History of Thebarton
Ingred Srubsjens.

CHAPTER ONE

BEGINNINGS ... SURVEY AND SETTLEMENT

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THE KAURNA

Long before the British arrived in South Australia, the area now known as Thebarton was occupied by members of the main 'Adelaide tribe', the Kaurna. They were one of about 50 separate groups in South Australia, whose origins extend to perhaps 40,000 years before the arrival of the Europeans. (1)

The Adelaide area was a favourite campsite of the Kaurna. In good seasons, the River Torrens and the trees in the vicinity provided permanent water and an abundance of game and shelter. Kaurna family groups, or hordes, lived as hunter-gatherers, and all members shared in the collection of food, water and raw materials. The Aboriginal economy was a highly efficient one, based on an intimate knowledge of climate, landscape and resources. They accumulated little surplus, extracting from the environment only those materials necessary to the continuation of their society.

At first the Aborigines approached the Europeans in friendship, and the Government made a pretence of protecting their interests. It appointed a Protector, distributed food, clothing and utensils and established a few reserves, but little was done effectively to safeguard Aboriginal land rights. As the settlers dispersed over the Adelaide Plains, cut down trees, ploughed land, and erected buildings, they disturbed the ecosystem upon which the Aboriginal way of life depended. It was almost inevitable that the Aborigines would retaliate against the foreign occupiers of their land. On March 12, 1839, Colonel Light wrote to Wyatt, the Protector, to complain of the behaviour of the Aborigines on his property at Thebarton.

> It is with reluctance I now write to complain of the natives, after requesting my friend Mr. Jacob the other day to inform you of the annoyance I meet with from them as well as the danger my property is in from wilful burning. On Wednesday last a fire-brand was thrown in the dry grass immediately to windward for the purpose of setting fire to my house. There is hardly an hour in the day they are not either lopping down branches, or burning some tree, and it is in vain speaking to them, and at this moment another fire has been kindled under an old tree which I have been obliged to send two men to put out.
> Last night several garden palings were torn down by them, and a sack of potatoes, the property of Wm. Lawes the gardener, stolen. Many of the natives were seen early this morning with potatoes on the ends of their spears. They have been some days encamped on my property where they were perfectly welcome as long as they conducted themselves quietly and did no injury.
>
> (2)

In an article in the Express and Journal of 27 May 1933 Mrs. Sarah Hannam, formerly Sarah Holmes, recalled the Aborigines' visits to the family home in Chapel Street in the 1840s :

> They would wander in and out of the house, sit on chairs and await to be given some food - which (my mother) always gave quickly to get rid of them, for though harmless, they were dirty.

The settlers were rid of them quickly enough. The Kaurna population had been greatly reduced by European diseases and the collapse of their traditional economic and social system. Although the Aboriginal population around Adelaide was swelled for a time by the arrival of groups from other parts of the colony, the Kaurna were virtually extinct by 1850.

THE EUROPEANS

The first European to be convinced of the commercial possibilities of the area now known as Thebarton was Colonel William Light, the Surveyor-General of South Australia. His life and the events leading to his death have been chronicled in detail by several writers. (3) He was born in Malaya in 1786, and was taken by his parents to Penang where his father was setting up the first British settlement in Malaya. At the age of six he was entrusted to the care of his father's friend George Doughty, the owner of Theberton Hall in Suffolk, England. He was educated there, and at the age of fourteen left to join the Royal Navy.

By 1808, he had purchased a commission in the British Army, and soon afterwards was promoted lieutenant. He served throughout the Peninsular War in Spain, where he was employed mainly as an interpreter and intelligence officer, and on his return to England he purchased a captaincy in the infantry. He left the Army in 1821, and married a Miss E. Perois not long afterwards. The marriage was a short one, for in 1824 he married Mary Bennet, the daughter of a Duke. The two travelled in Europe and round the Mediterranean, and in 1830, at Alexandria, Light made the acquaintance of Mohammed Ali, the pasha of Egypt.

The connection with Egypt augered well for Light's future career. He was commissioned by Mohammed Ali to recruit British officers to the Egyptian Navy, and in the course of his service Light met Captain John Hindmarsh. Both men left the pasha's employ - Hindmarsh with a letter of introduction from Light to Colonel Charles Napier who had resigned as proposed governor of the colony of South Australia. Light had been recommended by Napier as his replacement,

but Hindmarsh pipped him at the post in the race for the position.

Light,however, was offered the position of Surveyor General, which at £400 a year, was not highly paid in comparison with the salaries of surveyors in the eastern colonies. But the job promised some security and not a little prestige. Light and other officers in a similar position had few prospects in the British armed forces in the 1830s; an official appointment in South Australia offered not only the benefits of a salaried position, but under the regulations governing the Colony of South Australia, the opportunity to buy land at a relatively reasonable price. (5)

Light's responsibilities as Surveyor-General were enormous. He was instructed by the Colonisation Commissioners to examine 1500 miles of coastline, select the best site for the capital, survey the town site, divide 150 square miles of country into sections, and make reservations for secondary towns - an impossible task in the two months allotted him to complete it.

He arrived off Kangaroo Island in August 1836, and began his exploration of the coastline. After rejecting several alternatives, he chose to the capital on rising ground near the River Torrens, six miles from the proposed harbour. His decision provoked bitter criticism from a number of his fellow colonists, who felt that the port was inadequate and the capital situated too far from it. In an entry in his Journal, he provided sound justification for his choice :

> The great quantity of good land, good sheep walks,
> good fresh water and a good harbour for ships...
> the best line of communication with the Murray;
> and the frequent showers we saw on Mount Lofty range...
> gave me a certain proof. These were my reasons for
> selecting this spot as the best that could be found. (5)

Light started the survey of the town acres in January 1837, and was ready to begin on the country sections in April.
He was directed to survey the 437 Preliminary Land Orders into 134 acre blocks 'in a form convenient for occupation and fencing, with a reserve road adjoining each section.' The Colonization Commissioners had originally intended the land to be surveyed in 80 acre sections, for which some of the holders of Land Orders had already paid £1 per acre. Land sales however had been slow, and the price was reduced to 12 shillings an acre, so those who had already paid for their land were given blocks of 134 acres instead. The residue land was

surveyed into 80 acre sections, with some variations.

Light recorded his start on the survey of the country west of the city in his Journal :

> In the early part of April our stores were better supplied, and a party was formed under Mr. Finniss, who commenced on the western side of Adelaide, with the Torrens on his right, the range of hills to the left, and the sea in front - and soon after I began on the right bank of the River; difficulties were continually occurring by men striking etc., and many days lost, also by bad weather. During this period, I began to feel a very evident change in my health, which with anxieties of mind wore me down much, and I was obliged to neglect many day's working in consequence. (6)

Despite the team's difficulties, the country lands were ready for selection by May 1838. A ballot was held to determine the order of choice and the holders of land - orders or their agents made their selections. Colonel Light was lucky enough to draw first choice. He had purchased an order for a country section from B.T. Finniss for £210, and had intended to settle at Rapid Bay. After his exploration of the Adelaide Plains however, he decided to choose more practical land close to Adelaide and selected Section 1, which was later subdivided as Thebarton village and Southwark.

The other six sections that comprise Thebarton were selected by absentee landlords or by people soon to arrive in the colony. Some of the sections remained farmland until the turn of the century. Others were cut into a bewildering number of suburbs, during the 1800s. After the Second World War they were reduced to three; Thebarton, Mile End and Torrensville.

The South Australian Company selected section 2, later Mile End Old Mile End and New Mile End. The Company set up a farm on the parkland frontage , and appointed James Chambers as manager. In 1855, 88 acres were divided into farmlets ranging from 2 to 8 acres which were bought mainly by Thebarton businesspeople.The adjoining section, 48, was selected by a Miss Freeman. Known for many years after the 1880s as West Adelaide, it is now part of Mile End.

George Barnes took section 46, later divided into Torrenside, West Thebarton, Henley Park, Hemmington and Hemmington West ! 47 went to Christopher Rawson; it remained largely farmland until the early 1900s, when the southern part was subdivided as Torrensville Estate. 94, which was selected by William Stuckey, also became part of Torrensville in later years. Section 95 went to S.C. Freeman; the lower part was named Freemanton after the original owner, and later Torrensville. The portion north of Ashley §street was lost to West Torrens Council in 1918.

(see map, next page)

The Thebarton area had excellent potential for resale and development. It was conveniently situated to benefit from the passage of goods and travellers to and from the City along the Port and Holdfast Bay Roads. The nearby Torrens, though almost dry in summer, was a valuable source of water for farmers, manufacturers and townspeople. The flat land, with its accumulated deposits of alluvial soil near the river was ideal for agriculture, and there were extensive deposits of clay, gravel, limestone and sand for building.

The high price of land in the city and the delay in the rural surveys were added inducements to investors in land on the parkland fringes. Those who could afford it bought sections near the city and sold them at inflated prices. The less wealthy camped illegally on the parklands until they could afford to buy or lease small allotments. The speculation that occurred in these years plunged the colony into a depression in the 1840s, and was the subject of much comment in the newspapers of the time. On 29 June 1839 the South Australian Register recorded the re-sale of section 47 by absentee land owner Christopher Rawson :

> We understand a sale had been made in England of the following Preliminary 134 acre sections, chosen in the suburban districts of Adelaide - No. 47 on the Torrens, with 240 and 254, consecutive sections on the rural park frontage south-east together with 7 Adelaide town-acres for the sum of £ 4,750 - The best rural section in our estimation, No. 47, having realised only £ 800, the other two £925 each. The Seller, Christopher Rawson, Esq., the buyer, Harry Hughlings Esq., both of Halifax, Yorkshire.

COLONEL LIGHT - LIFE AT THEBARTON

Colonel Light was the first of the selectors to occupy his land at Thebarton. He had tendered his resignation as Surveyor-General in July 1838, and when his surveyor's hut near North Terrace burned down in January 1839, he moved into his partially built house near the River Torrens. There he intended to live a quiet life, free of the controversy that had hampered his work in the colony. Light spent the summer and autumn of 1839 virtually an invalid in the care of Maria Gandy, who had come out with him on the Rapid in 1836. Her presence must have been very comforting; his second wife, Mary Bennet had left him in 1832 during his absence in Egypt.

Despite his ill health, he was able to enjoy visitors, and occasional trips to town and to Holdfast Bay with Maria and other friends. He was in considerable debt at this time, although he was gaining a small income from sketching and drawing, and from assisting the firm of Light, Finniss and Company which was formed after

the resignation of Light and most of his survey team.

Even this was not enough however, and he decided to sell most of his land. He sold his country section 572 for £100, and in early 1839, subdivided the lower portion of section 1 to form the village of Thebarton. On 23 March 1839 he wrote to George Palmer, one of the Colonisation Commissioners, of his hopes for the future :

> I am now living a most retired life and doing what I can for my own support, independent of Patronage of any kind. My losses have pulled me down in purse sadly, but before two years more are passed, if I live so long, I hope to be clear and as comfortable as a broken constitution from harassed mind will admit. I thank God amidst all my anxieties and troubles my conscience has never for one moment caused me pain, but on the contrary, because I know that if not during my life my proceedings be defended, they will when I am dead ... I now live on my country section out above a mile from town, and hardly ever see anybody but the workmen on the premises. I have left off all active pursuits and allow the young men in our firm, Finniss and Jacob, to work. My health is now so bad I am not strong enough to bear fatigue, therefore I only assist at counsel. If you can do anything for our establishment in recommending us to people who may wish to purchase land or have any surveyed, you will oblige us.
> I met with such misfortunes in the loss of my patrimony, and being besides hitherto naturally very careless of money, that in my old days I am obliged to do something; however I believe it to be for the best. (7)

It was in March that he completed the Preface to his Brief Journal of 1836-1837, in which he gave an account of his activities and the obstacles he encountered in South Australia. It was printed and made available to the public at the end of June.

The publication of the Journal aroused more controversy, at a time when he could least afford it. By early October, his health had deteriorated further, and he died of tuberculosis just after midnight on 6 October 1839. In his will, which he made out in August, he left everything to Maria Gandy. Light's funeral procession took place on 10 October, and the service was held at Trinity Church. According to his wish, he was buried in Light Square. A monument designed by G.S. Kingston, was erected in 1843. According to Geoffrey Dutton,

> it was a 'curious piece of 19th century Gothic, looking rather like something lost from a cathedral'. Made of local sandstone, it stood 45 feet high and was surmounted by a cross. It soon crumbled and another monument was built in Light Square in 1905. In 1906, a statue made by Birnie Rhind was placed in Victoria Square, and later moved to Montefiore Hill, overlooking Adelaide( )

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THEBARTON COTTAGE

Dr. Charles Fenner, a noted early Adelaide geographer, provided the only accurate record of the house in an article he wrote in 1926, not long before the building was demolished. (8) It was situated on allotments 408 and 409, facing a little south of east, on the corner of what are now Winwood and Cawthorne Streets. Various additions were made to the house between 1841 and 1879, but the original cottage remained virtually unaltered until its demolition.

Light named the cottage after Theberton Hall in Suffolk, England, where he spent part of his youth. Later he altered the name to Theberton Cottage, but in the Preface of his Journal, it is spelled "Thebarton". It is generally accepted that the misspelling was the result of a typographical error in the printing of the Journal; there are no grounds for the common belief that the name is a corruption of "The Barton", an old English place-name. (9)

There is a description of Light's house in the South Australian Register of 2 January 1841 :

TO LET

> On the banks of the Torrens, at Thebarton, formerly the residence of the late Colonel Light, a substantial brickbuilt house, containing four large and lofty rooms, one underground and a back kitchen - commands a fine view of the bay - a garden in a high state of cultivation - a stable, with saddle-room - and a well of capital water. Apply to Dr. Mayo, Carrington Street, or to Mr. Gandy, on the premises.

THE BUILDING MATERIALS

The walls of the house were brick, of the "sloppy" type, and made in wooden moulds. In appearance they were sandy, because although made of clay, sand was used to dust the mould, and this adhered to the outside. The clay was tempered by hand, then moulded dried and burnt. "Sloppy bricks" were later replaced by wire-cut and dry-pressed bricks.

The window frames and sashes were of excellent quality the two front windows swinging vertically on hinges. The roof was probably made of wooden shingles, which were replaced later possibly by thatch, then corrugated iron. The main rafters of part of the original roof were made from a native pine tree (Callitris) which may have grown locally. Parts of the ceiling that remained until demolition were of lath-and-plaster, the laths of local hardwood fastened with short wrought-iron nails. Mr. C.A. Hodder obtained a roof truss of native hardwood consisting of two rafters and a collar-tie, "coved" upward for about eighteen inches to give height and ornament to the rooms.

According to Charles Fenner, Colonel Light's house was substantial for the times, and was probably built with the best workmanship and materials available. It is likely that the house was constructed by Maria Gandy's brother George, who, according to the South Australian Register of 29 February 1840 was working as a brickmaker and builder at Thebarton.

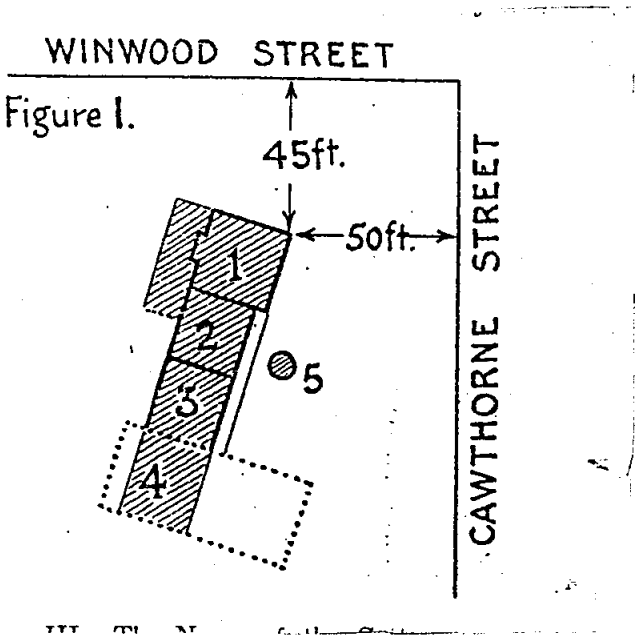

Figure 1.

Charles Fenner's sketch of the position of Light's cottage. It shows the approximate positions of the rooms - 1, room latterly used as a kitchen; 2 and 3, rooms opening onto the front verandah; 4, the underground room; 5, the well. The dotted lines suggest the later additions, which faced south.

Fenner noted that the additions made to Light's house gave rise to some doubts about its authenticity. This, and an eroneous belief that former owners of the house were exploiting public sentiment when they offered the house for sale, may have hindered attempts to conserve the building. Fenner recorded however, that Dr. F.S. Hone and Mr. A.H. Preston, representatives of past and present owners of the home, made offers for the sale of property that could not be described as 'other than generous'. (10)

Various people occupied the house and land after Light's death in 1839. For a time, Maria Gandy lived in the house with her brother George, and Dr. George Mayo whom she married on 7 July 1840. (11). The couple lived in the cottage for a short time, and then moved to Adelaide in November 1840. (After Maria Gandy's death a few years later, Light's house and the 100 acres of Section 1 on which it stood passed to the Trustees of Dr. Mayo until about 1877. In 1879 the area was subdivided as Southwark. Until that time, the greater part of the 100 acres was cultivated land. (12)

PLAN OF THEBARTON VILLAGE

It was unfortunate that Light did not live long enough to see the development of the village he helped to subdivide. An undated plan in the State Archives shows the lower portion of section 1 divided into 24 one-acre lots, with four unnamed streets at the southern end of the section, and a further eight subdivisions and an unnamed street. The plan was signed by Light, Finniss and Company.

The first advertisement for the land appeared in the South Australian Register, 23 February 1839 :

> To Newly Arrived Capitalists and Emigrants. Acre sections to be let on building leases on No. 1 section, now called Theberten. For further particulars, write to Light, Finniss and Co. Stephens Place North Terrace.

The prices of the 24 numbered lots ranged from £40 to £90, the most expensive ones being those located close to the Port Road. The three subdivisions adjacent to East Terrace were sold at £80, £85 and £90 to Thomas Jacques, George Gandy and Robert Bristow respectively.

The West Torrens Council Assessment Book for 1853 gives a detailed description of the subsequent layout of the village. The Assessor wrote :

> "The Township of Thebarton was at first laid out in three strips of land 210 feet wide each and extending across the section, at the southern end afterwards a 4th strip was added to the north of the former. These strips are subdivided into allotments of 34 feet by 104 feet they are therefore 1/12 of an acre each. There are three streets intersecting the Township and one on each side of it, on the North and South, the streets are 30 feet wide each. The whole township stands upon 32 acres."
>
> For convenience of reference I have called the most southerly street of the Township "South Street" but without any authority. I have called "East Road" that which runs parallel with the Western Parklands and which road is the most eastwardly in the District.

The three streets intersecting the township were Chapel, George and Maria. The northern boundary of the village became Light Terrace, the eastern boundary East Terrace, the southern boundary South Terrace (now Kintore Street) and the western boundary West Terrace, (later Beans Road , now Dew Street.)

The layout of Thebarton village bears some resemblance to the design of the City, in its rectangular shape and in some of the street names. That however, is where the similarity ends. There were no north-south streets to facilitate traffic flow, and no community reserves. The lack of north-south thoroughfares must have caused much congestion in the town, but it was to be another 20 years before any were constructed. Nor was there a reserve along the River Torrens, although given the demand for land near the river, Light would have been hard pressed to keep aside ~~any~~ for public use. One fortunate aspect of the planning of the village - at least for the townspeople - was that it was placed well away from noxious trades that were set up along the river. It was to be mainly the residents of the farming areas west of Thebarton who would complain in later years of the annoyance caused by these industries.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER ONE

1. Edwards, R., Pamphlet. "The Kaurna People of the Adelaide Plains", (Adelaide 1972).

2. Mayo, M.P. The Life and Letters of Colonel William Light (Adelaide Preece 1937), p. 25

3. See
Dutton, G., Founder of a City, Melbourne, (Cheshire, 1960).

Gill, T., A Biographical Sketch of Colonel William Light, (Adelaide, Royal Geographical Society of Australasia, S.A. Branch, 1911)

Mayo, M.P., op.cit.

Price, A. Grenfell, Founders and Pioneers of South Australia, (Adelaide Preece 1929.)

Steuart, A. Francis, A Short Sketch of the Lives of Francis and William Light, (London, Sampson, Low, Marston and Co., 1901.)

4. Pike, D.H. (ed.) Australian Dictionary of Biography. (Melbourne University Press, 1967) Vol. 2 p.116.

5. Light, W., A brief journal of the proceedings of William Light, late Surveyor-General of the Province of South Australia, with a few remarks on some of the objections that have been made to them. (Adelaide, 1839), p.49.

6. Ibid. p.71.

7. Quoted in Dutton, op.cit. p.281.

8. Fenner, C.A.E., 'Thebarton Cottage : The Old Home of Colonel Light', Royal Geographical Society, S.A. Branch, Vol.28. pp. 25-45.

9. Ibid. p.29.

10. Ibid. p.26.

11. The South Australian Register, 11 July 1840.

12. A succession of owners occupied the house and property after the Mayos left in 1840. West Torrens and Thebarton Council Assessment Books show them as follows :
1853, Edward Gandy (Gandy leased Light's house, four cottages nearby and all of section 1 north of Light Terrace from Dr. Mayo.); 1856, Richard Addis; 1859, David Solomon; 1861, Henry Warren; 1865-70, John Temple Sagar (who operated a fellmongery nearby); 1871-72, G. Catchlove; 1872-76, John Taylor (who used the house as an office); 1877-78, Reverend McEwen; 1879-1909, N.J. Hone; 1910, Mr. Cocking (with allotments 405-410).

CHAPTER TWO

INDUSTRIES AND WORK, FROM THE 1830s TO THE 1860s

CHAPTER TWO

Thebarton village grew as a working-class suburb of Adelaide, its residents attracted by employment in the growing number of industries in the area, the surrounding farmlands, and the carrying trade on the Port Road. For some time the village remained fairly isolated and self-contained, constrained by the costs and difficulties of transport in the new settlement and the depression of the early 1840s.

But with a good harvest in 1843, and the discovery of copper at Kapunda and Burra and later at Wallaroo and Kadina, South Australia experienced twenty years of almost continous growth. The expansion of the agricultural and pastoral industries, and the development of a road and railway network centred on Adelaide ensured the dominance of the capital and the growth of the settlements around it.

Economic recovery was reflected in many ways : in the growing quantity and diversity of locally produced goods and foodstuffs, in the construction of houses and other buildings, and in the development of rudimentary roads, bridges and public services. The need to finance and supervise some of these developments led to the establishment of District Councils after 1852. Five years later, after several unsuccessful attempts at governmental reform, the colony was granted self-government and its own parliament.

Despite the early difficulties, Thebarton fared better than many of the other settlements around Adelaide. In 1841 the South Australian Magazine recorded it as having 100 houses and a population of 501, with the added attraction of 'a good tavern'. (1)

J.F. Bennett, writing in 1843, gave a more detailed description of Thebarton and its neighbours Hindmarsh and Bowden :

> The largest of the suburban villages are Thebarton, Hindmarh and Bowden, built on three adjoining sections of land close to the Torrens just below Adelaide, and on the border of the park lands. The inhabitants of these villages consist of mechanics, labourers etc., who have houses of their own, cultivate small gardens, rear a few pigs and poultry and find employment among the surrounding farmers. One of the steam flour mills, already mentioned, is in Hindmarsh, and another in Thebarton. The latter place also contains a tannery, numerous brickworks, etc. (2)

Observers like Allen and Bennett rarely wrote about less noteworthy buildings and the daily lives of people in villages like Thebarton. Bennett however, made passing reference to the importance of peoples' houses and gardens. From the time of settlement, the form of subdivision and the high standard of living in South Australia compared with Britain, enabled people to build single-storied detached houses on separate blocks of land - although they were only one-twelfth of an acre in Thebarton township.

This preference may have been based partly on the desire for privacy and attractive surrounds, but the house on its suburban allotment also gave people the opportunity to set up small workshops, schools, and other commercial ventures, or to supplement their incomes by growing vegetables and rearing livestock. Moreover, a house and a small piece of land were and still are, a form of investment for people without the capital to buy large amounts of property, or to set up sizeable businesses.

But before much business could start, homes had to be built. The earliest in Thebarton were of humble and often temporary construction. The most common materials were pise, wattle and daub, brick, concrete, stone and wood. House styles, like so many other aspects of life in early South Australia, were based on the English model - most cottages had symmetrical fronts featuring a central door, and a window on either side. This plan remained basically unaltered throughout most of the nineteenth century.

Most people in Thebarton built their own homes; a few like Colonel Light could engage a private builder to do the job. The majority of the earliest houses in the village were of pisé, which was earth or clay, sometimes mixed with straw and placed in a mould like concrete. Pisé dried rock-hard in the sun, and ~~although it~~ harboured insects it provided a cool home in the summer months. Wattle and daub houses, which looked like stone when dry, were built of uprights and crosspieces of wood filled in with stone and plastered on both sides. Concrete, made of gravel or pebbles, lime and water, and sometimes bits of broken glass and bones, also made durable walls.

Roofs were of wooden shingles, palings or reeds gathered from the Torrens; ceilings, windows and even interior walls were improvised from calico or hessian. In later years, glass, galvanised iron and other durable materials were used as they became more readily available. Some of the settlers added rooms to their cottages, and built verandahs as protection from the weather or to suit current conventions.

The first West Torrens District Council Assessment Book for 1853 shows that of those houses described the majority in Thebarton village were of brick, followed closely by pisé. A few were built of stone and only one wooden house was recorded. A number of the pisé and brick cottages built in the 1840s and 1850s can still be seen in the vicinity of Chapel and Maria Streets, although renovations have largely obscured the original materials.

Henry Shearing, in reminiscences recorded for his family, wrote of his parents' efforts to find a home in 1839 :

> When arriving towards Thebarton my parents found a place that was build on the south-west corner of the parklands, opposite the Squatters Arms. It was built with timber split out of a large log about 8 feet long ... and having been put there in a green state warped like a piece of new leather in the sun, so that it was not necessary for a glass window, and neither was there any, but a calico about 2 feet wide and two feet long was put in its place ... natural surface for the floor and no fireplace as there was only one room. The fireplace was made outside with stones laid in mortar and in this way the cooking took place. I have often times wondered what my parents thought of their removal from England from a good home ... to go into a wilderness as it appeared to be at this time ... At this time I am sure there were not more than six houses in all Thebarton.

Henry Shearing's parents later moved to Hindmarsh, where his father built a pisé house and set up a brickyard using clay he considered to be as good as anything England had to offer.

Mrs. Sarah Hannam's family settled in Thebarton in the late 1840s when the village was a little more established, but conditions still primitive. Her 'Tales of Pioneering Days,' recounted in 1933, reveal the circumstances of her father's emigration to South Australia, and the conditions the family encountered in the colony. (3)

Her father, William Holmes, had been a lace maker in Nottingham. He left England in a Government sponsored programme to introduce machine lace making to the Calais mill in France, and when revolution broke out in 1848, the thousand or so lacemakers were repatriated to their homeland. There was no work for him there, so he decided to 'go to the colonies, which were then on everybody's lips as another El Dorado':

> His wife and relatives were very averse to leaving ... but in the end he had his way and with his wife and family stepped onto the Navarina, which after a five month journey, landed at Holdfast Bay ... A spring dray conveyed them to the embryo city - and eventually they settled at Theberten as it was then called.
>
> Mr. Holmes got some land (lot 7) in Chapel Street, so called because there was a Wesleyan place of worship at the end. Beyond that was a great belt of gum trees, long since gone. The family lived in tents until he and his two young sons ehlped to build their home, which consisted of two large rooms divided into compartments with hessian. His house improved, still stands.

Mrs. Hannam recalled the difficulties of life in unfamiliar surroundings, where there were few of the conveniences of the homeland, and everyone had to provide for themselves :

> Mr. Holmes found there was no scope for his lace designing. The heat was intolerable and conveniences practically nil, for a drought had swept the land and the Torrens had dried into pools. Mrs.Hannam, except through hearing her parents discuss it later, has little memories of those disillusioning times, but she still remembers a quilted silk bonnet and dress which an aunt, with no knowledge of the climate, had packed for her.
>
> There was a well near their dwelling, but the water was too brackish for drinking purposes; and her two brothers would have to go across the parklands with buckets on poles to get water from the Torrens, and sometimes she would accompany them. People were very thankful when water carts began to trade - charging 1/- cash for it. This householders would have to keep at some semblance of coolness as best they could. Flies and ants were other sources of discomfort. Meat was dear and for a time also flour. Mrs. Hannam said she only had to go next door to school, which was kept by a very severe young man named Watson, and his sterner elderly wife. In time they worked it into quite a big school, the children sat on backless forms and had to bring their fees regularly every Monday morning.
>
> Fruit, except water melons and tomatoes were scarce and dear. Mrs. Hannam recalls bullock carts loaded with water melons, which men hawked from door to door. They had their own goat and thus plenty of milk. (3)

Even as the first homes were built, commercial ventures of every kind began to appear in Thebarton. Slaughtering, wool washing, tanning, brick making, flour milling and brewing were the earliest secondary industries, although small-scale and often family operated in the early years, they were sources of employment for workers in both Thebarton and Hindmarsh, and encouragement to the growth of trades, shops, hotels, and early transport facilities.

By the late 1850s, the strip of land along the River Torrens from South Road to the Port Road was dotted with noxious trades and brickyards, interspersed with farmlets - these industries were the forerunners of the large-scale concerns that developed in the late nineteenth century, and which exist today. Thebarton village was a commercial and residential centre; apart from a large flourmill and a few slaughter-houses, the village was a closely-knit community packed with houses, shops, hotels, schools, churches and small work-shops. With the exception of the industries along the Torrens and in the village, much of the remainder of Thebarton was pastoral, agricultural or vacant land.

Occupations in the early days were not as specialised as they are today. J.J. Pascoe wrote in 1901 :

> It is difficult for the average individual in an old settled country to realise how many parts on the stage of life a man can play in a new and undeveloped country... from one occupation to another of the most diverse description, the young Australian passes with marvellous facility. ( )

The uncertainty of business and the keenness of competition in the 1840s and 1950s was reflected in frequent changes of ownership, dissolutions of partnerships and bankruptcies. Wealthier people safeguarded themselves by combining several interests, such as a factory with a shop, hotel or farmland.

For working class people, employment was hard to find and keep. The rates of pay given in "Papers Relative to South Australia" in 1841 remained much the same until the early 1900s, except in periods of drought and depression. Unskilled labourers earned 4/- a day; skilled workers, or "mechanics", up to 7/-,and bullock drivers 5/-. Blacksmiths were better paid at 8/- a day. The City of West Torrens Centenary publication of 1953 records that in 1853, on the basis of a 48-hour week, its labourers earned 6/- a day, which increased to 6/6 in 1899. Gangers were paid 6/6, increased to 7/6 in 1900. Drivers received 9/-, although they had to supply their own horses and drays. Farmworkers were paid 4/- a day, male servants up to £30 a year, and females

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£ 20 a year if they were lucky. ( )

Wages fell to subsistence levels in early 1850, which prompted many South Australian colonists to leave for the Victorian gold fields in the early 1850s. Some were successful, others less so. Mrs. Hannam's father, William Holmes, was one of the unlucky ones :

> Like most of the men, (he) went to the Ballarat diggings, taking his two young sons with him, who, with the optimism of youth, were delighted at the prospect of possible adventure. Thieving was rife and unfortunately (he) and his sons lost the little gold they found.

It is a myth that, except for women and children, Adelaide was deserted during the gold-rush. Many of the labourers, tradespeople and others who went to the diggings returned periodically to their homes, or made only a brief visit to the goldfields. 'For a lot of the fortune-seekers, digging was as seasonal as their other occupations.' ( ) 445
Nevertheless, many of the female colonists were left for periods of time to carry on in the absence of the men.

As they had done in the past,women led busy lives involving much unpaid labour, whether at home, with their husbands in businesses or on farms, or as volunteers in churches and schools. Some were able to find paid work as school teachers, dressmakers, shopkeepers, publicans and dairywomen, but such jobs were few and poorly paid.

INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE

Tanneries and fellmongeries were among the first industries in Thebarton. Supported by raw materials from slaughterhouses in the west parklands and in Thebarton, the successful factories developed into large concerns by the late 'fifties. Because of the methods used in these trades, and the need for a plentiful supply of water, some of the factories spanned both sides of the Torrens - leading to some confusion about their exact location.

The first tannery in Thebarton was set up by Robert Laundry Ingham and George Thomas Bean. The partnership was dissolved 'by mutual consent' on 24 July 1839. Bean announced his intention to carry on the business in the Register of 10 August 1839 :

> George Bean, having taken the above business, hopes by his constant exertions and knowledge of the business, to merit that support and encouragement which his predecessor has met with during the time he has been engaged in the business. He likewise wishes to intimate to those persons residing in the bush, that he is at all times open to purchase for cash, hides, calf and kangaroo skins in any number.

In the South Australian Almanac of 1842, he advertised as a 'tanner, currier, leather-cutter and parchment - manufacturer' with a wholesale and retail warehouse in Rundle Street. Other members of the family, William Henry and Arthur, joined the business. The original tannery was situated on half an acre of land on section 1, adjacent to the Torrens near Dew Street (formerly Beans Road). The Beans also leased 15 acres of land on adjoining section 46, where they kept horses, cattle, sheep and goats. In about 1864, the Beans transferred the tannery to section 46 and built a large brick and stone house on the northern side of Redi Street, mid-way between Queen and Dew Streets. There is a common belief that the house once belonged to Captain John Hindmarsh. However, Mr. Alfred Tiffin's research into the history of the ownership of the house showed that Hindmarsh never lived in it( )After the Beans left the house, in about 1865, the property was bought by Robert Dalgleish, a local farmer, for £200.

In 1871, the land, house and tanyard passed to the Reid family, who maintained the tannery until the early 1900s. The house was pulled down sometime between 1915 and 1923, but part of the tannery remains as F.H. Faulding and Co. Ltd.'s 'Eucalyptus Oil' store.

The Beans were joined by a number of other tanners and fellmongers in the 'fifties and 'sixties. Thomas McKay had a tannery and house on 1½ acres near the Port Road bridge. The business was substantially enlarged by 1858, and was sold to S. Martin in 1866, after which there was a succession of owners.

William Roberts had a brick cottage and tannery on section 46, adjacent to the bridge on South Road, where Onkaparinga Textile Ltd. now stands. In 1855, Roberts' tannery was taken over by Ephraim and John Taylor, who began washing wool on the 3 acre property in 1856. Apart from the tannery and woolwashing works, they had six acres of cultivated land and four small coattages for their workers. By the mid 'sixties, they were doing very well - their property had extended to 12 acres and the original value had doubled to £80.

Colonel Light's old home and part of the land around it were used for many years by tanners and fellmongers, until Reverend McEwin moved into the house in the late 1870s. After George Gandy and the Mayos left in the early 1840s, George's brother Edward leased the house, 25 acres and 4 two roomed cottages, from Dr. Mayo's Trustees. He also leased the remaining 80 acres of section 1 north of the Thebarton village, until 1855, when Richard Addis took over the lease. Edward Gandy apparently left for the Victorian and Californian goldfields, and on his return to South Australia in the sixties, went to Stonyfell to manage a Jersey stud and cattle farm. ( )

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In 1858, David Solomon leased the house and cottages and a few surrounding acres, and in the following year Henry Warren took over the property. In 1863, John Temple Sagar occupied the house, and by 1869 had set up both a fellmongery and tanyard on 6 acres. The business passed to G. Catchlove in 1870, who appears t have enlarged Light's old home: it was described in the assessment book for that year as an 8 roomed house. In 1872, John Taylor occupied the property, and there was no further mention of a fellmongery or tanyard on the premises.

Newspapers were always keen to inform their readers of the achievements of manufacturers in the nineteenth century. In 1859, the Adelaide Observer reported on the tanneries and fellmongeries in Hindmarsh and Thebarton, which were judged to be 'as good as any to be found in the Southern Hemisphere.' The description of the industries revealed much about the methods of production and something of the working conditions in these industries.

In the first of two articles on the tanneries, the reporter wrote :

> In a colony boasting its millions of sheep and its hundreds of thousands of horses and cattle, it is natural to suppose we should find tanning and fellmongering carried on to a considerable extent; more especially should we look for the practice of the former, when it is considered how much leather is required for use (as boots) ... and where the mimosa bark, about the best agent in the world for tanning purposes can be brought in from our forests at a reasonable rate and in almost unlimited quantities. ( )

Adelaide Observer October, 1859.

The larger firms used steam engines to drive bark mills, which ground the bark into small pieces for immersion in the tanning liquid :

> The mill room ... is a scene of continual racket and perpetual dust, the tonic quality of which is very perceptible to the taste ... indeed the men can only work by keeping their mouths and noses, indeed their whole faces covered up to the eyes ... The hides, when they are brought to the butchers, are first washed, and then placed in vats filled with a solution of lime, increasing in strength from vat to vat. The time occupied in this maceration is about three weeks when they are taken out and placed upon beams, and all the hair remaining upon them ... is scraped off. They are then taken to the tanpits, and are steeped in an infusion of bark ... of increasing tannic force.

The hides were taken out after lengths of time varying from seven weeks for harness leather, to five months for sole leather. When dry they were rolled, scoured and placed in tallow and oil, in readiness for the manufacturer. The waste liquid was sometimes carted away for use by farmers as manure; more often than not it was pumped into the River Torrens. The ladies were advised to 'take a hint therefrom as to the care they should bestow on their complexion when questionable breezes (were) abroad.' According to the report, the Bean brothers sent off 25 hides a week, and Thomas McKay 25 to 30. ( )

Adelaide river NOV 59

The Taylor Brothers' fellmongery was described in the Adelaide Observer of 26 November 1859.

> Having paid two visits to our tanneries and described at length the principal establishments in that line, the fellmongeries appeared to demand a special inspection, and we accordingly strolled down to the Torrens, where it is crossed by a fine new iron bridge on the road from the Black Forest to the Port, and entered the establishment situated there belonging to Messrs. Taylor & Co.
>
> The various buildings and drying-grounds of this fellmongery, which is the most extensive in the colony, are spread over about three acres of ground, and an air of compactness and of happy arrangement prevails throughout them.
>
> Prior to any particular description of them we may explain as far as possible, the process pursued in this branch of industry. The sheepskins, collected from the various butcheries by the carts of the establishment, on being brought into the yard are subjected to various operations in order to remove the wool, which appeared to be rather a tedious business, there being so many different qualities in a single skin. The process is far too complex for us to detail minutely or satisfactorily, and we may safely say that the perfume emitted from the sweating-houses makes it not at all desirable to remain long in this particular locality. It is evident an immense amount of ammonia is generated, the pungency of which very strongly impinges the olfactories of any person who is not familiarized with the fragrancies of a fellmongery. The pelts, which in England are made into parchment, glue, &c., &c., are here almost useless, nine-tenthsbeing used as manure or dried in the open air and then occasionally shoved under the coppers as a sort of reviver when additional heat is required in the process of wool-scouring.

We now proceed to describe the process followed in relation to greasy wool, which, so soon as it has come in from the stations, is weighed and packed up in large stacks. It is then rolled under a shed, and being opened as required, is sorted according to quality. In the shed we entered four men were engaged in this operation. The fleeces were lifted from the floor and placed upon a table about five feet by three , in the centre of which is a wire grating of two feet by 20 inches, or thereabout, through which falls to the floor the particles of dirt and dust, which appear to be very considerable. The wool is then sorted into several qualities. It is afterwards scoured in large boilers closely adjacent, containing hot water, soap, soda, and other peculiar ingredients, which are continually added as the wool is passed through the coppers, great care being required in keeping the liquor up to a certain heat - a matter that

depends entirely upon the description and quality of wool under operation. There are three of these coppers upon the premises, containing from 150 to 200 gallons each. Fresh water is being continually pumped into them to compensate for evaporation and for what the wool absorbs as it passes through them. Such is the scouring process. The wool, after being thus scoured, is washed in the Torrens, and deprived of every particle of dirt and extraneous matters. It is then carried up well-made brick steps in hand-barrows, and piled up in heaps upon lattice-boards to drain, preparatory to being put out to dry.

Any one who visits the yard on glancing down from the scouring coppers to the bed of the river, will see the water so dammed up as to bring the stream close to the bank, and will notice seven stages placed across the stream at convenient distances, upon each of which are placed two large tubs to contain the wool, and also two square boxes or washes constructed of perforated zinc imported for the purpose, and so slung as to allow the water to pass through them and so carry with it all the impurities contained in the wool, which is kept continually agitated by men furnished with long sticks, &c., for the purpose.
The wool after being sufficiently drained is spread upon large sheets to dry, and is turned two or three times a day. The drying-ground in Messrs. Taylor & Co's establishment extends over an area of an acre, one-third of which is boarded. This part of the yard is fenced off from the rest by a close fence. The time occupied in drying the wool after it is spread out varies, according to weather, from one to two days. In spreading the wool to dry the various qualities are kept distinct, as they also are when put into the woolshed, bins being formed for the reception of each variety. In one of the woolsheds, which are of smple dimensions, is an excellent screw-press, made by Mr. Wyatt, of Adelaide, from a pattern in the possession of Messrs. Peacock & Son.

It occupies two men ten hours to pack and finish off eight bales. The press in the busy season of the year is at work day and night; and a watchman is upon the premises from dusk to dawn as a precaution against accident and fire, and to light the fires under the scouring-pans in the morning. There is also a new and commodious shed upon the other side of the yard for classing and repacking washed fleece wools. The salting of hides for exportation is also carried on upon Messrs. Taylor & Co.'s premises. The hides being brought in fresh from the butcher, are placed in brine, after which they are spread upon a board, and a layer of slat of no inconsiderable thickness is placed upon them and rubbed into them. After they have lain there from a week to a fortnight they are rolled up, and afterwards shipped. A stack of 350, cured and ready for shipment, lay in the house at the time we visited it. Gluepieces arealso made at this establishment from the feet of bullocks, &c., in a manner not hitherto practised in the colony, although long prevalent in Sydney. Some tons have been shipped for the home market during the

current year. Neatsfoot oil is also manufactured on the premises by a new process. When clarified by some chemical ingredient, which is a secret with the firm, it is clear and pale as the finest sherry, and evidently far superior to that made by the old method. Messrs. Taylor & Co. employ 40 hands in the summer season and 15 or 16 in the winter; they keep eight horses for their business; they operate upon from 1,200 to 1,500 sheepskins per week; they salt 300 hides per month; and they wash, scour, or repack 1,500 bales of wool in the year.

Brickmaking in Thebarton grew from humble beginnings to become an important industry in the 1870s and 1880s. The earliest brickyards were small and usually run by families. The first brickmakers started in the Adelaide parklands, until they were evicted by the Government in May 1838. Fortunately, there were good deposits of alluvial or 'plastic' clay along the banks of the Torrens in Thebarton and Torrensville, extending as far south as George Street and North Parade.

The clay was mixed with water, and sometimes sand and other ingredients and then kneaded by hand or foot to soften and mix it thoroughly. Some manufacturers experimented with machines to shorten the process. Pan mills and pugmills were most commonly used. The traditional way of shaping the clay was to mould it by hand on a table. This method was refined when wooden moulds and the wire-cut system were introduced. The bricks were then ready to be dried in the sun or under sheds, in preparation for firing in the kiln. More sophisticated machinery was introduced in later years, but the principles remained much the same in South Australian brickyards using plastic clays. ( )

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George Gandy must have been the first brickmaker in Thebarton. The Southern Australian of 27 February 1839 advertised the 'delivery of bricks to any part of South Australia, for £ 3 per thousand, or at the kiln on No. 1 Country Section for £ 2. 10s.' Specimens were on show at the office of Light Finniss & Co. This was probably Gandy's brickyard; a year later he advertised the sale of 200,000 of the 'finest bricks' at his yard at Theb arton. ( )

South alian 29 ber, 1839 uary

Other brickmakers in the early years were John Sarre, whose 2 acre brickfield adjoined the River Torrens on Section 1, at the back of Thomas McKay's tannery. In 1857 he was joined by John Lane, but the business did not prosper and by 1859 the land was vacant.

The only major industry in Thebarton village was Gardiner and Craigies' "Victoria" flour mill, which was opened in May 1842, ( ) and was said to have the services of the most experienced miller in the colony. ( ) The mill took up eight allotments between Chapel and George Streets, including the area that later became Albert Street.

The brick and stone building was three storeys high and measured 21 feet by 18 feet, with an outhouse for the boiler and a 45 foot chimney. It was originally driven by gearing, but the cogs were replaced by belts in 1843. The ground floor was taken up by the machinery, the first floor by the grinding stones, and the second floor by two hoppers; one for the meal, the other for the wheat. By 1853, Christopher Whitford had taken over the mill and the value of the property had doubled to £200. He later sold the business to Thomas Waterhouse, after which it steadily declined in value - by 1865 there was no further mention of it in the Assessment Books.

In keeping with its working class character, Thebarton was well supplied with hotels, some of which reflect individual industries in their names. Apart from being places for people to drink, relax and meet friends, hotels had a another role as business concerns. William Gardiner wisely invested in one to accommodate visitors to the flour mill in George Street. The Wheat Sheaf Tavern was on allotments 105 and 106, immediately to the east of the present Wheatsheaf Hotel, which was built in 1919. He advertised the opening in the Register of 26 October 1844 :

> The pleasant village of Thebarton was on Tuesday last visited by a number of our respectable citizens for the purpose of celebrating the opening of the "Wheat Sheaf Tavern", recently purchased by our respected fellow colonist Mr. William Gardiner, and opened by him for the purpose of affording accomodation to the numerous country settlers frequenting his mill at Thebarton. On this occasion our worthy host and hostess placed before the guests a sumptuous dinner, comprising all the variety of luxuries in the colony. John Wotherspoon Esq., honoured the company by presiding over them; and on the cloth being removed, the usual loyal toasts were given, and responded to with great enthusiasm, and the company separated in perfect harmony at an advanced hour in the evening, wishing Mr. Gardiner every success that his perseverance and industry justly entitle him to.

A succession of publicans ran the hotel from 1846 to 1870; these included Thomas Ottaway, Charles Barnett, Alfred and Fanny Swift (who ran the hotel for a relatively long period of six years), William Smythe, William Robertson, and James Logan.

Another early hotel which still exists, the Foresters and Squatters Arms, was opened in 1850. There was considerable variation in the name of this hotel, which was built on the corner of George Street and East Terrace and opened in 1850. Patrick McCarron ran it until 1855, when C. O'larenshaw took it over. It then passed to R.B. Morgan, Thomas Jacques, H.W. Bolt and Charles Hepworth.

The Market Tavern, (renamed in 1848 the Butcher's Arms Inn,) was the forerunner of the present Mile End Hotel; it was opened in 1840, with William Wilkins as the first lessee. The hotel was opposite Hardy's Wine Cellars, next to the Thebarton cattle sale yards; these were in the vicinity of what is now Junction Lane. In 1845, the licence was transferred to William Dumbleton, who had a butcher shop in the city. There were a number of publicans after 1847, and in 1870 the hotel was renamed the Mile End Hotel, with Charles Blake in charge.

Other hotels in Thebarton were less successful; William Gandy opened the Brickmakers' Arms (otherwise known as the Bricklayers' Arms) in 1840, but in the following year it closed down. The Great Tom of Lincoln, also known as the Great Bell of Lincoln, lasted a little longer. Robert Bristow was the first licensee in 1840; by the end of the decade this too, succumbed to the competition from the other hotels.

There was certainly no shortage of shops in Thebarton village. Those who required meat and slaughtering services had three places from which to choose: John Cooter's butcher shop at the eastern end of Chapel Street; John Powell's shop and slaughterhouse in George Street, and John Hemmingway's butchery, a little further along the street, near the Port Road.

There were a number of general stores in George Street: William Gurr's, next to Powell's shop; Robert May's, which stood on the site of the present group of shops on the north-west corner of George and Albert Streets, and almost opposite May, Thomas Newman's store.

B/59

W.T.D.C. King Wm. Street
13 March 1855

Sir

I am instructed by the West Torrens District Council to write to you on the subject of the establishment of a branch Post Office at Hilton in the above District -

The above place is in the centre of a very thickly neighbourhood and the Council trust such an Office will be established particularly when they state that there are only two Post Offices in the entire district viz: Thebarton & Plenty situate at the extreme points of the district.

Mr. Ruddock a storekeeper at Hilton states his willingness to conduct the Office & carry the mail 3 times a week to & from Thebarton free of any charge during the present year

The Council venture to hope there will be no difficulty in establishing such an office at once - I remain Sir

Your obedt. Servt.
W.A. Hughes Clerk

John Wm. Esq.
Post Master General

Mr. Ruddock, a storekeeper at Hilton, carried mail to and from Matthew Crosby's Post Office in Chapel Street three times a week, free of charge. In this letter to the Post Master General, the West Torrens District Clerk requested a branch Post Office at Hilton, (From the West Torrens District Council Letter Book, 13 March 1855)

Matthew Crosby ran a combined Post Office and store on the northern side of Chapel Street, mid-way between Albert and Admella Streets. There were three bakeries in Thebarton in the 'fifties and 'sixties. Cornelius Crowder and Samuel Irish each had one in George Street, and George Moody Dew ran a very successful bakery at his home in Chapel Street, almost at the back of the George Street Methodist Church.

Don Dew, a great-grandson of George Moody Dew and former owner of Dew's Beverages on the corner of Chapel and Dew Streets, remembers the bakery being used as a living room during his childhood. It is said that Thebarton church-goers put their Sunday roast in the bakery oven before they went to the service, so that it was ready for them upon their return ( )
George Moody Dew's house survived for over a century, until it was demolished in the mid 1950s.

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Like many businesspeople, George Moody Dew combined his commercial interests with involvement in civic affairs and community work. One of the best known early residents, he arrived in South Australia in 1840, at the age of 22, with his wife Dinah and one child. They eventually raised eleven children, some of whom died; Elizabeth Ann died at 18 of tuberculosis, or "rapid consumption" as it was called. ( )

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George Moody Dew was a founding member of the West Torrens District Council, and a Councillor for 21 years before he retired in 1876. The Thebarton Corporation has an illuminated address presented to Dew on behalf of the District Council and Ratepayers, thanking him for "the constant attention (he) paid to the interests of the District, and the fair and impartial manner in which (he) discharged the always arduous, and at times unpleasant duties of a District Councillor."

George Moody Dew was an active campaigner for sanitation and law and order; one of the first problems he tackled was the blood and refuse discharged into the Torrens from the City slaughterhouse in the west parklands - this as early as November 1853.
In the following year he moved that Thebarton be brought within the limits of the Police Act, so that special constables could be appointed to the district. His efforts were successful and in July 1855, the first constable lists were hung at chapels in Thebarton, Plympton, Richmond and Glenelg. John Hemingway and Edward Lowe (a carpenter and undertaker) were appointed constables for the Thebarton area.

BRIDGES AND ROADS

The improvement of roads and bridges was of great concern to people in the early years, but they were difficult and costly to build and maintain. Before the Government passed responsibility for the upkeep of district roads and streets to local councils in 1852, people had to provide for themselves - if they were lucky, they were aided by wealthier members of the community.

The lack of a bridge across the Torrens at the Port Road was of great concern to travellers ... to and from the City. The South Australian, 30 April 1840, gave notice that a public meeting would be held at the Great Tom of Lincoln Inn, Thebarton, on 4 May, to discuss the building of a bridge over the Torrens. The meeting, which was attended by 'numerous and respectable' people, resulted in a committee of 13 and the start of subscriptions for the bridge. By 15 May 1840, £200 had been raised, but it seems that the scheme went no further, probably because of the current economic depression. ( )

The South Australian, 18 October 1844 reported that William Wilkins, licensee of the Market Hotel, Thebarton, constructed the first known Port Road bridge, of 'rough logs built in the American fashion'. A succession of floods weakened the bridge; despite repairs, it was washed away in 1848. It was replaced almost immediately by a Government funded bridge costing £1,000.( )

As with the Port Road bridge, the construction of Taylor's bridge on South Road was accompanied by much argument. After prolonged discussion between Hindmarsh and West Torrens District Councils, various subscribers donated money, foremost among them John Taylor. Tenders were called for the building of the bridge, and that of Mr. H. Dicken accepted.

The bridge was completed in July 1858. ( ) It was replaced by a new one 45 years later. The Advertiser reported the proceedings on 18 December 1903 : ( )

> Forty-five years ago great interest was taken in the opening of Taylor's Bridge and the ceremony was carried out in an imposing manner. Taylor's Bridge is now a thing of the past... the new steel Thebarton Bridge was opened ... and a large concourse witnessed the ceremony. Within a few yards from the scene of gaiety, in the Hindmarsh Cemetery, were the remains of many who were present at the opening of Taylor's Bridge, amongst them John Taylor, one of the chief factors in the erection of the wooden structure named after him. A few who witnessed the christening of Taylor's Bridge by Miss Emery on July 1, 1858, also saw a similar ceremony performed by Miss Brucker

ROADS

The Port Road, opened in 1840, was for many years only a track, with deep ruts and gullies in the vicinity of Hindmarsh and Thebarton, and no bridge on the western side of the Torrens. People travelling to the City were forced to leave the road where it ended at Hindmarsh and Thebarton, and went through the north parklands until they could cross the Torrens at the ford near Morphett Street. Travellers through Thebarton were hampered by the lack of public roads, and often had to cross fenced land or make detours to arrive at their destinations. The most important thoroughfare, the Reedbeds Road (now Henley Beach Road) was delcared a public road in 1841 but it was not properly surfaced until after 1855. Even then, it only extended from Fulham to Underdale - the residents of Thebarton went for many years without direct access to the City along Henley Beach Road. The problem was relieved when in 1855, Kintore Street was formed and declared a public road. But by the following year it was in need of repair, and according to Council Minutes, 'near impassable'.

WEST TORRENS DISTRICT COUNCIL

The need to improve living conditions outside Adelaide, and the unwillingness of the central government to undertake the responsibility, led to the passing of the District Councils Act in 1852. Based on the English Municipal Reform Act of 1835, it provided for the election of a council and for the levying of rates - given that there were sufficient ratepayers. Rates were needed most urgently for the building of roads and bridges, but there were many other things to be financed as well.

The first meeting was held on 25 March 1853, at Thebarton. People from Hilton, Cowandillah, Richmond, Reedbeds, St. Leonards, Plympton and adjoining lands also attended. It was proposed that the boundaries should be the parklands on the east; the sea on the west; the centre of the River Torrens on the north and the centre of the Bay Road (now Anzac Highway) on the south. The district comprised 9,000 acres, and included the Reedbeds, a vaguely defined area which stretched from south of Port Adelaide to the present suburbs of Lockleys, Fulham, Grange and Henley Beach. It was suggested that George Moody Dew, John Foreman, Abraham H. Davis, C.S. Hare and John Hector should be the first Councillors.

115 people signed the petition for the formation of the Council, and almost immediately another 55 people signed a counter-petition, claiming that the population of the area was not sufficient to support a local council, and that the state of the labour market was too unsettled. The first petition however, was approved, and the District Council of West Torrens was proclaimed in the Government Gazette on 7 July 1853.

The first meeting was held in John Hector's office in Adelaide; Abraham Davis was appointed Chairperson and temporary Clerk, until W.A. Hughes took up the position. The 'most pressing need' was to survey and assess the district, which George Francis did for a fee of £80. To cover this and other preliminary expenses the Council borrowed £100 from the Colonial Treasurer.

The Council had a host of tasks to carry out under the powers conferred by the Act, and little experience in how to go about them. It was responsible for maintaining and regulating roads, bridges, hotels, shops and slaughterhouses, stray stock, drainage and sanitation, noxious weeds and police services, among other things. The public expected much, but some were reluctant to pay the necessary rates or to accept civic involvement in their affairs - when the Council settled on a rate of one shilling in the pound in 1855, objectors proposed that it should be only one farthing!

Apart from the day-to-day problems, there were constant arguments about ward boundaries. When in 1859 the District Council was divided into four wards - Thebarton with two members, and Reedbeds , Hilton and Plympton each with one - there were indications of the town versus country differences that would lead to Thebarton's separation thirty years later. 68 petitioners from the Reedbeds Ward disputed the need for wards in their area; if there were to be any, they preferred to join Hindmarsh District Council. In the event, the residents of the Reedbeds south of the River Torrens remained with the West Torrens District Council, but petitions for and against ward boundaries dogged Councillors for many years to come.

CHAPTER THREE

COMMUNITY LIFE, FROM THE 1830s TO THE 1860s

CHAPTER THREE

In the early years, the Thebarton community was bound by its geographical isolation, the newness of the settlement, and the need to co-operate in the development of the village. Leisure time (and that was scarce) revolved around the church, shops, hotels and the streets, where people could meet face-to-face and exchange news, gossip, and information.

There was no hard and fast class system, but there were distinctions between various groups of people. The 'establishment' were the original land-owners of the 1830s and 1840s, usually skilled tradespeople, industrialists, retailers and small farmers - men like George Bean, Christopher Whitford, and George Moody Dew, who were looked up to by the community as leaders and models of behaviour. Lesser shop-keepers, semi-skilled and unskilled tradespeople occupied a slightly lower position on the scale. Below them were the 'undesirables' - larrikins, prostitutes, and the destitute.

THE CHURCH

While the local constabulary did its best to keep people in line, a different form of law and order was maintained by the Church. Apart from the spiritual guidance it provided, religion had a restraining influence on many aspects of everyday life, like education, recreation, family values and public morality (especially where drinking, gambling, prostitution and observance of the Sabbath were concerned). The earliest churches, which were often combined with schools, grew from humble beginnings; the first services were often held in homes or out of doors, until churches were built. Finance, as was the case with so many other facilities and services, was provided by the community, sometimes with the aid of prominent local residents and businesspeople.

The names of benefactors appear on a number of church foundation stones in Thebarton.

The main religious groups were Anglican, Methodist (with its several branches), Roman Catholic and Baptist. Of Thebarton's population of about 1,801 in 1881, nearly a third were Anglican.
The Wesleyan Methodists were not far behind, at 20% of the population. 15.3% were Roman Catholic and nearly 9% Baptist. ( )

The Wesleyans were first to start services in Thebarton. We can trace the history of Methodism to 1841, when services were held in Mr. Weston's home in Maria Street, under the guidance of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference. Soon afterwards the Thebarton Wesleyan Sunday School was set up, with an attendance of 99 children and 7 teachers. Many of these children must have come from outside the Thebarton area.

The congregation soon outgrew its small abode, and in 1847, land in Chapel Street was bought by Reverend Daniel James Draper, (where John Dring's Chapel Street property is now). The chapel was opened in 1848, making it one of the earliest Wesleyan Church buildings in the Adelaide suburbs.

A church trust was formed on the 19th January 1853, headed by John Colton and other well known businesspeople, including Robert Hawkes, Christopher Whitford, William Gurr, Josiah Norris and John Gillingham. The church was attached to the vast Pirie Street Circuit, which ranged from Adelaide to Parkside, Plympton, The Reedbeds area, and places in between.
Although the chapel seated 120, the congregation continued to grow and a larger church was needed.

Work began on the present George Street church in 1863. The Register of 7 December 1863 announced the plans :

> The foundation stone of the above building will be laid on Wednesday next, December 9, by Mrs. Watsford at 5 o'clock p.m. A tea meeting will take place in the MILL at 6 o'clock; and in the evening a lecture will be delivered by the Rev. J. Watsford. Subject - 'Edgar A. Poe and his Works'. Chair to be taken at 7.30 o'clock by G. P. Harris Esq. A collection will be made at the close of the lecture in aid of the Trust Fund. Tickets for the Tea 1s. each may be had from Messrs. G. P. Harris and Coombs, Hindley Street; Norris, Hindmarsh; and Crosby and Newman, Thebarton.

The trustees of the church were John Colton (later Sir), W. G. Coombs, J. S. Green, J. D. Hill, E. C. Corlett, G. P. Harris (a partner of Harris, Scarfe and Co.), Ellis Norman, Joseph Beasley, the Rev. C. T. Newman and John May. The church had a capacity of 250 and cost £1030.

The Register informed its readers of the opening :

> The OPENING SERVICES of the above chapel will take place on Sunday next, 13th inst. when three sermons will be preached - that in the morning at half past 10, by the Rev. J. Watsford; that in the afternoon, at half past 2 by the Rev. S. L. Harris; and that in the evening at 6 o'clock by Rev. John Cope. On Monday 14th a Tea Meeting will be held at the MILL at 6 o'clock; to be followed by a PUBLIC MEETING in the Chapel - Chair to be taken at 7 o'clock. Addresses are expected from Rev's J. Watsford, J. Cope, W. Brown, N. Bennet and several other ministers and friends. Omnibuses will leave the Pirie Street Chapel for the Tea Meeting at quarter to 6 o'clock. Tickets for Tea 1/6; for Tea and Conveyance both ways 2/-, may be had at Messrs. G. P. Harris and Coombs, Hindley Street; Green's and Jas. Scott's Rundle St; and at Newman's and Crosby's, Thebarton.

In the 1880s, the Methodist church became more involved in youth work, and a hall was needed. This was built in 1883, next to the church, on land bought from Mrs. Putland. The hall was equipped with classrooms, and in about 1914, a kindergarten was built at the rear, with the aid of Fred Crafter and other volunteers.

Others who worked for the church in the early days were John Ottaway, (a local preacher), Robert Stokes sen., Walter Hemmingway, J. Filsell, John Illman, Edward Rowell, George Norman, William Perriam, R. T. Burnard and A. G. Lea. In the early years, C. J. Filsell led the singing with his flute, until a harmonium was bought. For 33 years, members of the Filsell family continued to play the organ.

As the congregation dwindled during the twentieth century, services were transferred in 1979 to the Holder Memorial Church on South Road. Fortunately the former Methodist church is still in use - in about 1977 the Aboriginal Lutheran Fellowship of Greater Adelaide Inc. took it over, and Sunday services are held for the Aboriginal congregation. Youth groups and the Women's Guild also share the premises.

The old church in Chapel Street was bought by R. T. Burnard, a local teacher, and used as a day school for some time. In January 1878 it was sold to the Rev. Burnet Patch Mudge and became one of only three churches ever owned by the United Free Methodist Church in South Australia. However, it was not destined to be a church for much longer. It was closed in 1895, five years before the union of the Methodist branches, (Wesleyan, Primitive Methodist and Bible Christian) and the inclusion of Thebarton in the Adelaide Western Suburban Circuit. The old chapel was sold and used as a dwelling until its demolition in 1961.

EARLY SCHOOLS

The schooling of children in the Thebarton area lacked standards and organization in the early years - a state of affairs that no doubt pleased the children ! The first schools were private ones, forced to cope with unsuitable buildings and equipment and lack of funds. Schooling was not compulsory and many children spent time away, at home or working on farms.

Early efforts to regulate education in South Australia were hampered by the controversy over State aid to churches and church schools. In 1847, Governor Robe established a Board of Education to supervise schools receiving aid, but in 1851 the new South Australian Legislative Council abolished State aid to denominational schools. A Central Board of Education was set up, with the power to give communities some finance to build their own schools; it could also licence teachers and pay them a salary of up to £100 a year. District Councils were authorized to inspect their local schools, and a Chief Inspector, Dr. William Wyatt, was appointed. ( )

an, A.,
13.

In the meantime, the schools in Thebarton battled on, with varying degrees of success. According to Glen Ralph's research, C.E. Evans had a school which seems to have closed down by 1851. Henry Watson's Chapel Street school fared better; in 1851, there were 37 boys and 8 girls in attendance. Dr. Wyatt reported favourably on the school :

> Although the attendance at Mr. Watson's school has been injuriously affected of late, by a decrease of population in Thebarton, his unwearied attention and zealous endeavours to supply the pupils entrusted to his charge with a sound and useful education have ever been most gratifying. The girls are under the able supervision of his wife. ( )

lph, G.
. 3.

Reading between the lines of one ex-scholar's reminiscences, we get a rather different picture of life at the school. In 1933, Mrs. Sarah Hannam, (formerly Holmes), wrote :

> (I) only had to go next door to school, which was kept by a very severe young man named Watson, and his sterner elderly wife. In time they worked it into quite a big school, the children sat on backless forms and had to bring their fees regularly every Monday morning. ( )

Express and Journal, 7 May 1933

Watson ran the school until about 1863, when he seems to have closed it but he lived there until 1876, when Mr. Haddrick became the owner. In the early 'sixties, William McCreeth opened a school in George Street, then moved to Light Terrace. This school, which was opposite the bottom of what is now James Street, had 66 students in 1864 and 114 in 1872. Pamela McCreeth, who was possibly his wife, helped him run the school. ( )

pb, C- p. 6

Alfred Bell's school, which was in a house in Chapel Street, opened in 1852. The 26 boys and 15 girls were offered a wider range of subjects than most students; apart from the three R's, they studied grammar, geography, and history. Bell resigned in 1857, and Mrs. Elizabeth Rogers set up a school in a different part of Chapel Street in 1857 and added singing to the list of subjects. In the following year, Miss Sarah Rogers took over the school, where she taught drawing as well as the other subjects. The quality of the education though, was 'simple and elementary' according to Dr. Wyatt. ( ) In the mid 'sixties Miss Rogers moved the school to a house in Maria Street, and after 1867 Mrs. Rix carried it on for several years.

pb, Cr p. 6

There was little higher education in these years. Most children left school at the age of 12, and went to work to earn extra income for their families. Adult education did not exist; in the nineteenth century this usually took the form of meetings and lectures in a Mechanics' Institute or public hall. Thebarton had neither - all it had was a Debating Society which met in a cottage in George Street, near John Hemingway's butcher shop - and these meetings would have appealed more to the better-off people than anyone else in the village.

RECREATION

Leisure activities and entertainment, like most other aspects of nineteenth century life, were based on the British pattern. Churches, hotels, market places and sports grounds were the main venues for public social gatherings. The earliest organised sporting contest in Thebarton must have been the cricket match held in October, 1839 :

> A grand match will be played on Monday, October 28, on the Thebarton Cricket Ground, between eleven gentlemen of the Royal Victoria Independent Club and eleven gentlemen of Adelaide, for Twenty-Two guineas a side. Wickets to be pitched at 10 o'clock. Refreshments will be provided, and everything done that can add to the pleasure of the public. ( )

The Register
1 October 1839

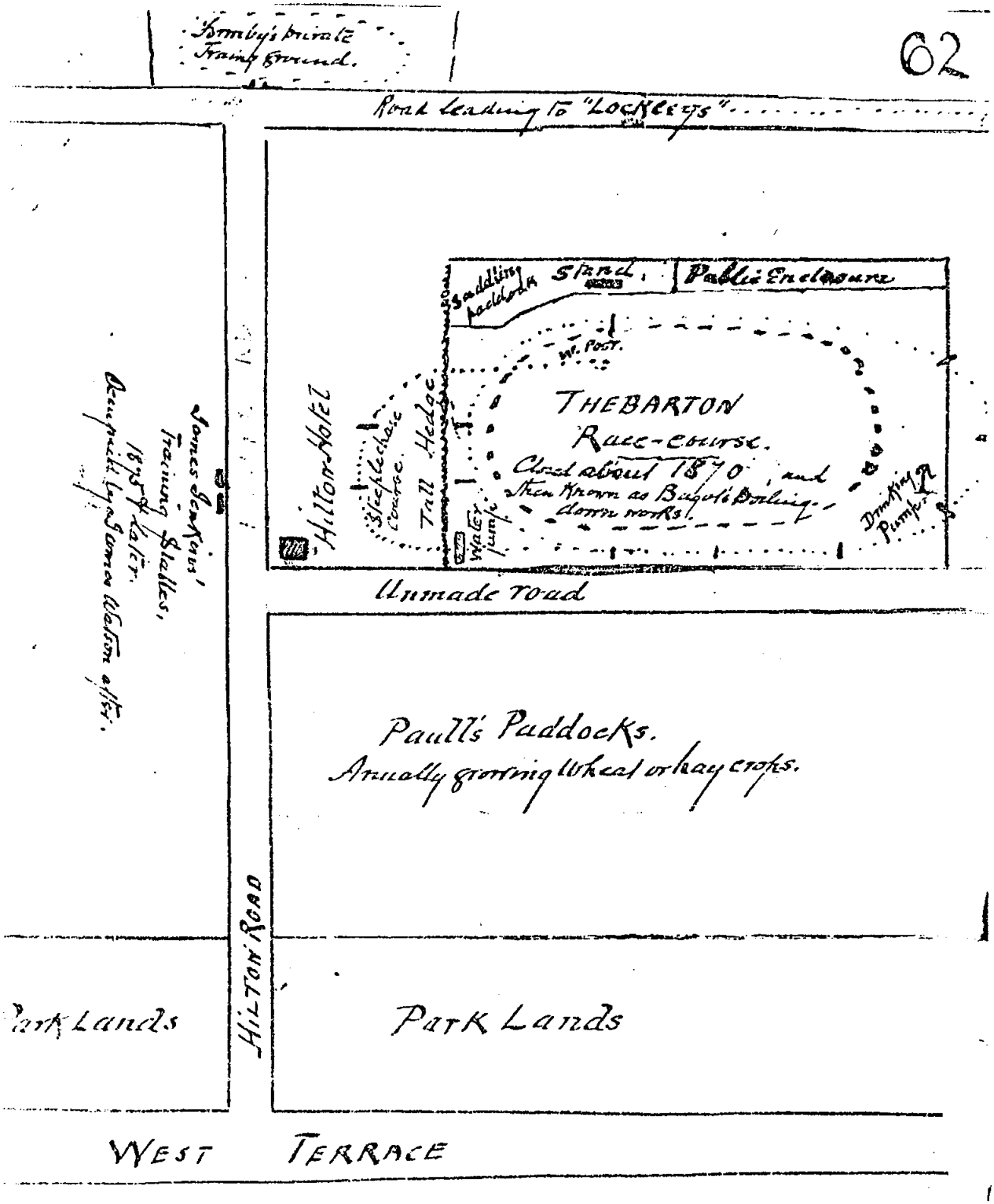
The host was the proprietor of the Great Tom of Lincoln Hotel, Mr. Bristow, who treated his guests to such traditional British entertainments as juggling and climbing the greasy pole. The Register reported later that after a keen contest, the Thebarton Club defeated the Colonists by eleven.

THE RACE COURSE

Entertainment on a far grander scale was provided at the Thebarton races, which began on New Year's Day, 1838, hardly twelve months after the Colony was settled. The first meeting was held on a dusty paddock on Section 48, now Mile End, with Colonel Light and James Hurtle Fisher, the Resident Commissioner, as stewards.

The course has been definitely located as occupying the U of Henley Beach Road, South Road (formerly Fisher Terrace) and Burbridge Road (formerly Hilton Road), on the western side of South Road. Part of the track on the northern side followed what is now Henley Beach Road. ( )

th Aust. hives, earch Note 62.



(S.A. Archives, Research Note No.62.)

According to The Victorian Ruff's Guide, or the Pocket Racing Companion of 1863, the course was left-handed and had well rounded corners. It was one mile, 3 furlongs and 187 yards in length. The stand, which accommodated 400 people, was situated in the south-west corner of the section and had refreshment rooms underneath. Between the stand and the boundary fence was a saddling paddock, with loose boxes and a weighing house.

Racing in the early days was a far cry from the sophisticated industry we know today, but the rough and ready conditions did not dampen the enthusiasm of the spectators. One contemporary observer wrote :

> On the first of January, 1838, Adelaide left for a while its speculative orgy in town acres... neglected for a day, the evolution of a town, and sought surcease on a gum-studded plain... 'down near the river'.
>
> Thither went about 800 of the colony's 2,000 people. Thither, too, were ridden matted-coated 'nags' from small farms and outstations as far afield as the Para, island horses shipped at pain and risk from Van Dieman's Land, and sturdy-muscled hacks which had come down from the overland route with Hawdon, Bonney, Sturt or Eyre. There were no aristocracy of blood or looks. They were innocent of pedigree, and some were as many cornered as a wagonette.
>
> The paddock at Thebarton was far removed from the animation and excitement of Epsom Downs, but these colonial sportsmen did their best. There was a canvas booth where William Chittleborough, or his fellow publicans, dispensed pleasant tipple from Wright's brewery, another where there was dancing to the violin, and in short, every attention was paid to render the affair worthy of support. ( )

oted in the
ory of the South
ralian Jockey
), p.3.

Among those present at the first race and the one held next day were John Morphett; Samuel Stephens, Colonial Manager of the South Australian Company; Edward Stephens, Cashier of the Bank of South Australia; T. Gilbert; Captain Berkely; John Brown, Emigration Officer; Dr. Wright, Medical Officer to the Survey, and Mr. Cotter, Colonial Surgeon. Among the riders was James Hurtle Fisher's son, Charles Brown Fisher; he and his brother James, later became the owners of Section 48. Charles, James, and their brother Hurtle, went on to breed some of the finest race horses in South Australia at their Lockleys Stud.

Later in life, C. B. Fisher was to have some misgivings about the development of racing over the years :

> We used to have good racing then, and the horses had better stamina... We never thought of stall-feeding in those days, but there were a lot of native grasses that had more substance in them than present-day feed has. *
> Of course our racehorses were stabled.
>
> They did not get up the speed they do now, but the stamina was there. There is too much short-distance racing nowadays. In the old times, the town plates were always run in heats of two miles. The intention of racing was to improve the breed of horses. ( )

istory of the S.A
ockey Club, p. 4

The continued support of the original patrons of the Thebarton races assured the survival of racing as an established sport. In August 1838, the Turf Club of South Australia was formed. The Club sponsored two annual meetings, and when races weren't run, the Thebarton course was used by stock drovers or other horse owners for scratch races.

In January 1856, the first South Australian Jockey Club was formed, with James Hurtle Fisher as Chairperson. This was probably the successor to the old Turf Club. The S.A. Jockey Club was reformed in 1861, with a management committee of Edward Meade Bagot, P. B. Coglin, W. K. Sims, G. Bennett and W. Blackler. E. M. Bagot held the office of secretary and treasurer. This club ran the first Adelaide Cup on the Thebarton course, in April 1864. The Cup was valued at 500 sovereigns, with sweepstakes of 50 sovereigns. The race was run over two miles, and was won by 'Falcon', with 'Roebuck' coming second. In 1865, the cup was won by J. C. James' 'Ebor' (Robe spelt backwards). E. M. Bagot's 'Cowra' won the cup in 1866 and 1867.

* This view was expressed to "Rufus" of the Register in 1902.
The first Town Plate was run in 1839.

In September 1866, a Grand Annual Steeplechase was held on the course. The horses had to run over four miles, across a number of low fences and a wall with a wide ditch on either side. The winner, 'Cadger', was described in The Victorian Ruff's Guide, or Pocket Racing Companion, as "a neat little animal, but not up to weight". ( )

story of the
A. Jockey
6, p. 13.

No doubt C. B. Fisher would have given the horse full credit for his performance, despite the criticism! Little 'Cadger' made history in another way, for in that race he was ridden by well-known Australian poet and rider, Adam Lindsay Gordon.

The steeplechase must have been an exciting and somewhat dangerous experience. Mark Russell Gawen recalled his memories of the course in the 1860s :

> Scenes and features of the old Thebarton racecourse are some of my earliest memories. There was far more revelry at a race meeting in those dim days than there is now.
>
> Immediately adjoining the stand was a long stretch of ground, which served as the very centre of the "side business" of the meeting. Big canvas marquees formed the public drinking bars and luncheon places; merry-go-rounds creaked and swayed under their loads of juvenile patrons; "cock-shys" and "Aunt Sally's" abounded; circus tumblers in spangled trunks and skin-tight cotton garments threw their somersaults, hand springs and catherine wheels on strips of coir matting... and the ubiquitous hot saveloy man cried his slogan, "All 'ot! All 'ot!" with proud acclaim and raucous voice.
>
> How I remember the well with an iron pump far over in the north-eastern corner of the ...grounds, a good way from the stand. On a hot day, between the races, a long line of thirsty souls would stream back and forth from the well.
>
> As a general rule the horses were despatched from ... a post-and-rail fence running through the centre of a prickly hedge... not far from the grandstand. On occasion there would be a wild stampede of spectators near the jump as some baulking and unruly horse refused and, whipping round, caused dire confusion and occasional hurt among the venturesome enthusiasts.

> When horses cleared this fence they disappeared from view behind the high hedge, and, galloping across a paddock towards the Hilton Hotel, during which they had to clear another fence or two, reappeared on the course at the lower corner near an unmade road. To reach the legitimate confines of the course, the field had to jump a formidable fence with a broad artificially made ditch on the landing side, which often proved disastrous for the competitors. ( )

The Adelaide Chronicle, 21 December, 1933.

Onlookers loved to gather near this obstacle, (known as Bagot's Ditch) to watch the horses fly or flounder over it - with or without their jockeys! Sometimes three riders at a time were parted from their mounts, much to the amusement of the spectators.

The formidable nature of the ditch seemed to fit the personality of the man who designed it. E. M. Bagot, pioneer pastoralist, sportsman and a founder of the stock and station agents Bagot, Shakes and Lewis Ltd., was described by Mark Gawen as

> An engine-like personality in the affairs of (racing), a dominating presence who, adopting the emblematic garb of the typical John Bull, wore it for all the years I can remember, and longer. His tremendously solid figure, with its leonine head, clothed in top-boots and Bedford cord breeches, single-button Bliss tweed coat and broad, flat-rimmed 'topper' made a unique and imposing impression... and his deep, rolling voice commanded immediate attention.

Even Bagot's influence however, could not prevent the S.A. Jockey Club from closing down. By 1869, it had liabilities of £802 and only £15 cash in hand. Bagot resigned his secretaryship, and the lease on the Thebarton course was terminated. Racing continued in the east parklands until the S.A.J.C. was re-formed in 1874 and races were started at Morphettville in 1875. Before his death in 1886, E. M. Bagot set up a boiling-down works in Bagot Avenue.

The races probably did not stop too soon for the West Torrens District Council. By the late 'fifties the glamour and prestige associated with the course had begun to wear a little thin - for the local residents more than anyone else. Illicit gambling was a problem, and at first the Council took it upon itself to deal with the offenders. In February 1858, the District Clerk reported that he and the Superintendent of Police, as well as the local constables had made efforts to prevent gambling. Clearly, they felt it was not a matter for local government, for the Council resolved to "write to the Commissioner of Police as to the powers of the police to put down gambling in public." ( )

Torrens
ict
il Minutes,
ruary 1858

The deterioration of roads near the racecourse was a more serious problem, given the cost and effort involved in maintaining them. In August 1862, moves were made to metal Henley Beach Road, on the northern boundary of the racecourse, but from South Road to East Terrace it was still an unmade track. E. M. Bagot wrote a letter of complaint about it in 1863, hoping that it would be put in repair "for the forthcoming steeplechase". The District Clerk replied in no uncertain terms:

> The Council receives no benefit whatever from the races being held in the District which very much destroy the roads, trusting that in future the Jockey Club will contribute something to the repair of the road. Steps will be taken in the present instant to remedy the evil complained of. ( )

: D. Council
ules,
August 1863.

Bagot promised to subscribe £50 to the metalling of the road, but by May 1865 no money had been received. The Council's view was that Bagot was "making unfair demands on the Council and not keeping his part of the bargain". In June, Bagot paid £25 toward the subscription, but the Council replied that it would acknowledge the money as only half the promised amount.

The Council's differences with Mr. Bagot did not end there. In June 1869, the City Corporation complained that an "intolerable stench existed from the Boiling Down works near Thebarton", and requested the Council to take steps to remedy the evil. A copy of the letter was sent to Bagot, who replied that he had dealt with the nuisance. However, the complaints continued, and the Council informed the City Corporation that the problem would be remedied when its By-Laws were passed in October 1869. By-Law No. 1 ruled that any person boiling down, crushing or burning meat bones and offal, "so as to cause an offensive smell, and be a nuisance to the owners or occupiers of the adjoining premises, or to the neighbourhood" would after three days notice be fined no less than 10 shillings or more than £10. The By-Law must have had some effect, for in 1876, Bagot wrote to say that he had stopped slaughtering cattle at his works.

There was not much in the way of organised entertainment for children in the early days. Few children of working-class families had toys or books, but as they have always done, boys and girls invented their own games. For the boys in Thebarton, who had much greater freedom than girls, there were a number of favourite playing spots in the area. Fishing and swimming could be done in the River Torrens, and there were backyards, paddocks, vacant blocks and pugholes to play in and explore - with or without parental permission. We can imagine the concern of the parents whose boys were reported to the Commissioner of Police for playing cricket and gambling in the west parklands on a Sunday ! ( )

Torrens
ict Council
es,
April, 1874

Pleasures were simple, although some fortunate children went into Adelaide on special outings with their parents. Mrs. Hannam remembered that "it was quite an event to go to the lollie shop, where bull's eyes, sticks and other home-made sweets were conjured from brown sugar". There was the occasional play, like "The Willow Plate" in the theatre in Gilles Arcade, and sometimes a major public event to watch :

As a thoughtless, carefree child, she remembers racing off with her brothers to see the last public hanging in the Adelaide Gaol, clambering up on the gate with them to get a view. Crowds, she said, were present and such an event was looked upon almost as an outing. However, after that time those in power decided such exhibitions should be stopped.

It was a red letter day, too, when the father brought them all to see the Agricultural and Horticultural Show on Frome Road. It was held on February 14, and the day was exceedingly hot. In those days, said Mrs. Hannam with a reminiscent smile, girls and "young ladies" wore an unbelievable amount of clothing, and she remembers under two starched and belaced petticoats she wore a flannel one, which, to add to its cumbersomeness was tucked; knickers reached to the ankles, and even children had their crinolines. Later, the jaunting cars appeared, and were, with the voluminous skirts, most comfortable to ride in, but one had to be extremely careful to manipulate one's steels.

She remembers the excitement of the first train to Port Adelaide. Prior to that a spring dray, drawn by two horses in tandem, would pass the top of (Chapel Street) morning and evening. This, unless people owned convenances, was the only mode of transit - and the cart would sometimes be crowded in a way that would set the S.P.C.A. investigating now.

STREET LIFE

A lifestyle of a different sort took place in the back-streets and around the hotels in Thebarton. Much as local residents would have liked to see their community as respectable, there were plenty of unruly characters to tarnish its image. In the 1850s and 1860s there were frequent complaints about prostitution, 'profane language', 'disorderly conduct' and 'abandoned characters', mostly associated with the Wheatsheaf Inn and the Squatters' Arms Hotel - the 'red light' areas of Thebarton.

Such behaviour was seen as a vexing moral problem, not easily solved by the usual methods of maintaining law and order.* Under the terms of the Metropolitan Police Act, prostitutes could only be prosecuted if their behaviour was felt to be a public nuisance, and then it was difficult to prove that a brothel or 'house of ill fame' actually existed. In the suburbs it was usually left to local constables to keep watch on them; a job some of them did not relish. One of the earliest complaints came from Constable Taylor, who reported to the Council in 1862 that Mrs. Fanny Swift, the proprietor of the Wheatsheaf Inn, had "persons of ill fame" living in one of her cottages adjoining the Inn. The District Clerk warned her that unless the nuisance was removed at once, the matter would be reported to the Bench of Magistrates.

In December 1864 there were reports that "the most abandoned characters" were inhabiting Mr. Ottaway's cottages in Light Terrace, and that the Wheatsheaf Inn was still being conducted improperly. By this time William Smythe had taken over the Inn, and the Council threatened to take steps to remove the offending characters.

*

The frequency of such complaints must have alarmed Charles Hepworth, the proprietor of the Squatters' Arms from 1863 to 1871; in 1865 he attended a Council meeting to ask if there had been any mention of his hotel as a disorderly house. The Councillors informed him that there had been none, but in the following year he too, fell foul of Constable Taylor. Taylor complained to the Council in April 1866 of the "disgraceful conduct of the landlord of the Squatters' Arms on a Sunday night, when he was called out of his bed to interfere with persons who had been fighting in his house".

According to Taylor, "the language of Hepworth towards him was very bad indeed, there were women and children present who heard the foul language". Taylor was anxious to know whether he had acted properly in going, and "wished to be protected by the Council in future, by doing his duty". Poor Constable Taylor - only a few months later he was called upon by Hepworth to deal with young men who were using disgusting language near the Squatters' Arms!

The poor and destitute sick in Thebarton presented another problem for the Colonial Government and District Councils. Few doubted that poverty existed, but 'pauperism' was commonly seen as a moral failing, caused by idleness and lack of self-reliance. In the early years, it was usually left to families, church groups and philanthropists to provide for the poor, although governments gradually began to assume more responsibility for social welfare.

A Destitute Board was formed in 1849 to take applications for relief, and in 1853 work was begun on the Adelaide Destitute Asylum. In the main however, it was left to the residents of West Torrens to nominate people in need of relief. The system improved a little after 1860, when Dr. Lane from Hindmarsh was appointed the first Medical Officer for the destitute poor in the West Torrens area. He served the district for seven years, and then left to work at the Destitute Asylum. In 1868 he was replaced by Dr. Foster, who was succeeded in 1872 by Dr. Glendinning.

We can only wonder about the fate of the unfortunate Mr. La Pierce, who, according to the Council Minutes of 18 March 1879, was convicted as a "pauper lunatic". Mr. Lea, the Constable who acted as a witness, wrote to the Council to ask for witness fees incurred in that case and another involving some men who had committed the 'crime' of "tin ratelling" (sic) in the streets of Thebarton.

CHAPTER FOUR

The 1870s to mid 1880s were boom years for Thebarton, and Australia as a whole. The Colonies were getting good prices on the world market for wheat and wool, and South Australia was riding on the expansion of the copper mining industry. In 1868, the value of copper exports was even greater than those of wheat and flour, and the industry continued to play an important part in the economic stability of South Australia until the mid 1870s.

For the established settlements around Adelaide, it was a time of consolidation and growth. This was reflected in many ways; in a massive subdivision boom, population growth, the expansion of manufacturing and commerce, and improvements in transport and public services. The period was also marked by greater Government involvement in public works, mainly in the fields of education, communications and transport. At the height of the boom, a number of Thebarton residents successfully petitioned for separation from the District Council of West Torrens, and the Corporation of Thebarton was formed.

The good years however, were not to last. There was a succession of droughts in the north in the early 1880s, followed by general depression after 1884. Prices for wool and copper dropped, and any chance of a quick recovery was prevented by the onset of depression in the eastern colonies in the 1890s.
Fortunately, new opportunities came with the discovery of minerals at Broken Hill, Kalgoorlie and elsewhere in the 'eighties, so the late nineteenth century was not a period of complete gloom.

GROWING URBANISM

The existing villages and townships in the West Torrens district were more closely settled during the boom, and many new subdivisions were laid out. Thebarton was at the forefront of this development, for the same reasons it grew steadily in the 1850s and 1860s. The population of the original Thebarton township did not rise dramatically - it went from 736 in 1871 to 771 in 1881, by which time there were 171 houses in the town. As the new suburbs grew however, the overall population of the Thebarton area rose to about 1,700. In addition, there was an undetermined number of people living in Mile End. *

The building boom in Thebarton began in the early 1870s and continued for about a decade - until the bubble burst and depression set in. There were few if any controls on allotment size, buildings, or the shape and pace of development. J. J. Pascoe, Editor of the History of Adelaide and Vicinity wrote in 1901 of the rapid increase in population and trade, and the rise in the value of property in and around Adelaide in these years :

> of course there was a land boom, during which building operations in Adelaide were conducted in a manner suggestive of 1840 ... New townships were laid out on the Adelaide Plains ... and syndicates purchased land here and there, with the idea of cutting it up into residence lots ... By 1882-3 had come the re-action and the vain regrets.

* These statistics are approximate only, and do not include the suburb of Underdale. The figure of 1700 applies to Thebarton, Southwark, Hemmington, West Thebarton, New Thebarton, Old Mile End, Mile End and New Mile End. The latter three each were described in the 1881 Census as having populations of "less than 50".

Many of the new subdivisions in Thebarton weren't built upon immediately. Some of those on the northern side of South Road, near the Torrens, developed quite rapidly, because of the existing and anticipated industry in the area. It is no coincidence then that the first major subdivision outside the old Thebarton township was the working class suburb of West Thebarton, which was surveyed in November 1871. It was divided into allotments ranging in size from a quarter acre to $1-\frac{3}{4}$ acres and larger; the bigger blocks were probably intended for industrial use. Later, an odd little strip was added to the original subdivision, and rather confusingly, was named Thebarton West. It ran north-south, and took up Murray and Dalgleish Streets.

Census figures show that by 1881, West Thebarton had 86 houses, and a population of 428. The Thebarton Corporation assessment book for 1884 lists most of the local men as labourers, carters, tanners and fellmongers. West Thebarton was quite a complete little township in the early 1880s. There was the West Thebarton Hotel on South Road, which was run by Robert Hyman and had a blacksmithy next door. In Ballantyne Street, David Kay ran a bakery, and Robert Childs a shop and Post Office. For those who required dressmaking services, there was Jane Munroe's shop in Murray Street, and for meat supplies, there was the Warren family's butcher shop on South Road, two blocks down from Bennett Street.

Hemington and Hemington West, also part of Section 46, were subdivided in the early 1870s. They first appear in the West Torrens assessment book for 1872-73, although they were not officially named until 1875. Hemmington, which ran between Pearson and Dew Streets, was named after local butcher John Hemmingway, who had been elected to the West Torrens Council in 1858, and became the member for Mile End Ward in March, 1861. The suburb began in a small way, with John Hemmingway subdividing 6 acres of land into substantial blocks. E. Hemmingway bought half an acre and built a concrete house on it, while John kept 3½ acres as pasture land. Richard Crafter and Robert Stokes each bought an acre. George Street West as it was called, had been formed as early as 1855, and was now given its official title.

The original blocks were cut into residential allotments in the following year, and R. Crafter built a wooden shop and then a house on his quarter acre block. Several others soon began building homes, including local engineer William H. Richardson, and Robert Stokes. A. G. Lea, variously described as a storekeeper and clerk, built a 7 roomed house, (termed a 'mansion' in the assessment book for 1884) on the northern side of Kintore Street, formerly called Lea's Road. There was also a Police Station in Kintore Street, near Lea's home; this was first run by Constable Segerlind in 1882. The Station was later transferred to the corner of George Street and South Road.

Hemmington West grew more slowly, and in a different way. Unlike Hemmington, which was mainly a middle-class residential area, the western extension was ideally located on South Road, and developed as a busy administrative and service centre. In time, it gained a Post Office, the first substantial Catholic Church, a new Police Station, and on the northern corner of George Street and South Road, the Thebarton Corporation Town Hall. By 1881, Hemmington and its western extension numbered 107 persons and had 24 houses - a dense population given its relatively small area.

The suburb of New Thebarton, part of Section 94, was divided into urban allotments in 1878. By the following year, there were 131 owner-occupiers of the lots, although only 51 had been built on. An additional piece of land, running from Ashley Street to the River was subdivided and named New Thebarton Extension. In 1881, there were 89 houses and a population of 296. At this stage, local residents felt that their interests would be better served if a New Thebarton Ward was created - in addition to the existing six wards in the West Torrens district. * In May 1881, a large number of ratepayers presented a petition to the Governor, Sir William F. D. Jervois, who agreed to the request in August that year. Thomas Hardy was elected the first Councillor, but his position was declared invalid and Joseph Stevenson was elected in his place. ( )

Stevenson, who had substantial business interests in the area, seems to have been a prime mover in its development. In 1879, he built a large house, engine shed and outbuildings valued at £100, on the corner of East and Ashley Streets. He also owned various properties, and helped to construct a number of buildings in the new township.

* New Thebarton Ward was bounded by the River Torrens, South Road, Henley Beach Rood and Holbrooks Road.

In 1878, moves were made to build a suitable District Hall and Council Chamber, and a special meeting was held at the Hilton Hotel. Interestingly enough, one suggestion (made by Thomas Hardy), was that it should be built on the site of the present Thebarton Municipal Offices. Another site under consideration was a piece of land on South Road, on Section 49 - this at the suggestion of John Marles Jnr. In July 1879, Joseph Stevenson attended a Council meeting and offered to build a District Hall, Council Chamber and an office for the Clerk, with the idea that the hall could be used by the public, free of cost, at an annual rent of £15, and that the Council could use a room in the Royal Hotel free of charge, until the chamber was finished.

The Council accepted Stevenson's offer in December 1879, and came to an agreement for the occupation of the hall. *
In the following year, R. T. Burnard wrote to say that a trust had been formed and had bought the hall from the assignees of Stevenson's Estate; it would allow the Council to use the office and hall for £20 a year, with an extra charge of 5/- for each meeting in the hall. Ironically, when the Thebarton Corporation was formed, it took the hall, and the West Torrens District Council was left to find alternative accommodation.

On 10 January 1880 the Observer commented on the growth that was taking place :

> • At Thebarton, many new buildings have gone up, including a new public hall which was erected by Mr. Stevenson at a cost of £800. A Bible Christian Church is in course of erection. At New Thebarton the Royal Hotel has been put up according to the design of Mr. Cumming for £1,800, Mr. Stevenson being the builder. The house has fourteen apartments. In most of the other western suburbs, a lot of cottages have been erected, the tide of prosperity evidently having set in that direction.

* The office and hall were built on the northern side of Henley Beach Road, between West and Clifford Streets. The Methodist Church later made use of the hall, and in 1917, the Masonic Hall was built on the site.

The report was slightly exaggerated, as it was probably based on the shops and other buildings springing up along Henley Beach Road in the late 1870s and early 1880s. Next to the Royal Hotel, there was a shop, and a blacksmithy, run by George Smith. The allotments on the other side of the Hotel, between Jervois and East Streets, formed a busy commercial centre. In 1879, Richard Wilson built a house and butcher shop, with stables at the rear for his horses and carts; this shop still stands, and is now Rodney's Meat Store. Around the corner, in Jervois Street, S. Harvey had a house and blacksmithy on two allotments, part of which was later occupied by Mrs. Jones' private school. Just along from Wilson's shop, R. G. Russell had a house and bakery, and on the corner of Jervois Street and Henley Beach Road, James B. Broderick, a storekeeper and blacksmith, ran a shop which was leased from Stevenson's Estate. In 1882, the shop was taken over by William Cope, and Broderick moved to the southern side of Henley Beach Road at Mile End, (opposite what is now the Commonwealth Employment Service building), where he built a 7 roomed stone house, and a store.

Southwark, which was named after the industrial suburb of London on the southern bank of the River Thames, was laid out in 1879. The Observer reported on its early progress on 10 January 1880 :

> A new township, Southwark, has sprung up during the year at the call of the National Building Society. It is situated between Thebarton and Hindmarsh and is on the block of land known as Colonel Light's Section (No. 1). It consists of about 100 acres, which the National Building Society has cut up into 400 allotments, each 50 feet by 150, and with streets 50 by 60 feet wide, and a large reserve in the centre for future public buildings. Sixteen houses are finished, six are in progress, and ten are contracted to be built. The township was only laid out nine months ago. It fronts the West Parklands.

Not surprisingly, given the pressure there must have been for industrial and other forms of land-use, the reserve for public buildings was never set aside.

Southwark was a bustling area in the 1880s and 1890s, with its numerous stores, workshops, and factories. By the mid 1880s, the commercial focus had developed along the Port Road, from Phillips Street to Light Terrace. Weary travellers could stop off at the Southwark Hotel on the Port Road, which was built in 1885 by Hausen and Co., with Richard Davy as the first publican. Stock feed was available at A. Edward's chaff mill on the corner of Smith Street and Port Road, and horses could be shod at William Sincock's smithy, which was situated a little farther south on Port Road. For general provisions, there was Joel Lyons store, near the southern corner of Port Road and Smith Street.

The establishments on the Port Road would have catered as much for passers-by as local residents, although the people within the township were well served with shops and services. Frederick Slade and his wife ran a boot-making shop on the northern side of Light Terrace, and owned a house next door which was occupied by an employee. Henry W. Chamberlain had a store on the corner of Holland Street and Light Terrace, and Frederick Barnden ran a butcher shop on the southern side of Smith Street.

Southwark, like many of the other suburbs laid out at the time, did not develop as rapidly as its developers anticipated. There was certainly a sound basis for growth, given the industries in the area and its closeness to the Port Road and the City. Manufacturing however, was still small-scale and concentrated mainly along the Torrens, and the demand for houses was not great; by the late 1880s there were still many vacant blocks in the area, mainly in Phillips and Anderson Streets. In the meantime, people were able to keep a variety of animals for commercial and private use. In the early 1880s, William Brindle ran a large dairy on three allotments fronting the River Torrens, and sold milk to nearby residents and people in the City. The land is now the site of the Southwark Brewery complex.
J. Leonard kept cows on his property in Smith Street, and put them out to pasture in the West Parklands - a practice that was common until well into the twentieth century. Inevitably, there were complaints about straying stock of all kinds, sheep, cattle, dogs and goats included. The latter apparently were helping themselves to the flourishing garden that surrounded Colonel Light's old home; the occupier at the time, Mr. N. J. Hone, wrote to the West Torrens Council in 1882 to complain of the nuisance they were causing in the area.

The sale of "West Adelaide", on Section 48 was rather premature, though not for want of trying by the auctioneers. It was divided into 557 building lots mostly 60 x 150 feet, and was sold at public auction on 7 October 1882. It was bounded by Henley Beach Road, South Road (known then as Fisher Terrace), Darebin Street and Bagot Avenue (then Bagot Street). The auctioneers, Henning, Bruce and Aldridge, described the suburb in glowing terms :

> The most magnificent section of land close to the city which has ever been submitted ... to the Adelaide public. Within ten minutes of the business thoroughfares and an easy distance to the sea. Glorious views, unequalled soil, macadamized roads. Level surface, capital drainage, water is laid on.
>
> This really grand block of land will be remembered by our colonists of a few years' standing as the old Thebarton Racecourse, the scene of many a stirring incident on the flat and over the big jumps. The proprietors have arranged with the Adelaide and Hindmarsh Tramway Company to convey intending purchasers to the spot by tram. A large marquee will be erected on the ground, and luncheon, with every other convenience, provided.

In 1884, there were less than 40 buildings in the area, (although it could boast three churches) and even in the early 1900s there were still many vacant lots.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT — The First Horse Trams

As Michael Williams has pointed out, Adelaide railways did not really serve commuters - with the exception of the Glenelg line - but horse tramways admirably made up the gap in the suburban transport network. They didn't cost much to run, fares were cheap, and they were easy to build on flat land. ( )
The first horse trams in Thebarton were a great improvement on foot, horse and train transport, not only by making travel faster and more convenient, but by encouraging the development of the area.

Admittedly the first trams lagged behind the settlement of some early suburbs, but as the population grew in the 1880s, they promoted the growth of new residential suburbs, by enabling people to live further away from their place of work. Just as the earlier settlements grew along major roads, the new suburbs of the boom years were close to Henley Beach Road and the Port Road. In later years, when tram services were extended along South Road, the suburbs along the route began to grow more rapidly.

The first horse tramway near Thebarton was constructed by the Adelaide and Hindmarsh Tramway Company in 1880. It ran from Hindley Street, directly across the parklands along Mile End Road (later replaced by Glover Avenue) to East Terrace and its continuation, the Port Road. The line was of little benefit to Thebarton, but in 1882 (~~the following year~~) the company laid a tramway along Henley Beach Road, which was much more accessible to local residents. Not long afterwards the company established a horse tram depot on Henley Beach Road, extending into Henley Street; shops now occupy the main road frontage, and Lawlor Chemical Industries Pty. Ltd. use part of the old sheds.

Mrs. Dulcie Watts recalled in 1972 her memories of the tram :

> I was born at Thebarton in 1892, and have seen great changes. Our only transport to the city was by horse tram, that came from Henley Beach and Hindmarsh. At Henley Beach Road the trams had to cross the railway lines. Now in those days all the railway shunting was done at Henley Beach Road so often there would be a half hour to wait for the tram. More often than not we walked to the city. Having crossed the railway lines, the tram would cross the parklands direct to Hindley Street. First, a halt was made at a shed in the middle of the parklands. Here a man waited with an extra horse which he harnessed to the tram to help pull (it) up the long rise to the terminus, the corner of Hindley and King William Streets. ( )

Senior Citizens' News, March 1972.

THE COMMUNITY

Churches

With all the new suburbs that came into being in the 1870s and '80s, and the corresponding rise in population, it is not surprising that the existing congregations in Thebarton outgrew their premises and a number of new churches were established.

The Methodists in Torrensville (formerly New Thebarton) decided that a preaching place should be established between Thebarton and Torrensville, and a meeting was held in the Pirie Street Church. The Wesleyan Journal of 12 September 1879 reported on the meeting :

> Two buses, besides private conveyances, brought friends from the city, Thebarton and adjacent places. The meeting was ably presided over by Mr. A. A. Scott, and addresses delivered by Revs. T. Lloyd and S. Moncrieff, Messrs. P. Harwood, Loudy, Collyer, Prettijohn, Stephenson, Rowell and Hemmingway.... The attention of the Church is being directed to the increasing population at New Thebarton and neighbourhood ... as our preachers have been travelling over the ground for about 30 years.

Services began irregularly in 1880, in the hall built by Joseph Stevenson on Henley Beach Road. A Church was formed and the hall was bought from Mr. A. Everidge by a group of trustees in September 1880. The trustees of the New Thebarton Wesleyan Methodist Church were Henry T. Burgess, Thomas Lloyd, the Hon. John Colton, John Hill, Matthew H. Madge, Simon Harvey, William Paddock, John Illman, William Nias Perriam, Richard Thomas Burnard, George Gifford Norman, John P. Evans and John Harris.

When the Methodist brances united in 1900, the Bible Christian Church built in 1879 on the corner of Ashley and Jervois Streets merged with the Torrensville Church. The two groups held services in the building on Henley Beach Road, but soon outgrew the premises. A new church was built in 1911, in Hayward Avenue, on land once farmed by Alfred Chapman. The old property was sold to the Torrensville Lodge of Freemasons in February 1912. ( )

drewartha, J., Murrie, B., Church on elled Ground, 80 - 1980

The Baptist Church in Thebarton had humbler beginnings than most - the first services were held in Edwards' chaff mill on the corner of Port Road and Smith Street. The fine church building in Phillips Street was begun in September 1883, when Charles Wilcox laid the foundation stone. The Church was formed in the following year, with Rev. J. B. Sneyd as the first pastor. In 1913, an equally imposing hall with a stone front and bricks at sides and rear was built next to the Church. As the congregation dwindled over the years, the church was forced to close; the last service was held in 1969, and the property was sold to J. Inverarity Pty. Ltd. Three stained glass memorial windows, installed in memory of Mr. and Mrs. N. J. Hone and family, Mr. Arthur Burnell, and Rev. S. Bowering were transferred to the S. A. Baptist Union. Mr. Burnell's window was later put in the Seacombe Gardens Baptist Church.

The beginnings of the Catholic Church in Thebarton go back to February 1869, when Father Julian Tenison Woods set up a building fund for a school chapel. * A subscription of £31 was raised, and a foundation stone laid in March. ( )

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The school chapel was opened in September, with the Sisters of St. Joseph in charge of the school.

* It is said that before then, Mass was celebrated sometimes in a house in George Street, and a school was held in a residence on the corner of Kintore and Dew Streets.

In 1881, Father John Healy took over the care of the Thebarton district, as well as Glenelg, Marion and Blackwood - not an easy task to carry out. There is a story that he walked such a regular beat from West Terrace in the City to Thebarton that a track through the parklands became known as "Father Healy's path". When he wasn't walking, he rode on horseback or in a buggy, stopping on one occasion (or so the story goes), to break up a two-up game with his horsewhip!

In 1883, a second school chapel was opened. This was the first Queen of Angels Church, a small stone building with a porch and tiny bell tower; it still stands on South Road. In 1885, Bishop Reynolds laid the foundation of a separate school and convent in Kintore Street, by which time Father Healy had come to live in Thebarton. His efforts did not stop there, for he renovated a house at Hilton for use as a church school; this was the forerunner of St. John the Baptist Boys School Thebarton, which was opened in 1895. The building was later replaced by the Kilmara Secondary School Library and classroom block.

As the population grew, there was a need for more, and plans were made for the construction of the present Queen of Angels Church. The architects were Cowell and Cowell, and E. T. Isley and Co. successfully tendered for the construction of the building. Parishioners gave £1,550 toward the cost, and the foundation stone was laid in July 1915. Archbishop Spence opened the Church in February 1916. It stands on the corner of Kintore Street and South Road, alongside the old school chapel, where its Gothic spire can be seen for miles around.

Thebarton Public School

Education in South Australia improved considerably with the passing of the Education Act of 1875. This provided for a Council of Education to supervise the building of public schools, appoint teachers and determine courses. School was made compulsory for all children between the ages of seven and thirteen, although it was not free. In 1878, a Department of Education was established under a responsible minister.

In Thebarton, there was an urgent need for a new school with room for at least 400. In 1876 a deputation of George Dew, Robert Strutton, Thomas Newman and W. H. Crosby requested the Council of Education to provide a school, but they had to wait two years for a definite answer. ( )

Eventually, land on the north-east corner of South Road and Henley Beach Road was bought from the South Australian Company, and work began in 1878. The school and Head Master's residence were opened in April 1879 by R. T. Burnard, who had the company of 250 students on the occasion. Richard Burnard and his siter Emily first taught at the school, with the assistance of Kate Nootnagel, and later Mary Herbert.

In the school's Jubilee Book, published in 1929, one old scholar recalled the early days at the school :

> There were two ponds or dams near the school, one where the Institute now stands, and one across the Beach Road; from there, which were a source of interest to the boys, but an annoyance to the teachers, we had great frog hunts, and the quarry was brought in and liberated in the class-rooms. We frequently essayed to cross the ponds on rails purloined from nearby fences, often with disastrous results to our clothes, and were not only punished in school, but on arrival at home.

The land on the west side of Taylor's Road was then an open paddock leased by a Mr. Linn, who grew hay and wheat crops thereon. There were regular tracks through, but at the time of seeding Mr. Linn was in the habit of mounting guard with a whip. Later on, when the crop was nearly ready for mowing, it was his custom to stop anyone going through and turning them back, but we smaller boys often saw him first and turned in our tracks, making sure that he would see and chase us, and turn our faces in the way we desired to go. When the hay was in stooks we had great mouse and lizard hunts, and many of these were taken into school. I remember a live lizard and a nest of young mice being found in a teacher's desk, and as no one knew who did it all boys in the class were kept in.

Not long after the opening of the school a fight between the Thebarton and Hilton lads (between whom there was always a difference) was staged, and we were all invited to participate. It started off with the bigger boys using fists but soon developed into a stone-throwing battle, and we smaller boys quickly got away.

I remember the late Mr. Thos. Hardy, who was always keen on tree-planting, setting out the Moreton Bay fig trees in the schoolyard. He gave a speech, which I am afraid was not listened to very carefully, and made us promise to see that they were watered during the dry weather.

During the grape-cutting season a lot of boys from the city were employed in the vineyards at Underdale (Norman's Holbrook's, and Hardy's), and some of the local boys thought they were badly treated because they could not get leave from school to work there, and a good many skirmishes took place between them, not always bloodless battles.

Richard Burnard did not stay long at the school. He lived for a while in the cottage, now the pottery room of the West Croydon Annexe, and left in 1881 for the Unley Public School. He was replaced by Charles Webb, who remained Master for ten years.

The children paid fees of fourpence (for those under 7) to sixpence a week, unless it could be proved they were unable to pay. Attendance fluctuated, depending on whether they had to go to work to earn extra income for their families. During the depression years, attendance dropped from a daily average of 308 in the last quarter of 1884 to 243.4 in 1888. It picked up however, when free education was introduced in the early 1890s.

Small private schools, which were less expensive to run, were better able to withstand the depression of the late nineteenth century. One such school was started by Elizabeth Jones. She and her husband Daniel, who had taught music at Norwood, moved to Jervois Street, Torrensville in the early 1880s. Mrs. Jones started the school in Jervois Street in about 1882, and taught mainly English grammar and music.

THEBARTON CORPORATION

With all the developments taking place in Thebarton in the 1870s and early 1880s, it is not surprising that many local ratepayers felt it in their interests to separate from the District Council of West Torrens. A number of ratepayers petitioned for separation on 28 October 1882; this was followed by a counter-petition on 16 November of that year. After considering the case, the Governor, Samuel James Way decided in favour of the original petitioners, and on 8 February 1883, Thebarton was proclaimed a Corporation in the Government Gazette.

The area was divided into four wards; Strangways, Musgrave, Torrens and Jervois. The first Mayor was Benjamin Taylor, and the Councillors were Thomas Pritchard, James Vardon, Edward Cunliffe Hemmingway, William C. Pepper, James Broderick, Richard Wilson, Joseph Stevenson and James Manning. Vinrace Lawrence and Edward Lowe were appointed auditors.

For a time, things ran smoothly as the Corporation set about putting its affairs in order. The first meeting was held on 12 February 1883 in "Harvey's Room", at which it was decided that Charles Loader, the Clerk of West Torrens District Council, should act as temporary Inspector and Secretary of the Local Board of Health and take on the usual duties as Clerk, Surveyor, Assessor and Collector. In the meantime, Loader was to advertise for tenders from people wishing to take on the job. Thirteen people, including Loader, tendered and four names were submitted to ballot; Loader was appointed on the casting vote of the Mayor.

At the same meeting it was decided that the Council meet at the Squatters' Arms each alternate Monday at 7.30 p.m., until a more central meeting place could be found. At the next meeting, the Council adopted the emblem of the "Rising Sun" as its seal, and resolved to write to the Destitute Board for a "medical man" for the destitute poor in the area. - Dr. Henry was later appointed.

In March, the Council found temporary accommodation in the hall at New Thebarton, until such time as more suitable offices could be built. The next few meetings were spent dealing with acquiring furniture, preparing an assessment of the properties in the area and a map of the town, and dealing with the usual duties of roadmaking, impounding stray stock, issuing licences, etc.

In the meantime, hidden tension began to surface; Charles Loader, who was still Town Clerk, presented a letter "calling attention to the conduct of Cr. Stevenson", who had "come into the office and challenged him to come outside and fight, threatened him with a sound thrashing and stated that he would soon have him out of his office etc.". The Mayor and Councillors Vardon and Pritchard said they were dissatisfied with Stevenson's conduct, and the matter was dropped. In the event, Loader resigned, and Abel William Parker was appointed Clerk in June 1884.

The Corporation also lost its Mayor around this time. Taylor wrote a letter on the 25 September 1883 tendering his resignation, to which the Council replied :

> We, the undersigned view with regret the manner in which Mr. B. Taylor, J.P. has treated the Council in not calling them together to lay his resignation before them, he having ample time to call a special meeting... he had been in town ten days previous.
>
> Signed, Joseph Stevenson.

At the meeting held on 23 October 1883, it was reported that the Governor had appointed Mr. E. J. Ronald as Mayor.

The Corporation had more important matters to consider, in any case. In September 1884, the Councillors decided to buy the site at the corner of South Road and George Street for £600, for the building of a Town Hall. In January 1885, the Corporation borrowed £1,700 for the land and Town Hall. Messrs. James King and Son tendered £1,130 for the job, which was accepted, and the building was opened in October 1885. In 1948, the Town Hall was severely damaged by fire; it was partly reconstructed and used by various community groups through the years. It now serves as the Thebarton Community Hall.