times. Mr McIntyre agreed to maintain the regular services in the Swan Parish and to give instruction in its schools but would have no time available for parochial visiting other than at the local hospital. Parishioners accepted the arrangement without enthusiasm, but the Rector's likable personality, his excellent preaching and inspirational services all helped in a somewhat strained relationship between Hostel and Parish. But this situation did not last for very long. Mr. McIntyre's father died and the Rector felt that he ought to return to New South Wales so as to be not too distant from his elderly widowed mother. He was replaced by the Assistant Diocesan Secretary, Mr. Noel Massey, a man with good clerical experience, but none in the management of students living in a boarding situation. However he quickly showed that he had a real aptitude for institutional care, taking a keen interest in all Hostel activities and in maintaining excellent rapport with students, staff and parents. His sense of humour, his business acumen, his musical ability, his love of sport and, most important, his pastoral care of students, especially when they were sick, were all attributes contributing to his success as our Deputy. He has since resigned to become Warden of Agricola College, Kalgoorlie - a residential establishment founded to provide accommodation for students attending the School of Mines. Readers may have noticed that Swanleigh seemed to have been something of a nursery for the training of Hostel managers, for from its ranks came Don and Ruth Logan, Peter Morton and Noel Massey. Later two other members of Swanleigh staff received appointments in charge of country hostels. Mr. Kim Millstead became Warden of Narrogin High School Hostel, and Mr. Vic. Davis of St. Michael's Hostel at Merredin.\*

It remains for me to mention a small group of staff to whom I feel a special tribute should be included. When we opened the Hostel it was decided that the Perth Office

\* *Mr. Davis tragically perished in a bus accident in 1982.*

was no longer required. Mr. Robertson, its manager, had grown old in our service and was now due to retire, while his assistant, Miss Venetia Latimer, knew that because of her failing eyesight she must also give up work. So these two resigned their posts and the office was closed. I have already written of the great contribution to the work of the orphanages and the Swan Homes made by the former (see page 55). Miss Latimer's interests lay between Parkerville and Swan, and she had done a great deal for both institutions in her relations with the parents of private case children and in staff recruitment and the organisation of fund-raising. Hers had not been such a long association with our Homes as some, but it had been a happy and successful one, characterised by her quiet efficiency and co-operation.

A lady who was with us for many years was Miss Beatrice Fletcher. When first appointed to Swan early in my management it was to join the girls' staff. Then came our decision to open upper Brown House as a semi-cottage for younger primary boys - an experiment she successfully pioneered. In 1946 she accompanied Mrs. Logan to Coogee. Having seen that branch through its most difficult years she accepted Mr. Nugent's suggestion that she transfer to Padbury Farm School as Matron, a position she retained until our decision to close it on account of falling numbers. Then for a time she became our country representative, but when Hillston opened she was invited by the Committee to become the first Matron. In accepting this post she considered herself as still being a member of Swan Homes' staff, even though paid by the Child Welfare Department. Miss Fletcher remained at Hillston after its official connection with our organisation ended, but when she had completed ten years' service, she resigned to return to Cornwell House as housemistress after the death of Mrs. Cope. I felt, however, that in its rather isolated situation at Swan, Cornwell needed a married couple, with a man in charge. Accordingly I appointed Mr. and Mrs. Bill Brown to take over the responsibility of the First Year boys and I transferred Miss Fletcher to the dual position of Matron of Waylen with the general supervision of the whole of the domestic side of the hostel. It was while carrying out part of these duties that she had an accidental fall in which she permanently injured her hip. This in addition to a lifelong leg disability made it impossible for her to resume employment in our widely-scattered establishment. Hers had been a wonderful record of capable conscientious service, much of which had been carried out under strenuous and often rather primitive living conditions. She is still an active person, interesting herself in helping others and not worrying overmuch about her own mobility problems. In Western Australia there must be few people who had anything approaching her experience of life in residential institutions, for prior to her first joining our staff she had already been employed both at Parkerville and in the Methodist Boys' Home at Werribee.\*

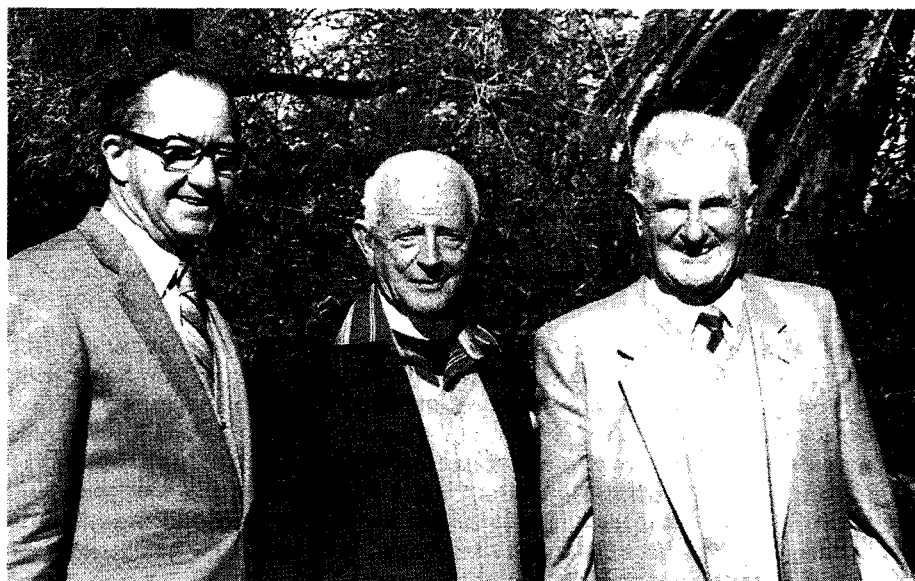
For over twenty years Swan had the much-appreciated services of an honorary member of staff. He was Mr. Bill Lessells, a former inspector of the Bank of New South Wales (now "Westpac"). Bored with inactive retirement, he offered his services in a voluntary capacity to St. Christopher's Hostel at Northam as a handyman and was accepted. A few years later he decided to move nearer to Perth and he came to us, working for his meals and a room. Quiet and unassuming, always pleasant and courteous, liked and respected by all, he made himself available for all manner of building and furniture maintenance jobs that were within his strength. For instance the number of chairs he mended in his time must have run to thousands! Time on the job meant nothing

\* *Miss Fletcher died in 1983.*

to him. He also loved to repair watches and clocks - he had almost a specialist's skill with these - while his ingenuity in making stage properties for our concerts and plays was quite remarkable. Time and time again I would say to Mary: "Whatever would we do without Bill!" He was a fine old man.

And now I bring my list to an end with the name of Miss Jean Gardiner, who succeeded Mrs. Brown as my secretary. Like her predecessor she was devoted to the progress of the establishment, and very proficient and most painstaking in every detail of her office management. She entered enthusiastically into all phases of Hostel life - always happy to assist in any way to make these a success. We were more than fortunate in having such a dependable, discreet, co-operative person in charge of our office. She was a particularly capable typist, but even the best of us sometimes presses the wrong key. One day she was typing a report for me, in the course of which I had referred to "the Archbishop, Bishops and other members of the Anglican hierarchy". But Miss Gardiner your slip was showing! When Jean handed the typed copy back for my signature I was almost hilarious when I read about "the Archbishop, Bishops and other members of the Anglican hierarchy!"\*

*\* Miss Gardiner died in 1983.*



*Mr Ron Elphick, Canon Jack Watts and Mr. Roy Peterkin, the Co-founders of Swanleigh.*



## 5. The Swanleigh Student

Archbishop Sambell once remarked to me: "I think of Swanleigh not just as a place where students board while they attend High School, but as an establishment devoted to their education". I think he had in mind for it a similar ideal to that expressed by the English Headmaster, E.H. Partridge, when he wrote:\* "The function of the boarding school is the education of the *whole* boy"; or perhaps what the philosopher, Herbert Spencer, meant when he defined "Education" as a preparation for *complete* living. When we speak conversationally of education we usually think of it as the acquisition of general knowledge and specific abilities considered desirable in order to fit a person - child or adult - for normal living in his own community. In his book "Freedom in Education" Partridge maintained that, essential as facts and skills are for each of us in our daily lives, "it is independence rather than knowledge which is the distinguishing characteristic of an educated man. Such a man has acquired the ability to form his own judgments on the facts as he sees them". There is the same idea in Kipling's poem "If". In this the poet tells the boy of some difficult situations with which he may one day be challenged. At that time his qualification for manhood will be his independent response to these in action or attitude. I believe that the boarding school and the hostel give girls and boys a much better training to face up to such experiences than does the day school, for it conditions them better for independence, preparing them for the day when it will be character rather than knowledge that will count.

How does it do this? From the time our boarders say "Goodbye" to their parents they are treated as *responsible* persons. Says one of our pierrot songs:

"This is Swanleigh, Mary Green,  
You keep your cubey (cubicle) nice and clean,  
You've had mother to sweep your floor  
But she won't help you out any more."

That's it. From that time onwards they have largely to depend on *themselves*. Straight away they find that there is a set programme of routine, which they must observe (and be on time in doing so). Then they must themselves organise their study, their leisure, their spending, their associations with others, their participation in their own selected Hostel activities. In making decisions in such matters they learn how these work out and the consequences for themselves. In a word, they begin standing on their own feet. Certainly there will be people to counsel them - companions, Hostel staff, and sometimes school teachers. But in the last count it is their own judgement that they will have to make in many matters, and stand by their own actions and re-actions. Later as they develop in maturity there will be required of them some responsibility for others as well as for themselves. Swanleigh is a microcosm - a little world of people - with some exercising authority while others are rank and file members. Some of those with whom the student must rub shoulders he will like. With a few he may make a life-long

\* "Freedom in Education", E.H. Partridge (Faber and Faber 1943).

friendship. Some he will heartily dislike, but as of necessity he will often be in contact with them he must learn to get along with them. He finds that all have rights; that rules, irksome at times, are necessary and must be obeyed, for without them there would be chaos and no one would have security and happiness. Nowhere could he learn these things so readily or forcibly as by community living. As a preparation for life it is an invaluable experience - and preparation for life is what the business of education is all about.

Doubtless it will be affirmed that these things can be learned just as well at home. But there is doubt about this because of the normal bond of human love that exists between parent and child. This so often results in the former making excuses for the latter, and perhaps in doing things for him that he is quite capable of doing for himself. What children really need is the opportunity of confronting various problems when they are young and learning to cope with these. Provided the difficulty is within their child's capability such intervention tends to *prevent* such child from developing independence.

The truth is that most parents themselves are bewildered in this world of permissiveness in morals; of peculiar dress and unkempt appearance which became so prevalent with the advent of the Beatles and "hippydom" and "Countdown", and has gone on from there; of pornography in reading matter; of obscenity, nudity and violence in so much modern drama, cinema and television; of unbelief and mockery in religion; of crudeness and ugliness in art. We live in a materialistic world in which so many believe that success is to be measured in terms of money, and that happiness is to be found in possessiveness. And because parents are bewildered and are so desperately anxious to retain the love and affection of their children, they so often don't know how to advise them in matters of conduct, dress, morals, attitude and choice of companions. They fear that if they cross them they will lose them. So all too often they don't say - "NO!" Some give up the struggle without much effort. They go off to the Country Club where possibly they may derive some consolation from listening to other parents discussing all the trouble they are having with their adolescent children.

There is a provocative set of "Rules for Parents" in a booklet published by the Police Department of Houston, Texas, in the United States. Here are a few of them:

1. Begin in infancy to give your child everything he wants. In this way he will grow up to believe the world owes him a living.
2. In childhood and youth never give him any spiritual training. Wait till he is 21 and then let him decide for himself. (But do you wait till he is 21 before you train him to brush his teeth? Do you let him decide whether he needs to go to school?)
3. Avoid the use of the word "wrong". It may develop a guilt complex. This will condition him to believe later, when he is arrested for stealing a car, that Society is against him and he is being persecuted.
4. Pick up everything he leaves lying around - books, shoes, clothes. Do everything for him so that he will be experienced in throwing all the responsibility on others.
5. Take his part against neighbours, teachers, policemen (and Hostel staff). They're all prejudiced against your child.

There were some others but they might have finished up with this one: If he gets into real trouble wring your hands and say: "Where did we go wrong? WE DID EVERYTHING WE POSSIBLY COULD FOR HIM".

Perhaps had they listened less to their child's wallowing in self-pity: "He hates me", but rather had been like the parent of one of our girls who, when she read her daughter's term report (these were sent home at the end of each term) said to her: "I see you've got yourself into Mr. Peterkin's bad books. Well, when you go back you just get yourself out of them and bring us home a better report next term". By the time that girl reached her final year she was a happy, popular, academically successful and mature young lady.

Sometimes it is objected - indeed it often is - that the child who boards in a residential institution misses the invaluable influences of the home. These, it is claimed, are replaced by an artificial way of life, whereby mutual confidence and love between parents and children may be lost. If that were indeed the case it would be serious. But from the experience of having my own children spend some part of their school years as boarders in college and having had hundreds of girls and boys in a residence at Swanleigh, I think there is not a great deal in this objection. In the first place a child normally spends his infancy and primary years - the formative years we are told - at home. Even when he goes to Hostel or boarding school he will be at home for about a quarter of every year - which is long enough for a good home influence to have effect. In the second I firmly believe that the bond between parent and child is actually strengthened by the periodic separations that occur when a child boards away. Such girls and boys develop *GREATER* love of home and parents than does a child who lives at home all the time. I know that this will be doubted or disbelieved, but, though it may sound trite, my experience has been that there is much truth in the saying that "absence makes the heart grow fonder". The boarders count the days to the one on which the holidays commence and they will be home with Mum and Dad and the rest, whereas very often the day-student is inclined to take both the home and his parents for granted. I find it difficult to believe that the years spent in a hostel do anything to loosen the bonds of genuine family affection. I think the boot is very much on the other foot.

But what of the boarders who will be left to their own resources for much of the year? Adolescence has always been a time of uncertainty, of insecurity, of instability. Deepdown the girls and boys of that age seek for an anchor in a world in which they know instinctively that all is not well. "That is when they need their parents most", the critics of boarding would probably reply. But the fact is that many - perhaps most - adolescents do not find it easy to discuss with parents the changes in physical and mental development that normally occur at that time. Some have a natural reticence to do so, while sometimes friction is aroused by children at that time of life expressing independence and opposition to parental standards and ideas. Herein lies the strength of the good boarding establishment. It stands for ideals that have been tested by time and never will be out-dated. It demands worthy standards in all that it regards as the essentials. In lesser things it is usually prepared to make some concessions to current tastes, but does not do so very readily or without a good deal of consideration, refusing to believe that just because a thing is popular or new it is necessarily the best for youth. It maintains that nothing worthwhile is achieved without effort and self-sacrifice; that happiness and satisfaction are to be found in giving rather than getting; that what our consciences tell us is wrong can never be right. So it provides some stability to students in an unstable world. Its programme, combining boarding routine with study and activities, is planned to help the girl and boy through the difficult years of adolescence towards maturity and independence. It is in this wider sense that Swanleigh claimed to be an "educational" establishment.

An example of the student's growth in independence may be seen in their attitude to dancing at our socials. Traditionally we had a programme of "Old-Time" dances - Canadian Barn Dance, Pride of Erin, Maxina, Valeta, Boston Two-step, etc. - with one or two Fox Trots and Quick-steps included. But with the arrival of the Hostel students they wanted the "moderns" such as the Stomp, the Jive and the like - so called "dances" which appeared to me to be rather like physical jerks than the real thing. However when approached by the student committee conducting the socials with a request that moderns be included in the programme, I agreed that they should be tried. At first these were very popular and the innovation was hailed as a great success. But after a time their popularity waned, until the time came when few got up when these dances were announced. At school socials where there were no alternatives they joined in, but at Swanleigh they preferred to sit out till the next "old timer" when there was the familiar rush to get a partner. The committee continued to include a couple of moderns on the programme, but these never regained their initial popularity. I think that students as they matured found it much more pleasurable to do steps that provided variety and some skill, and that to hold your partner in your arms rather than to jog up and down a few feet apart with an assumed half-witted expression on your face was, in their opinion, a poor substitute for the dancing to which they had now grown accustomed.

The supervision of a large number of adolescent boarders entails some controls. There must be certain restrictions on personal freedom imposed, which will not be popular. They will hear from their non-resident friends at school how much greener the grass is elsewhere, and what good times they have compared with "you poor kids at Swanleigh". But the fact is that these associates didn't look happier or more contented than the Hostel students, nor, for all their alleged independence, did they display more leadership and so take precedence over Swanleighans in school activities. Rather it was the other way round. The schools - especially Hampton - found many of their leaders and outstanding pupils from among these same "repressed" students. Even at Governor Stirling where our girls and boys were numerically a minor group there was a good deal of regret among the staff when it became known that the Education Department had decided to send them to another school.

Of course the imposition of rules was resented by Swanleighans. When any sort of restriction was announced there was always a moan. Staff would tell me that after any such pronouncement at the end of a meal in the dining-hall the girls would return to their houses, sit on the steps and look at each other in disgust, muttering, like the man from Kansas City in "Oklahoma": "What next!" I would sometimes say to them: "You grumble about the rules and the supervision and the controls here, but when you leave Swanleigh those things will soon be forgotten. Instead you'll remember the friends you made, the things you enjoyed, the outings, the sport, the funny incidents, the successes you achieved. All the unpleasant experiences will fade". On numbers of occasions ex-students reminded me of this: "When you told us that we didn't believe you", they said, "but it was true. We'd hardly left Swanleigh when the unhappy events began to be forgotten. In fact it was not long before there didn't seem to be anything wrong with the place." Good boarding schools and Hostels are hard - not harsh - taskmasters. They are like rusks in teething - rough at first but help a lot in the long run. Among mature adults who boarded at school or in a university college I have found few who regard that experience as other than having been a good one.

As education is achieved by doing rather than by telling the Hostel's policy was to provide many opportunities for student participation in activities, most of which involved co-operation with others as well as requiring personal effort. The one which exerted the greatest influence was sport. A wide variety of games was arranged to cater for the varying ages and grades of ability of the students. In earlier times almost every older boy had to be recruited to make up a team to play other institutions or visiting clubs. Now, with so many wanting inclusion, we were able to have several teams in most sports - one for seniors, one for seconds and one or more for younger girls or boys. While in one part of the playing fields there might be a football or cricket match in progress, according to season, in another area there could be hockey or softball or net ball. The tennis courts, with their all-weather surface, were in use in every term. Annual athletic and swimming carnivals were important occasions at which almost every student competed in at least one event. Sport was also an important part of the High School curriculum, and it would be a rare occasion indeed if there were no Swanleighans in the school team in any particular sport. When Governor Stirling won the State Cross-Country Schoolboy Championship in 1968 three of its four runners were from the Hostel. What a race that was! In the early stages Stirling held the lead but then lost it to Hale. When Stirling's last runner, our Colin Reid, took the baton Hale was well out in front and appeared to have the race won. But Reid gradually overhauled his opponent and about a hundred metres from the finishing line he drew level with him. For the remainder of the race the two boys kept pace with each other, both lads straining every muscle to draw ahead of his rival. Ten metres to go and they were still neck and neck. Then by a superb effort Reid managed to force himself ahead to win by a touch. It was a proud moment for the team. Two other sporting achievements are worthy of mention. One was Bevin Crouch's award of "Fairest and Best" in the Swan Districts' Junior Football Association in 1970. The other was Wendy Evans' success in winning our "All-Rounder" Cup - our blue-riband award for sport in the Hostel - for three years in succession. During her time at Swanleigh Wendy was also selected in the State Schoolgirls' hockey team for four years, and while there she represented Governor Stirling in inter-school hockey, swimming, tennis, softball and athletics.

In the Hostel years we built up a healthy sporting rivalry with the boys and girls in the Northam Hostels and with the girls of St. Gertrude's at New Norcia. These matches provided happy picnic outings and keen annual competition for senior and junior teams from the respective establishments. In most years victories and defeats were shared, but our last year at Swanleigh was an "annus mirabilis" for Swanleigh sport, for we had an unbeaten record against our traditional rivals; our footballers were undefeated champions in the Hills Districts' competition; in our Annual Athletic Carnival twenty-one records were broken, while in the Swimming Carnival - the first in our own pool - there were eight records. Hampton's A and B tennis teams were all Swanleighans, with the latter just missing a win for the Mursell Shield by four games in a count back. That year was the first for some time in which we fielded cricket teams in outside competition because of the long Christmas vacation. But in 1971 we decided to do so, recognizing that all matches scheduled to be played during the holiday period would have to be forfeited. Despite this our Under 15 XI won their grade while the First XI, undefeated in every match they played in the preliminary games, suffered a lapse of form in the final and were runners-up in the competition. Over-all the year's sporting record was a very good one.

The improved standard of sport and the success achieved in the Hostel years was due to two factors. The first was that the steep increase in numbers made for keen rivalry among the students for selection in teams, with consequent greater enthusiasm and effort in training. The second was the appointment of Mrs. Nell Graysmark as sports-mistress and later of Mr. Kim Millsteed as sportsmaster. Both were keenly interested in sport, experienced in coaching and were good organisers. They had the true sporting attitude of fair play, respect for the umpire's decision and taking defeat in good spirit, and they strove to inculcate these ideals in their teams. Mrs. Graysmark had been well-known in women's hockey circles before she came to us and she also had a good knowledge of other sports. Mr. Millsteed had spent his school years as a boarder at Guildford Grammar where he had been a prominent performer in games. His attitude in all things was strongly influenced by the public school tradition, which pleased me greatly, so that later I was delighted to hear of his appointment as Deputy-Director of Swanleigh. \*His wife, Yvonne, a trained nurse, was in charge of the "Mary Peterkin Sick Bay" for girls. We feel that the appointment of this couple to the Swanleigh staff was one of our real success stories of the Hostel years.

Next to sport I would include Scouting and Guiding among our more important activities, for these provided a Saturday afternoon programme for a good many students, some of whom had little interest in games. Over the years the scouts participated in an interesting variety of projects, one of the most ambitious being the conversion of our old van into a mobile tuckshop. In addition to its providing a most popular amenity for all students, it proved a highly successful means of raising money for the troop. Out of the profits the members purchased a secondhand bus with which they conducted numbers of tours, even as far away as the Eastern States. They added to their other watercraft by building a catamaran, christened by Mary the "Victor Davis", and they also constructed their own rafts and regularly participated in the "Scout's Swantiki". They won the district competition for the erection of a substantial tower, using only poles and ropes - one strong enough to hold a patrol at a good height, which was a creditable effort. On the occasion of the visit to Western Australia of Sir Charles McLean, the Chief Scout of the British Commonwealth, the troop won the land and surf relay race open to all scouts, and was congratulated by him. One of their most exciting experiences was a canoeing expedition down the Blackwood River, while camps in the nearby Darling Ranges were regular features of their programme. Mr. Vic. Davis who became Scoutmaster after Commander Anderson left Western Australia (see page 122) was the very able and enthusiastic driving force behind the scouting enterprise, so that it was not surprising that he was awarded the Long and Meritorious Service Medal (with Bar) for scouting while he was at Swanleigh. \*The guiding programme under the direction of Mrs. Sparks, while not as spectacular in achievement, nevertheless attracted a fair number of girls each year, and the Company was held in good repute by State Officials of the movement. Especially commendable was the number of Queen's Guides it produced. In fact hardly a year went by when there was not at least one Swanleighan among those receiving this award at Government House.

The third form of voluntary activity which gave many students an opportunity for self-expression was stage-work. I well recall Miss Elizabeth Hamilton's coming to speak to me at the conclusion of the 1959 concert. Instead of the usual polite expressions of how much she had enjoyed our entertainment she said: "I feel very sad tonight".

\* *Mr. Millsteed and Mrs. Graysmark died in 1985 and 1986 respectively.*

\* *See also footnote page 213.*

"Good gracious", I replied, "were the items as bad as that?" "No", she said, "it was the usual lovely programme, but now that we're to become a Hostel I suppose this will be the last concert". "Certainly not", I told her. "I've no intention of discontinuing them". Nor did we do so. In fact stage work in dancing, drama, choir, gymnastics and revue continued to be one of the most successful of all Swanleigh activities. A pattern of yearly programme was evolved in which we presented two one-act plays and a pierrot revue at the end of each first and second term, a full length drama about the middle of the year, and an annual concert during the third term, which included pierrots, a gymnastic display, a variety of dancing numbers, some songs by the Swanleigh choir, a one-act play by the members of the Drama Club, a pianoforte solo or a duet by outstanding music pupils, and a burlesque by the senior boys. Throughout the years we maintained the tradition that every Swanleighian appeared on the stage at some point on the programme, and a high standard of performance was demanded. I never forgot Mr. McLeod's saying to me when Governor Stirling was producing "Oliver" for its first presentation in Australia (there were several Swanleighians in the cast): "If people say 'Not too bad for kids' I'll know it was a failure". That became my yardstick for Swanleigh productions. It was always our objective to try to make the show as professional as we could. Through the courtesy of successive headmasters the annual concerts were presented in Governor Stirling Hall which was well-equipped for stage, property-storage and dressing-room accommodation. It was one of the largest halls in the State and was always packed on our concert nights.

In our stage work I must record my sincerest thanks to Mrs. Fiorella Smith for her work with the pierrots and the dancing. Without her professional experience and enthusiastic effort we could never have achieved anything like the same standard of performance. The costuming in stage work was in the capable hands of Mrs. Kath Sanders,\* and most attractive the girls and boys always looked in their numbers. The wardrobe the establishment built up over the concert years (1946-1971) first by Miss Ahearn and then by Mrs. Sanders would be worth thousands of dollars at today's prices, for there was nothing shoddy about the costumes. Good materials and competent dressmaking went into them. The stage sets were built by Vic Davis who was also our stage manager. At our performances he and a team of willing boys toiled at the strenuous job of getting the properties quickly on and off the stage between items to give us the almost non-stop show we tried to present.

A special feature of the term and annual concerts was the decor. This was painted by groups of volunteer girls, sometimes assisted by a few gifted boys. Each year we had some students with a real flair for this form of art, and their efforts added greatly to the attractiveness of the presentations. In earlier years we had held annual art displays with the Elizabeth Hamilton Art Prize being awarded to the outstanding exhibit, selected by Mr. Allon Cook, a prominent West Australian artist. Entries, however, were from the art work done at school. I felt that I could not describe this as a "Swanleighian" activity. So the prize in later years was awarded to the student whose decor was considered the best for the year.

Another activity which afforded some of the students opportunities in a different medium was by writing for Swanleighian publications. The initial effort was a news-sheet, composed and handprinted each week by Stephen Johnson. On the night before its "publication" I would sometimes find him working till midnight to finish it. Then he would pin it up on the notice-board for the boys to read. For the next few days one could

\* Mrs. Sanders died in 1986.

be sure that in out-of-school hours there would be numbers gathered round it enjoying his articles and news items. It really was a very commendable and maintained effort - interesting and often quite witty - revealing an early ability in journalism that was eventually to take him from the reporting staff of the "West Australian" to become a senior editor of the Australian edition of the "Readers' Digest". Johnson's effort was later followed by the publication of a weekly paper written by students but typed and duplicated by the office staff, so that everyone might receive a copy. Out of this grew the Hostel Annual - "The Swanleighan" - which included a wide variety of articles from many student contributors. There were also numerous photographs and a section for original prose and poetry.

An area in which students participated to a pleasing extent was in assisting with parts of the church service - especially as servers. Photos. in the "Swanleighan" reveal that in two consecutive years there were 28 and 29 boys respectively in the Guild. All of these were volunteers responding to the Chaplain's invitation ' "Would any boys like to be members of the Servers' Guild?" ' A later chaplain invited girls as well as boys to join, and several did so. It was the first time I had seen girl-servers, but I know of no reason why they should not assist in this way. Students - lower school as well as upper, girls and boys - were rostered to read the Lessons, Epistles and Gospels. I insisted that the passage to be read must be rehearsed in the church, and I supervised this myself. It was time-consuming for me, but there was compensation in the standard of chapel reading achieved. Selected intercessory prayers were sometimes read by senior prefects, standing in their pews. I felt that a new voice coming from a different part of the church added to the attention of the congregation. Reference has already been made to the spirited congregational singing in our services and to the enthusiastic Sunday School teaching of the junior boys in Hamilton House by senior girl volunteers in earlier Hostel times. When we no longer had young boys on the enrolment the classes were conducted by the girls for local children.

Two very special occasions in our worship each year were the annual Confirmation Service and the Carol Service, in both of which we featured the singing, the floral decoration of the sanctuary and the lightings of the old church by candlelight. Hymns of inspiration and appeal to youth were sung during the former - challenging hymns such as "Who is on the Lord's side?" and "Maker of morning light", with its words of joy and encouragement, sung to the old Russian National Anthem tune:

"Give us light hearts to go out on Thine adventure  
Lifting our lives to the joy of Thy praise".

On one occasion Archbishop Moline was so impressed with the words of this hymn that he told the candidates that he had chosen the above couplet from it as the theme of his address to them. Mrs. Moline who was present that evening also made a comment on the hymns and the singing: "What a pleasure it always is to come to the Swan Confirmation Service! Elsewhere one gets rather weary of hearing the same hymns night after night. - 'My God accept my heart this day' and others". The carol singing at the final chapel service for the students was always popular with them and their parents. The readings were presented by six girls, and consisted of sentences from the biblical account of the birth of our Lord and the purpose of the Incarnation. These would be read in between pairs of carols - Traditional and Australian - with the girls in turn standing at the sanctuary step to give their readings. There was great keenness to be selected to do this, with each chosen to do so working hard at rehearsals to read her part perfectly. At the end of the service there was a moving moment when immediately before the final blessing all sang: "Lord, dismiss us with Thy blessing". It was not



uncommon for some to be emotionally overcome at the realization that their student days at Swanleigh were over:

“Let thy Father-hand be shielding  
All who here shall meet no more:  
May their seed-time past be yielding  
Year by year a richer store.  
Those returning  
Make more faithful than before”.

(H.J. Buckoll)

A most important activity - one in which every student participated was study. While it has been stressed that we regarded education to be more than the acquisition of knowledge, we made it very clear to the students that they were expected to do well at school and that their prep was to be done thoroughly. With the exception of Friday night and the week-end every evening was compulsory study for all. Only on very rare occasions was any television permitted at that time, the exception being a request from the school that a group of students be permitted to view a particular programme associated with a classroom subject. Outings on prep nights were avoided unless it was to a school function. Even music practices were not permitted in the evening because we found that students coming and going from study was disturbing to others. Daily practising had to be done in the morning or after school. Supper was normally at 8.45 p.m. after which any student could go to bed, but a good many middle and upper school students worked later. During the 1960's a Mr. Harrold of the University staff conducted an investigation into the academic results achieved by students attending State High School Hostels compared with those of day scholars in the High Schools. He found that the examination results of the former averaged better. He then gave the tests to Swanleigh students, whose results confirmed his previous finding. This was not really surprising for at prep all study was supervised by staff till supper time, and no talking or other disturbance was permitted. When carrels were introduced it was possible for a student to work without seeing anyone, so that if he wanted to study there was nothing to distract him from doing so. By the introduction of movable screens we endeavoured to provide the same facilities for older girls in their houses. Lower school girls, however, did their prep in the dining-hall under Mary's supervision, and First Year boys studied in Cornwell House. That the study conditions were of satisfactory standard was proved by the results in annual and public examinations, and especially by the creditable number of distinctions gained by Swanleigh students. During Hostel years we also gained an Exhibition and a good many Commonwealth Scholarships. On several occasions a Swanleighian received the top marks in the State in a Leaving Certificate subject; and Deidre Madden gained distinction in each of her seven subjects in her Leaving Examinations. A number of our students received Rotary or American Field Service Scholarships, awarded on a combination of all-round achievement plus personality. In general if a Swanleighian's academic record was disappointing, the study conditions at the Hostel could not be blamed.

It may be asked: “Could the students not have done just as well academically if they had boarded privately?” The answer is that a few could - the majority wouldn't. Most Swanleighians were honest enough to admit that without proper supervision - something so often lacking in private accommodation - their classwork would soon have deteriorated. They would fall into the old trap of: “I'll just go down the street and see what's doing. I'll finish the assignment tomorrow night or maybe the night after”.

There are other temptations, too, in that street environment. Some may not fall into these, but to escape the pit-falls and the powerful influence of street companions is not easy, even for students of strong character. The weaker can easily go to the wall. At Swanleigh I kept a record of the marks gained in each subject by the student in school term exams, together with the school's general comment on his results and attitude. I also noted any achievement of his at Swanleigh or special participation in our activity programme. Similarly anything particularly unsatisfactory in conduct was recorded. Keeping the "Black-Book", as it was known, was laborious, but I felt it was well worthwhile. At interviews with parents or students I could produce from it the record sheet which showed the whole of the girl or boy's progress - school and Hostel - from the day of admission. It was very convincing.

No references to student life at Swanleigh would be complete without mentioning the most disliked activity - chores! To some extent they were a legacy from the earlier Orphanage days when the very penury of the establishment necessitated that some of the domestic work had to be performed by the children. In those times there was just not sufficient money to pay for much adult help. Ten cents a day - the Government subsidy and the usual private case fee (not always paid) - to feed, clothe, accommodate and supervise a child was hardly enough. The work of cooking, laundering, sewing and caring for that child all required adult staff, so that girls and boys had to help with minor domestic work. Within reason I see nothing wrong with their doing so. My own parents were loving and self-sacrificing, but they expected my sister and I to help with some of the household jobs - something which would be true of a great many families in Western Australia. So when the Hostel-system was introduced, I continued to roster all students to give some help in this way. Of course it was boring for them and there were moans. But it certainly helped to keep the fees a little lower which was helpful to parents, for Swanleigh's charges were already higher than those in Government Hostels. In the first place our "House" system required much more staffing. Secondly our activities' programme necessitated considerable extra outlay for such items as the maintenance of playing fields and sporting facilities, its chapel and chaplain (both largely paid for by Swanleigh) and its stage work with its outlay for costumes, lighting and properties. Thirdly there were the transport costs, and the building maintenance and farm, orchard and garden expenses. Money saved by the students performing some of the minor domestic work, quite within their capability in time and effort, kept total costs down. Other than bedmaking and some sweeping most of the chores were associated with our mealing arrangements - such things as table-setting, "dishing up", orderlies, clearing away, dish washing and preparing vegetables and lunches. With the increase in numbers we soon found it necessary to install a large electric dish-washer and a mechanical vegetable-peeler. In time cut-lunch preparation became highly organised in a self-service system which proved very efficient. (Over three hundred lunches every school-day needed that organisation!)

Early in the Hostel period I asked the students to write down anonymously any suggestions for the improvement of conditions at Swanleigh. Quite interesting and even entertaining were some of the ideas I received from their enthusiastic response. To mention just a few: One student said that we should have collection in the church services. Several suggested that there ought to be supper after prep ("How enjoyable it would be to have a slice of bread and dripping with pepper and salt to appease our pangs of hunger before going to bed"). Note: We tried this - there was pepper everywhere!) Some of the girls thought it would be a good idea if they took the little Hamilton boys for Sunday School each Sunday morning. One boy submitted a suggestion

that boys ought to be allowed to bring their ponies to Swanleigh and have regular race meetings. (Perhaps he thought if we ran a tote we might get the fees down further!) But the most common suggestion - all from one sex - was that the girls ought to share in doing orderlies. Said one boy with dramatic bitterness: "We lay the table for them; we collect their food from the serving table; we carry it to their table; we place it in front of them; we almost pick up a spoon and put the food in their mouths!" I have to confess that I got numbers of ideas from the students' answers to that exercise, which in time I adopted.

In the Hostel years the Prefect System was introduced. A boarding establishment, especially one with a House system, presents far more opportunities for this feature than does a day-school, because more situations arise in which leadership can be delegated. I believe it has four advantages. First it provides a training in responsibility for older students. So in addition to the few who were made Hostel Prefects all Fifth Years were appointed House Prefects and placed in charge of some feature of Hostel life.

Secondly, the system assisted in the problem of supervision, so that if house staff were not present there would always be some responsible student to take charge. For instance when the siren sounded to end prep at 8.45 p.m., the housemaster would oversee the serving of supper while a prefect would supervise the boys rostered to set the tables for breakfast. Thirdly, any students could make requests, suggestions or complaints to the Prefects who would discuss these at their meetings. If they considered it desirable, the Head Boy or Girl; would refer the matter to me as coming from the Prefects. In this way I not only got some particularly useful suggestions but I also had something of a sounding board as to the reactions of the students to my "clear directions". (I always maintained that "clear directions" were the key to the successful management of students). I never minded modifying these if I felt the Prefects' advice to be wiser. Finally the appointment to the position of Hostel Prefect was an honour - one to which numbers of girls and boys aspired. Prefects were elected in the first place by their upper-school fellows, the present Fourth and Fifth Years voting separately. It was interesting to see the maturity that had developed in the latter group as revealed in those elections. Says Carlyle: "A people may be judged by those whom they elect to represent them". (How do Australians score on that dictum?) The names on the separate lists were then submitted by me to a meeting of the staff where a final decision was made. Only in rare instances were names added to or deleted from the students' vote. Prefects' powers of punishment were limited to the imposition of extra chores. The students laughed when I announced that little Reg., the smallest boy in upper school, had been elected a Prefect. But I smiled when a few weeks later I heard him berating a heavyweight offender twice his size: "I told you to stack plates on the bench and you took no notice. Right, you do orderlies over the week end" - and the boy did. In the rare instances when the Prefects considered something very serious had occurred, the Head Boy reported it to me: "I'm very sorry to have to report this, Sir, but we feel that you must be informed that etc." This seldom happened for they mostly handled the problem themselves and did so satisfactorily.

Earlier in this chapter I discussed at some length what I considered to be the advantage of the boarding establishment over the day school in an education for complete living. But how did the Hostel students themselves regard Swanleigh and the residential life? Obviously with an enrolment of over three hundred there was considerable variation in attitude. Some had looked forward to coming especially if there had been brothers or sister previously attending. Perhaps they had seen some of the concerts or been present at sporting events. They would have heard stories of outings and esca-

pades which may have glamorised life in the establishment. Others entered rather nervously, not having known anyone who had been a student in residence. There were those who for some reason seemed to be opposed to the Hostel right from the time of their admission and maintained a critical attitude throughout their stay - something which I found eventually bored their companions. Numbers were disconsolate about leaving home and took a long time to recover from that change. Such were often a trial both to their friends and the staff. Most however found much in the life and companionship of Hostel and school to help them overcome their early homesickness. Once again, occupation was the best solution to the problem. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed a good grizzle about regulations and restrictions, and doubtless they went to great lengths to tell their school companions how irksome these things were at the Hostel. "You don't know how lucky you kids are with all your freedom compared with poor us!" But secretly most were rather proud of being Swanleighans and I suspect that some considered themselves to be an asset to the reputation of the school. "Hampton would be nothing without the Swanleighans", boasted one young lady. It was known that numbers of the teachers had a good opinion of the Hostel and its students, and regarded the enrolment of these as having been beneficial to the school.

Only in the first year did I ever hear any student express concern that Swanleigh had been an Orphanage. That tradition soon died and I doubt if ever it was resurrected. Their school friends knew that the majority of Swanleighans came from the country and were only boarding at Middle Swan to continue their education. On this point of tradition it is of interest to note that a number of very famous English schools were founded for poor boys. Eton, for example, opened in 1440 with 70 poor scholars and 20 fee-paying boys. St. Paul's (1509) awarded 153 scholarships "for children of all nacions and countres indifferently". The Charterhouse (1611) was first an almshouse for 80 old men and 40 poor scholars. Winchester, the oldest and often considered the most elite of the Public Schools was founded in 1382 by William of Wykeham. (Many Swanleighans will recall his motto oft-quoted by me to the student assembly - "Manners makyth man"). It commenced with 70 nominated scholars and 16 Quiristers in addition to 10 "commoners who paid full fees". Readers of Charles Lamb will recall that as a boy he was enrolled at Christ's Hospital. No ex-scholar of that establishment would consider it anything other than an honour that he, too, had been a "blue coat" boy. Similarly most boys who had attended any of the other schools mentioned would regard it as a privilege to have once been enrolled in it despite its one-time charitable foundation. In that way Swanleighans are traditionally in good company.

At school all boarders wore the small Swanleigh badge in addition to the High School uniform. The former was one adopted by the Council in the early years of the Hostel and consisted of an heraldic shield in two colours - dark blue and light blue - the colours of the two greatest educational establishments of the British race, viz. Oxford and Cambridge. Across the centre is a chevron - the heraldic symbol of a hostel. In the upper half are two white lilies of St. Mary, the patron saint of the Swanleighans' church. These are separated by a sword pointing heavenward - the sword of the Spirit. In the Hostel's traditional hymn, "Soldiers of the Cross Arise", are the words:

"Be the banner still unfurled  
Still unsheathed the Spirit's sword."

Bishop W. Walsham How

(It is a grand hymn and a bright tune and was selected for us by the then chaplain of the Hostel - the Revd. Alex Bateman). Occupying most of the half below the chevron is a black swan, emblem of our district and our State. I believe that by far the majority of students were proud to wear the badge, and that most parents were pleased to have their children enrolled as Swanleighans.

Here is a story about one of those parents. He was chairman of the Parents and Citizens' Association of a primary school situated a long way from Perth. A meeting of his Branch had been called to discuss the possible establishment of a High School hostel in a nearby larger town. Most parents present were enthusiastic for the project, guaranteeing that when the time came for their children to leave primary school they would enrol them in the proposed district Hostel should it be built. Then someone asked the chairman: "And what about you. Will you send your children to the new hostel?" "No", he replied, "their brother went to Swanleigh and that's where the rest will go".

# 6. The Shortest Chapter

In this book we have seen how, in a hundred years, an insignificant Orphanage became an important High-school Hostel - one of the largest, if not indeed the largest, co-educational residential establishment for adolescent school students in Australia. For most of that century it had remained a home for destitute children, but from 1960 it commenced enrolling fully-paying country boarders as well as girls and boys classified as "necessitous". For years the two groups shared the living conditions, though in that time the number of needy children steadily decreased due to a widespread public disapproval of institution-placement. Eventually a point was reached at Swanleigh when there were none at all on the enrolment. The result of this was that in 1979 legislation was introduced into the West Australian Parliament which, recognizing that the establishment was no longer required for the accommodation of the "orphaned, the neglected, the destitute and the unwanted", now declared that "Swanleigh is a Hostel for country boarders".

The passing of the Act was an historic occasion for Swanleigh - and this for two reasons. It was a point of arrival. It was also one of departure. For, as has been said elsewhere: "History goes both ways. It goes into the past - that is the history you read. It goes into the future - that is the history you make. There is an element of continuity in human affairs, a relationship between the past, the present and the future. The play goes on from age to age, and all the time it is the same play. Each generation occupies the stage for a brief period, but in doing so it makes its contribution to the drama of eternity".\*

It had been the privilege of Mary and myself to be the leaders of the cast in the Swanleigh play for almost thirty years. Now the time had come for our exeunt. In voluntarily making that decision we experienced a natural regret that for us it was all over, but we felt that this was the right decision; that Swanleigh now needed a new man at the helm to steer it through the last quarter of this exciting century; that it required new direction, new inspiration, new energy surging through it, new leadership to cope with the changing conditions which lay ahead.

It had been a persistent boyhood dream of mine that one day I would be in charge of boys living in a residential situation. Evening after evening, as I carried out my summer after-school job of hauling up buckets of water from our well and hand-watering our large flower garden, the idea would recur to me, and I imagined myself presiding in the boys' dining-room or taking prep or urging them on in a sporting fixture. (In an exciting finish they always won!) In my dream it was not a great public school, nor was it an Orphanage. It seemed to be very like the sort of establishment Swanleigh became - though there were no girls there! In my final speech-day address I told the students and parents about that dream - adding that when the dream did become a reality Swanleigh was a much better place because of the girls' presence. (Applause from

\* *Introduction by Archbishop Moline to "Four Bishops and their See" - edited by Professor Fred Alexander (W.A. University Press).*

the girls). I really meant that. I believe that co-education is the best, and that if high standards and good attitudes are achieved among the senior girls their influence permeates the whole establishment.

So the dream did come true and Mary and I have always felt most grateful for the opportunity of undertaking the work to which a generation earlier we had felt called. But we have not fallen into the error of over-estimating the importance of our particular contribution to the history of the institution. Most people realize that if they resigned tomorrow their names would hardly be mentioned six months later. To quote E.A. Partridge again: "The life of the school is too vivid, too immediate, too intense for dead hands to keep any grip on it". He goes on to say that this is right, but that good work will always endure. We were content to hope that in the estimation of people whose opinion meant something to us ours had been a worthy effort.

During 1971 the Council appointed Mr. Richard H. La Mothe Stowell B.A. Dip Ed. MACE, formerly of the staff of Ivanhoe Grammar School in Victoria to be Director of Swanleigh as from the following January. Under him the Hostel has maintained its reputation among the State's boarding establishments. Enrolments have been even higher and the activities programme has been considerably extended.

As our retirement approached there were many kindly and indeed laudatory things said about us at Synod, at farewell functions and by individuals. We were very appreciative of these. There were also a good many letters from parents expressing their satisfaction at the care and interest taken in their children while these were boarding at Swanleigh. But perhaps the tribute we liked best of all was in a letter from a girl who had been a resident in the Hostel for five years, finally leaving us with an excellent matriculation to go to the University. After expressing her thanks for our care of her, and extending good wishes for health and happiness in our retirement, she concluded with this sentence: "I feel there's a little of A. Roy Peterkin in all of us". Thank you, Kym.

# EPILOGUE

JANUARY 6th , 1972

January 6th, 1972, dawned brightly. It was a day we had awaited with mixed feelings of relief and regret, for that morning we would relinquish forever our responsibility for the management of the "noisy mansions", and move into quiet retirement in far away Albany. What a change that would be after the thirty strenuous exciting years at Swan - years in which we had experienced much happiness, pleasure and some satisfaction, but during which we had also known anxiety, disappointment, frustration, regret and even some sorrow.

That January morning we rose very early, had breakfast and loaded our car with the last of our cases and parcels. Then I walked over to St. Mary's Church to spend a few quiet minutes. Like Tom Brown I sat down in the back pew to think about some of the events of the past generation and of some of the people with whom we had been associated. Then I dropped to my knees to thank Almighty God for having given me the opportunity of doing the work which I had wanted to do, and for inspiration and support down those years; to seek forgiveness for failures, and to ask for His blessing on the Swanleigh of the future, and on us in our retirement. After this I walked through the church, stopping now and then to take a last look at some of its beauties - its lovely sanctuary, its stained glass windows and the tablets on the wall, memorials to some of the pioneers of the Swan district. I paused at the organ which Mary had played for services in the church throughout our thirty years, and I remembered the spirited congregational singing in which we had all joined. Then I went outside into the churchyard where lie buried several generations of local settlers, right back to Lucy Yule, laid to rest in 1838. I stood for a moment by the grave of our friend Canon Dick Hamilton, and then passing through the Ferguson lychgate, I walked across to the office to check that everything had been left in readiness for my successor. Then on the way to our quarters I walked round the library to take a last look at the pictures - the lovely collection of original Australian art left to Swan by Dick. By this time Mary had completed her final tidy-up of our rooms and all was in order for Noel and Mrs. Massey to move in later in the day. So we closed the door, climbed into our car and drove off.

It was still quite early with no one about. Even Ossie Mills, the gardener, had not yet arrived to turn on the reticulation sprinkler system as was his custom first thing on summer mornings. The first part of our drive was to be a nostalgic one, taking us past places of many memories. As we started there was Waylen block on our right - mostly built in Burton's time but finished in Armstrong's. Now the boys' section of it included three "Houses" - Ferguson, Sundercombe and Robertson - all linked in Stan Hewitt and Harry Hyde's "Waylen-Brown Project". Brown House came next - the first of the "noisy mansions" commemorating the old Archdeacon who had founded the Orphanage over a hundred years ago. Upstairs in what had once been the dormitory was our "experimental" house in the 1943 cottage scheme. We had named it "Stanton" after the orphans' lumper friend, but for us it was also to be associated with the



names of Beatrice Fletcher, Eileen Thompson and Terry Morvey. Below was where Matron Logan had commenced a boys' kindergarten, and we remembered her and her successors, Mrs. Reiken and Mrs. Volt.

The car proceeded along the curved driveway past the attractive staff quarters which we had named Knapp House. There followed a glimpse of Birch's "Tech", and after that a view of St. Mary's with its church bell up in a tree - something which many visitors found quite fascinating. Just as we turned into Yule Avenue we saw the beautiful view of the Swan River with its rising morning mist, our vineyard on the opposite bank, and Jock Anderson's little jetty where hundreds of girls and boys had swum - my own three among them. Now to the left of us stood the ancient spreading oak - a giant of a tree which we had grown to love, especially in the autumn when it was in its golden glory. We passed on along the side of our quarters in which we had spent thirty years of happy family life. There followed the Dining hall-Kitchen block - a "noisy mansion" if ever there was one - which commemorated the fine record of service to Swanleigh of gallant Alf Guy. Close to it was the Assembly Hall - the gym - with its memories of socials, concerts, choir and dancing practices, pierrot and drama presentations, and, in earlier times, gymnastic and boxing tournaments. Alongside the Hall was the open-air auditorium where we screened films on the hot summer nights. (Today the "Mary Peterkin Sick Bay" stands there, replacing a former sick bay in Vineyard House. I am most appreciative of the Council's naming the new building in honour of Mary, who is very proud of it).

Our drive then took us past the pines where the Revd. William Mitchell's rectory had stood for forty years before ever the first Orphanage boy arrived at Middle Swan. On the other side of the trees was Hudleston House, the fine effort of the boy-builders of the forties. It brought back memories of the saintly Archdeacon after whom it was named, and of Harry Adie, Ted Layton, Ernie Williams, Peter Merritt, Len Darcey and others who helped to build it. We thought, too, of Mrs. Cope, the longest-serving housemother of the little girls, who lived in it in Swan Homes' times, and of her successor, Mrs. Burrows. Next to it stood Swanleigh's newest house - "Stanton" - built to mark the centenary of the establishment. As we passed we remembered Albert, and also Jock Stewart, Roy O'Byrne and the happy times at the Coogee camps. "Stanton" had replaced a demolished house - "Forrest" - which originally had been Canon Burton's rectory and later had been a cottage for girls in the charge of many housemothers in their time, including Miss Thirlwell from Adelaide Terrace, Miss Harber, Miss Straube and at the end, the greatly loved Mrs. Chris Smith. There followed the two "mansions" we had built under migration agreement - "Lee Steere", with which will ever be associated the name of that doyen of housemistresses, Miss Elsie Ahearn, and with that of Mrs. Pereira; and "Freeman", with the names of Mrs. Sloan and then Mrs. Chopin.

After we passed these houses there is a gap which enabled us to see across the playing fields to Ernie Williams' bridge, and giving us glimpses of Cornwell House. What memories that held for us, recalling as it did the Gartners, the Copes, and Bill and Thea Brown. What a trio of married couples they had been in their record of service to the establishment and its girls and boys! And if there had been time to think of even earlier days, Cornwell had been the Mission, in which, long before our time, the Misses Mackintosh and then Mr. and Mrs. Jones had worked so devotedly in caring for native children.

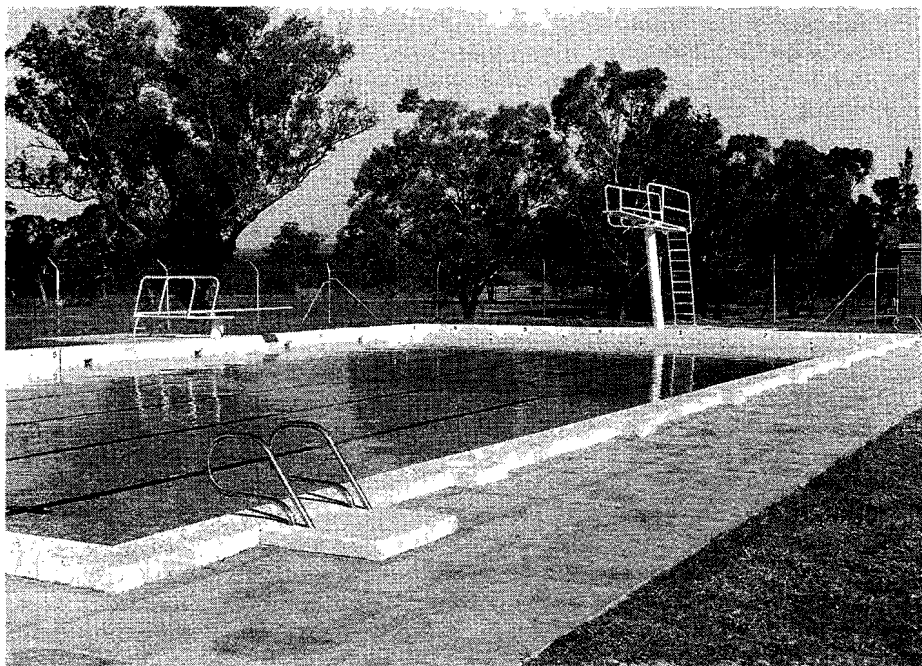
And so we reached the last of the girls' houses - "Hamilton" - commemorating the

Canon of blessed memory - his loving service and his generosity. And as well as remembering him we also thought of the remarkable old lady who was its housemother for so many years - Mrs. Volt. Across the road from this was a little brick house named "Swan Cottage", built long ago to accommodate young native women returning to the institution in which they had once been mission girls. In our time it had been used by married staff, all of whom had rendered us much help in converting the old Orphanage to the Swan Homes. There was Harold and Mrs. Milton, Brian and Mrs. Marshall, Jack and Mrs. Nugent, Ivor and Mrs Parry, our cook and matron for so many years. Opposite this, which had been one of the first buildings at the Orphanage, was Swanleigh's latest project - the partly-erected residence for our successor, Mr. Stowell.

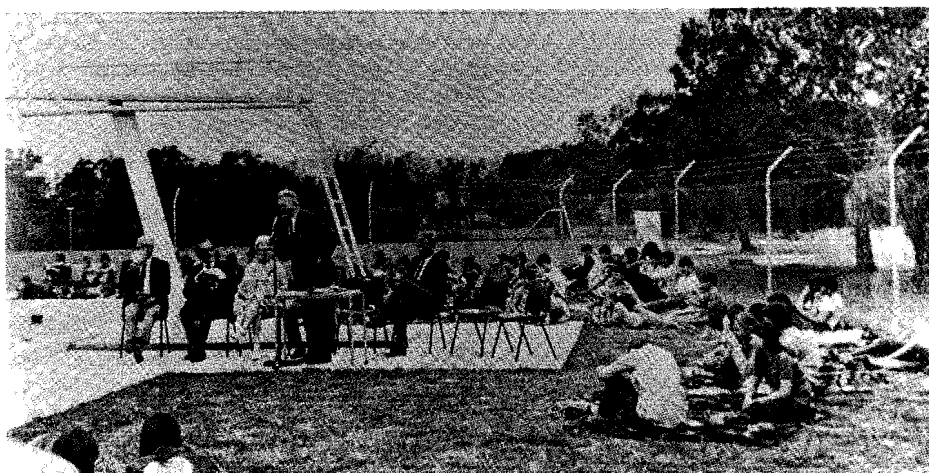
So we came to "Elephant's Foot" - only just alive but still standing like an ancient sentinel at the entrance to Swanleigh. We passed that gaunt massive old gum tree and turned into Middle Swan Road, where on the left was the "archy", crossed by the meandering Jane Brook - "the brookie", in which almost four generations of boys had played. Soon we came to a right turn into the Northern Highway towards Midland. We gave a hurried glance back - and Swanleigh was gone! We had made our exeunt and for us the play had ended.

For the next few miles we drove on very quietly, having little to say to each other. Then suddenly a thought came to me and I gave a little chuckle, so that Mary looked enquiringly at me. "Do you remember what day it was when we came to Swan?", I asked her. "Of course I do", she replied "It was April Fools' Day in 1942". "That's right", I said, "and thirty years later we are leaving on January 6th - the Feast of the Wise Men. I wonder if there is any significance in that?"

I looked across at her and we both laughed a little. Our serious mood fell away from us and we began to talk about the future as we drove happily into our retirement.



*Our last project. The Swanleigh  
Swimming Pool 1971.*



*The Official Opening of the Pool.*  
*Seated L to R: Mr. H. Hyde, Mr. S. Hewitt, Miss Norma Monger (Council).*  
*Standing: Mr. Roy Peterkin, Director and also seated Mr. R. Verbrugge (Hon. Engineer).*

## THE CENTENARY DINNER — JUNE 28th, 1968

*Top Table (L. to R.): Canon L Brown (Grandson of Founder), Miss F. Brown (Granddaughter of Founder), Hon. Jas. Craig, M.L.A., Member for Toodyay, Chief Secretary and Minister for Police (representing the Hon. The Premier), Mrs. J. Craig, Mr. D.H. Ferguson (Council 1925-33 and 1951-72. Life Member 1973-82), Mrs. D.H. Ferguson, Rt. Reverend Bishop T.B. Macdonald (Administrator), Mrs. T.B. Macdonald, Mrs. R. Peterkin.*

*Left Table (L. side from top): Mr. A.A. Robertson (Organising Collector 1924-59), Mrs. A.A. Robertson, Miss V. Latimer (Anglican Homes Office, Perth, 1949-59), Rev. M. Keeling (Council 1967-71), Mrs. Keeling, Dr. G.H. Hingston (Medical Attendant), Miss E. Cotton (Council 1934-40), Rev. P.S. Lawrence (Chaplain 1935-40), Mrs P.S. Lawrence, Mr. E. Cope (Staff 1938-67), Miss L. Favas (Music Teacher 1962-78), Mr. I. Parry (Cook 1945-61), Mrs. I. Parry (Matron 1945-61, Relieving Housemistress 1967-77), Mr. W. Lessels (Voluntary Maintenance Assistant 1956-70), Mrs A. Volt (Housemistress 1958-76), Mr. B. Pearl (Laundryman 1956-70), Mrs. C.L. Smith (Housemistress 1959-70), Miss J. Gardiner (Secretary 1961-73).*

*Left Table (R. side): Miss N. Monger (Council 1955-73), Miss Monger, Mrs B. Brown (Secretary 1959-64), Mrs. S.E. Craig (Council 1968), Mr. I. Clarke (Council 1968-74), Mrs. I. Clarke, Canon J. Watts (Council 1933-36, 1954-64), Mrs J. Watts, Mr. W. Roberts (former Institution Officer, Child Welfare Department), Mrs. E. Williams (Matron 1942-44), Mr. E. Williams (Deputy Manager 1942-44), Miss B. Fletcher (Staff 1944-55 and Matron 1967-69), Mrs. P. Browning-Ashton (Music Teacher 1960-79), Mr. J. Sanders, Mrs. J. Sanders (Wardrobe and Sewing Mistress 1958-73), Mr. T. Morvey (Housemaster 1963-69), Mrs. B. Pereira (Housemistress 1962-67), Mrs. M. Gillett (Boys' Matron 1962-67), Mrs. F. Graysmark (Sportsmistress 1958-69).*

*Middle Table (L. side): Mrs. Alf Guy, Mrs. "Dick" Chamberlain, Mr. H. Hamersley (Council 1966-69), Mrs. H. Hamersley, Mr. N. McLeod (Former Principal Governor Stirling Senior High School, Council 1968-72), Mrs. N. McLeod (Council 1968-72), Mr. E. Beckwith (Principal Hampton High School), Mrs. E. Beckwith, Mr. I. Sparks, Mrs. I. Sparks (Captain Swanleigh Girl Guides 1963-73), Mr. D.J. Shields, Mrs. D.J. Shields (formerly Mrs. Johns — Secretary Lumpers' Orphanage Committee), Mr. Vernon Reid (Head Boy 1967), Miss Anne Robertson (Head Girl 1967), Mr. David Rickson (Head Boy 1966), Miss Shan Ralph (Head Girl 1966), Mr. R. Verbrugge (1953-57), Mrs. R. Verbrugge, Mr. F. Dymond, Mrs. F. Dymond (Mary Calver 1951-55).*

*Middle Table (R. side): Mrs. V. Sundercombe (Council 1933-73), Mrs. R.B. Jessor-Coope, Mr. W. Gordon, Mrs. W. Gordon (Council 1952-64), Mr. J. Macaulay (Principal Governor Stirling Senior High School), Mrs. J. Macaulay, Mr. H. Hyde (Building Advisory Committee 1959-71), Mrs. H. Hyde, Mr. T.J. Williamson (Shire Clerk), Mrs. T.J. Williamson, Mr. R. Garside (Deputy Director 1957-59), Mrs. R. Garside, Mr. S. Johnson (1956-62, Head Boy 1962), Miss L. Boucher, Mr. P. Tiller (1962-64, Head Boy 1964), Mr. Richard Pittman (1955-66, Deputy Head Boy 1966), Mrs. J. Sowry (Mavis Page 1956-59), Mr. John Sowry (1947-52), Mrs. C. Grocott (Audrey Neal 1946-51, Office Assistant 1951-54), Mr. C. Grocott.*

*Right Table (L. side): Mrs J. Stewart, Mr. J. Stewart (President Lumpers' Committee, Council Member 1946-51), Mrs. Albert Stanton, Mr. G. Brockman (Superintendent Seaside House, Coogee Beach 1959-68), Mrs. G. Brockman (Matron Seaside House 1959-68), Rev. R. Greenhalgh (Diocesan Secretary), Mrs. R. Greenhalgh, Mrs. L. McIntyre, Rev. L. McIntyre (Deputy Director and Chaplain 1967-70), Mrs. A. Smith (Voluntary Dancing Teacher 1946-60, Office Assistant 1968-72), Mr. A. Smith, Mrs. A. Ransted (Rene Smith 1935-48), Miss C. Ransted, Miss Beverley Jones (1964-68, Deputy Head Girl 1968), John Walker (1965-68, Deputy Head Boy 1968).*

*Right Table (R. side): Mr. R. Peterkin (Director 1942-71), Mr. J.J. Brady, M.L.A. (Member for Swan), Mrs. J. Brady, Mrs. C. Booth, Mr. C. Booth (Founder.M.I.O.C. 1946-68, Council 1949, Life Member 1963-86), Mrs. R. Logan (Matron Seaside House 1950-58), Mrs. A. Mowday, Mr. A. Mowday (Secretary M.I.O.C.), Mr. V. Davis (Maintenance Officer 1959-72), Mr. T. Jeffries (Sportsmaster 1968-69), Mr. W. Thorne (1940-49, Kitchen Assistant 1957-70), Miss J. Atkinson (1962-66, Secretary Ex-Swanleighans' Association), Mr. K. Cook (1961-66, Secretary Ex-Swanleighans' Association), Miss W. Evans (1964-68, Head Girl 1968), Colin Read (1964-68, Head Boy 1968).*