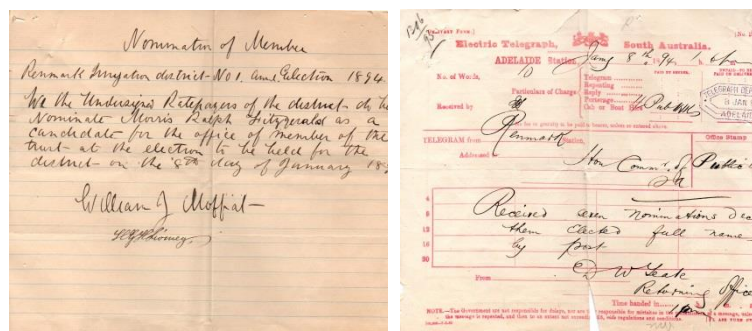
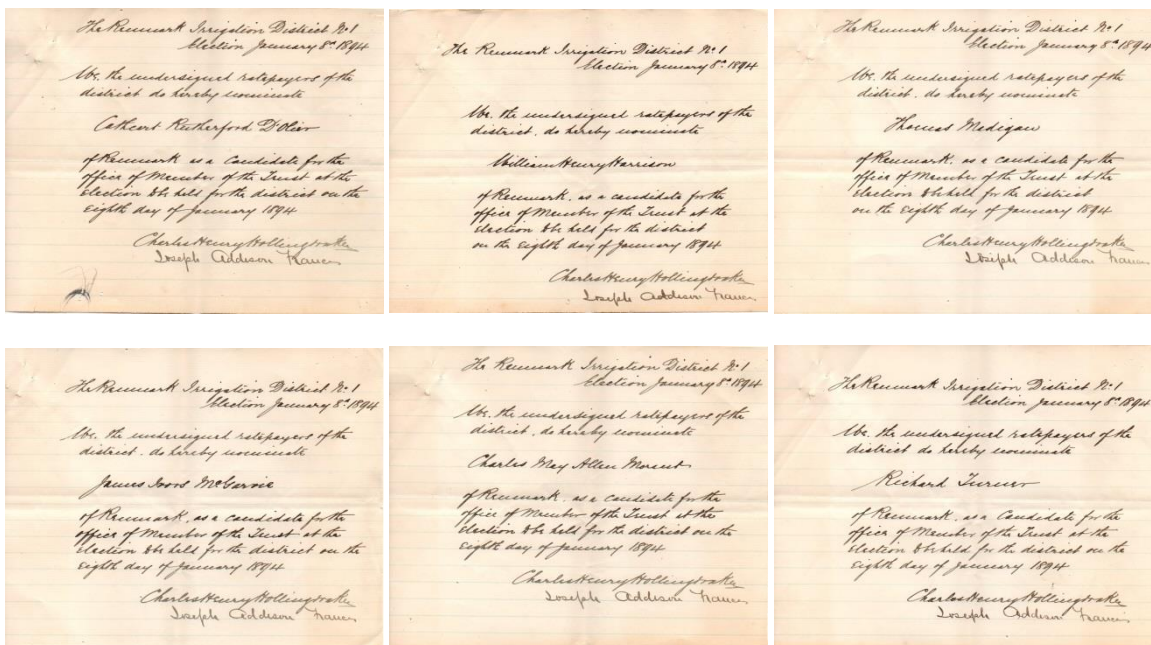


Pioneers of the RIT

Eight men rose to the challenge of establishing the Renmark Irrigation Trust. They were the 7 inaugural board members and the first employee. They emerged from the troubles in Renmark between 1891 and 1893 to lead the Trust from January 1894 through the next two years of uncertainty until the collapse of Chaffey Brothers Ltd in late 1895. They represent the diversity of characters drawn to the exciting new enterprise and the qualities of those who provided leadership in the fledgling community. Some may have been motivated by duty instilled by their class. Some may have wanted to control their financial investment. Some explored the opportunity and moved on quickly. Some, including their wives and children, paid a high price for their ambition. Some put down roots that have lasted for generations with one branch of the descendants of the first chairman of the Trust Board, Colonel Charles Morant, living in Renmark in 2020. In a reminder that the bush telegraph existed long before social media, three of the pioneers were related through their wives to the Ward family in Sydney.



Nomination Documents from RIT Archives

Six of the seven nominations for the first board were from Charles Hollingdrake and Joseph Francis, both closely associated with the Renmark Irrigation Company, the antecedent of the Renmark Irrigation Trust.

Renmark Public Station
9th January 1894

Notice is hereby given that at
the nomination of members of
the Renmark Irrigation Trust
No. 1 held at the Public School
Renmark at noon of Monday
the 8th day of January 1894 the
following persons were nominated
and declared duly elected to be
the first members of the said
Irrigation Trust viz—
William Henry Harrison M.A.
Cuthbert Rutheford D'Olier
Richard Turner
Thomas Madigan
James Ivory M^{rs} Garvie
Charles May Allen Morant
Morris Ralph Fitzgerald.

David W. Teate
Returning Officer

Letter from Returning Officer Constable Teate to the Commissioner of Public Works 9 January 1894

Source: RIT Archives

Cathcart Rutherford D'Olier

Property: D'Olier owned 42 acres at Settlers Bend that he named 'Riverside'. He occupied the property in 1892 and engaged C F Curtis to build for him. A year later the builder was insolvent and cited the high cost of transporting stone (by paddle steamer) and disputes with the building inspector (Mr Venables) for Mr D'Olier's building as contributing factors to his financial difficulties.¹ D'Olier listed the property for sale in January 1899 but by late 1902 it had still not sold despite constant advertising. The Federation Drought had a depressing effect on prices. A sale of the contents of the house was held and the family left Renmark on 19 December 1902. D'Olier eventually split the title upon which the house was built in January 1903 and transferred the orchard title to his co-owner E R Douglas on 14 March 1903 who then sold it in 1907 to F C E Wilkinson.



'Riverside' source: State Library of South Australia 73069/33

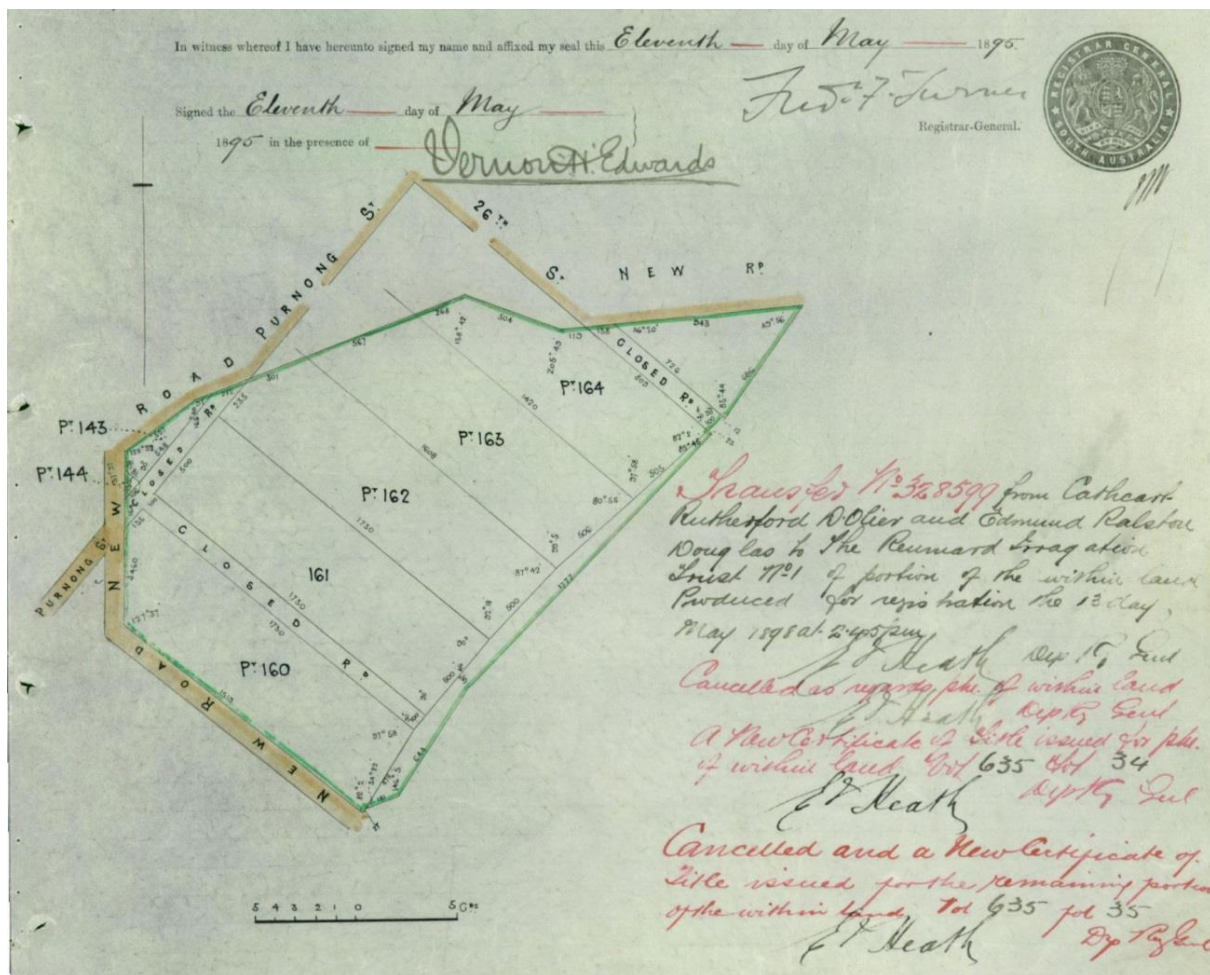
FOR SALE.

MR. C. D'OLIER'S most desirable property on the banks of the Murray at Settler's Bend, Renmark, "Riverside."

The estate consists of 47 acres, bounded by the river, cleared, fenced, partly planted, graded and furnished with concrete irrigation channels, by which the whole can be watered by the 6in. centrifugal pump, of No. 5 Pumping Station of the Renmark Irrigation Trust No. 1. There are 1100 citrus trees planted, 200 being oranges, of the best varieties, now bearing a good crop, 50 apricot and other deciduous trees. Two acres of lucern. Stables, coach house, chaff house and man's cottage.

The substantial and elegant stone residence commands a fine view of the river. It contains, hall 17ft. x 12ft. two front rooms, 17ft. x 17ft. each, cellar 17ft. x 17ft. (the coolest living room in Renmark), two back rooms 14ft. x 15ft., pantry and dressing room 10ft. x 6ft. each. Kitchen, semi-detached, and outbuilding of four rooms, bathroom with hot and cold water laid on. Underground tank of 15,000 gallons, 2 iron tanks of 2000 gallons each, with every appliance for comfort and convenience. Vegetable garden and vineyard, well laid out flower garden, lawns and tennis court.

This beautiful property is to be purchased at a considerable reduction on cost price, as Mr. D'Olier is leaving the colony. For terms and further particulars apply to the Pioneer Office or on the premises.



D'Olier Property at Settlers Bend
Source: Sailis Certificate of Title 597/10

Family Background: Cathcart D'Olier was Irish although his ancestry was French Huguenot and the name is well known in Dublin with a relative providing the family name for a major street. He was born on the 7 September 1859 at Roebuck Cottage, Mount Anvill near Enniskerry south of Dublin. He was the second son of Edmund D'Olier and Mary Manders. The first son, also Edmund, remained on the family estate while Cathcart became a tea planter in the Darjeeling area of Bengal, India and, aged 30, married Emily Rebecca Osborne on 11 Dec 1889 at Kurseong, Bengal. Emily was the daughter of the late Henry Osbourne of Melbourne. A son Bryan Valentine D'Olier was born on 4 November 1890 at Tindharia, Bengal, India. Mr D'Olier arrived in Adelaide from Colombo on 10 Feb 1892 aboard the *Oroya*³ and Mrs D'Olier in Sydney with child and maid from London on 14 March 1892 aboard the *RMS Orient*⁴. A daughter, Lorna, was born in South Australia at Stirling West on 3 Feb 1897⁵. Eleven year old Bryan D'Olier entered a drawing in the children's section of the Renmark Citrus Fair in August 1902⁶ and the family participated actively in the social and sporting life of Renmark. They were regularly involved members of the Tintra Tennis Club.

After the family left Renmark Bryan died as a young man on 3 Jan 1916. He was a twenty five year old civil engineer who was at the family home, Ballyman House, Bray, Ireland cleaning a miniature rifle. His father was in a study nearby when he heard a shot and then a thud. He found his son with an accidental, fatal gunshot wound to the head.⁷ Cathcart D'Olier applied for probate on behalf of his son in Victoria in 1917 as he had a mortgage there.

Lorna Osborne D'Olier married Captain Edward Montgomery Miles, gentleman, of Seagry House, Chippenham, England in Italy in the summer of 1923. They lived on coastal Italy near Genoa in Villa La Vignette, Alassio, Savona between the wars. Cathcart and Emily left Ireland to live there also in 1933. Cathcart died in Alassio on 16 May 1937.⁸ Captain Miles moved to London during the war but where and how Lorna and her mother, both Australian born, survived the war is less certain. Emily D'Olier died on 10 August 1949 and Lorna Miles in 1979.

RIT: D'Olier was an original board member of the Renmark Irrigation Trust and was 'elected' in January 1894. He was one of the board members whose term expired at the 3rd Trust election in June 1895. He was not re-elected and it is not known if he was a candidate. He was one of 8 candidates in July 1896 but was not elected. He received the least number of votes (100).⁹ There is no hint of any questioning of his eligibility to be a board member at the time but it seems that he was not the sole title holder of RIT property in 1893-94 (a legal requirement). The property was owned by the Chaffeys until 11 May 1895 when a title was granted in joint names with Edmund Ralston Douglas, tea planter of Nurbong, Tindharia, Bengal, India¹⁰. As a joint owner D'Olier still would not have qualified to be a board member as it was necessary to own a minimum of 10 acres as an individual.

As a settler D'Olier was involved in negotiations with the Trust over water supply to his property at Settlers Bend which was not connected to the channel system in the rest of the settlement. The engine, pump and boiler at Settlers Bend were moved from Salt (now Bookmark) Creek to a more suitable site on the river on the D'Olier/Douglas property following a Board resolution in 1896.¹¹ The Engineer, Alfred Thompson, was instructed to order fire clay and 200 fire bricks for resetting the boiler at Settlers Bend.¹² In December 1896 a letter was received from the Agent (Driffield) of the Debenture Holders, who gained an interest in the property through the collapse of Chaffey Brothers Ltd., regarding the hire of a traction engine to use as a pump for Settlers Bend. Chaffey Brothers Ltd had arranged the mortgage for D'Olier. During this period there were no wood tenders to the Trust for Number 5 Pump and D'Olier and the Debenture Holders were left to irrigate the property.

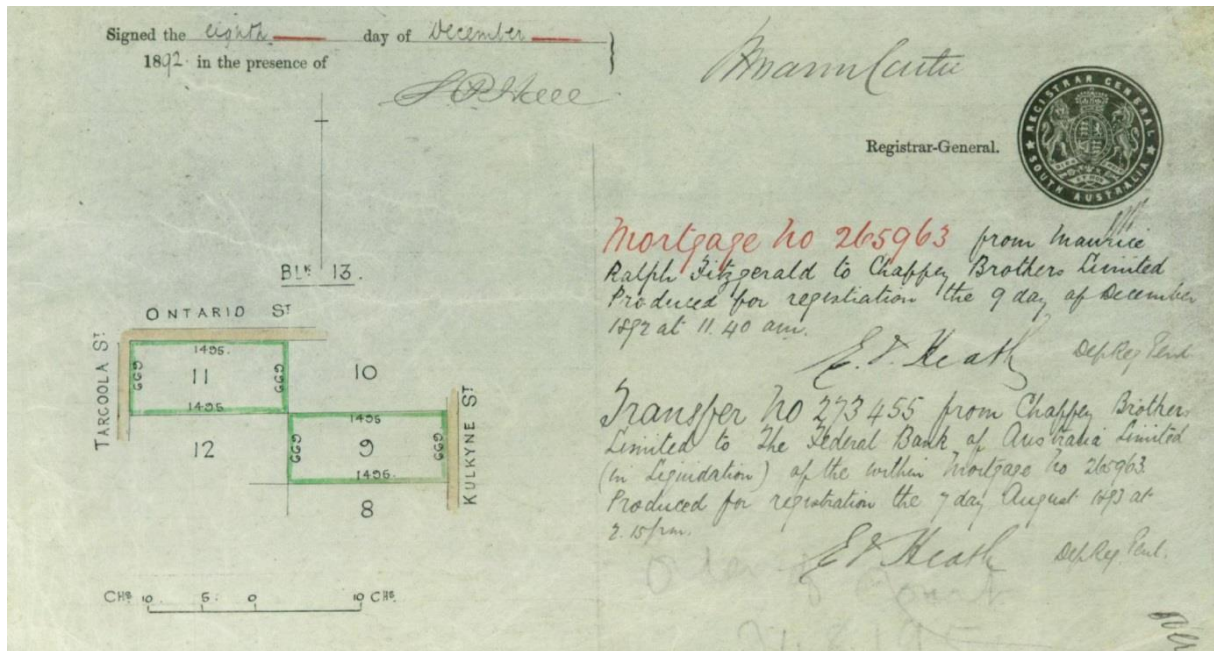
In July 1897 the board resolved to obtain a transfer of the land for the site of the Settlers Bend pump and boiler from Messrs. D'Olier and Douglas. It was also proposed that a contract be arranged with Mr D'Olier for two years to supply water in lieu of water rates, the engineer employed to be approved by the Trust. Land transfer of pump site 5 was sent to Fisher and Culross (Trust lawyers) for execution on 6 September 1897¹³ and that transfer occurred on 4 July 1898¹⁴. Those 6 perches of land were later transferred to Chateau Mildura and Olivewood Pty Ltd., on 6 September 1923 thus returning it to Chaffey ownership of sorts. (WB Chaffey was the founder and director of Chateau Mildara)

Cathcart D'Olier put himself forward for election to the board in July 1900 and of the 7 candidates he received the lowest number of votes, possibly reflecting the fact that his property was on the market.

Departure: The D'Olier family left Renmark by coach on Friday 19 December 1902 after the sale of furniture at '*Riverside*' on Saturday 6 December 1902¹⁵, well attended according to a newspaper report the following week.

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- ¹ Adelaide Observer, 21 April 1893, Insolvency Courts, p21
- ² Renmark Pioneer, Friday 20 Jan 1899, p2
- ³ https://archives.sa.gov.au/sites/default/files/documentstore/passengerlists/1892/GRG_41_34_0_79-1892_Oroya.pdf
- ⁴ The Australian Star (*Sydney, NSW : 1887 - 1909*) Monday 14 March 1892 Shipping, p4
- ⁵ South Australian Register, 4 Feb 1897, Family Notices, p4
- ⁶ Renmark Pioneer, 15 Aug 1902
- ⁷ Inquest into the Death of Brian D'Olier, Coroner's Report 4 Jan 1916
- ⁸ <https://www.youwho.ie/doliere.html>
- ⁹ Renmark Pioneer, 10 July 1896, Renmark Irrigation Trust, p5
- ¹⁰ Land Title 597/10
- ¹¹ Board Minutes 1 July 1896
- ¹² Board Minutes 24 August 1896
- ¹³ Board Minutes 6 Sep 1897
- ¹⁴ Land Title 635/34
- ¹⁵ Renmark Pioneer, Friday 5 Dec 1902, p3

Maurice Ralph Fitzgerald



Fitzgerald Property on Ontario Street
Source: Sailis Certificate of Title 568/151

Property: Maurice Fitzgerald 'owned' 40 acres of land on the corners of Ontario, Tarcoola and Kulkyn Streets, lots 9-12 ten acres each. Lots 9 and 11 were purchased on 8 December 1892 and mortgaged to the Chaffey Brothers. Lot 10 was also purchased on 8 December 1892 without a mortgage. Lot 12 was purchased on 13 July 1893¹⁶ and also mortgaged to the Chaffey Brothers. A run on deposits in late 1892 caused the original Federal Bank of Australia to go into liquidation in February 1893 and this was one of the Victorian sources of finance used by the Chaffey Brothers. The Federal Bank was noted in the rate assessment book as the contact for the Irrigation Trust. After Maurice and Mabel left Renmark in 1895 the property was managed for some time by Mabel's brother, Bernard Ward. The property was beset by financial difficulties and was eventually forfeited to the Public Trustee. Lots 9 & 11 were sold by for non-payment of rates on 4 March 1902 by order of the Supreme Court¹⁷. The house in which Fitzgerald and his family lived briefly on the property was named 'Chotah Wallah' possibly from the Indian connections of Mabel.

Family Background: Maurice Ralph (AKA Randolph) Noding (AKA Fitzgerald) was born in Port of Spain, Trinidad, to Charles Horace and Helen (nee Espinoza) Fitzgerald (sic) on 12 August 1865¹⁸. A sister Clara Antonia Noding was born in the following year, a younger brother, Arthur Noding, on 12 May 1873 and an older brother, Thomas Edward Noding in 1859. The three youngest children became the adopted children of Horace Fitzgerald. Around the age of 14 in 1879 Maurice was sent to *HMS Conway* British Merchant Navy training school to follow in the wake of his father, the late Captain Noding RN, by his guardian the Hon. Horace Fitzgerald, born in Ireland and Colonial Judge in Trinidad.¹⁹ Maurice Noding spent time in the Merchant Navy including aboard the steam ships *Duke of Athol* and *Rosetta* from London to Sydney between 1883 and 1889. In 1891 he was 4th mate on the *Rohilla* working for the British India Steamship Company having previously worked on the *SS Ganges*.²⁰ In the same year his guardian, the retired judge, was living in the centre of London at 16

Pall Mall, St James, Westminster. Horace Fitzgerald died on 6 Jan 1892 and probate was granted on 4 May. Upon the death of his guardian, in accordance with his will²¹, Maurice assumed the Fitzgerald name which became official on 26 July 1892.²² He shared the estate equally with his brother Arthur who inherited when he reached the age of 25. Maurice was married at the age of 27 on 22 November 1892 to Mabel Ward (Grant-Ward in the social pages) at Woollahra in Sydney and was described in the family notice and Parish Register as a resident of Renmark.²³ Mabel was a cousin of Mary Madigan. In December 1892 Maurice purchased the property in Renmark and in 1893 a daughter, Grace, was born to Maurice Noding-Fitzgerald of '*Chotah Wallah*', Renmark.²⁴ In 1896 a sister Pauline was born in Surrey, England.

Grace (AKA Kitty) died aged 10 on 25 October 1904 at 'Darley', Bayswater Road, Sydney.²⁵

Mabel Ward's father, Edward, was born in Madras, India and came to South Australia in May 1852 'for the climate' after studying in England. He entered the public service in Adelaide and became familiar with the Torrens Title system. Upon the recommendation of Torrens himself, he gained a position in 1862 in NSW where he rose to the position of Registrar General.

RIT: Fitzgerald was an inaugural Board member and resigned his position on the board on 10 June 1895 as he was going to live outside of the province.²⁶

Departure: Following their brief residence in Renmark Maurice, Mabel and Grace spent time in Sydney and London. Upon the death in Sydney in 1897 of her father, Edward Grant Ward, Mrs Mabel Fitzgerald was reported to be in London studying singing. Her brother Bernard Torrens Ward was mentioned in the same article as the manager of an irrigation property in Renmark.^{27,28} In 1900 Bernard enlisted in the 4th Imperial Bushmen Contingent to the Boer War with a group of fellow Renmark troopers, Wilson, Ogilvy, Woodham and Woodward. Bernard rose to the rank of sergeant and upon returning to Adelaide in July 1901 re-enlisted this time as a Lieutenant in the 8th Commonwealth Horse. He left Adelaide again in May 1902 but the battalion saw no action and was disbanded in August 1902. In 1904 it was reported locally that Bernard Ward had been awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal at the battle of Oliphant River in 1901.²⁹ In 1951 Bernard's wife Margaret wrote from their home in Bondi to the Military Staff Office in Adelaide to claim the medal. The Office could find no record of it being awarded.³⁰ Bernard died in 1952.

Mrs. Maurice FitzGerald, of Sydney, an Australian singer who has been studying in England for some time past, will shortly (says the "British Australasian" of May 17) give a concert at 7 St. James's Square, by permission of the Duchess of Buckingham and Chandos.

Evening News (Sydney 1869-1931), 14 July 1900, Stageland, p4

Mabel remarried Walter McMorran in Sydney in 1910 after petitioning for divorce from Maurice Fitzgerald.³¹

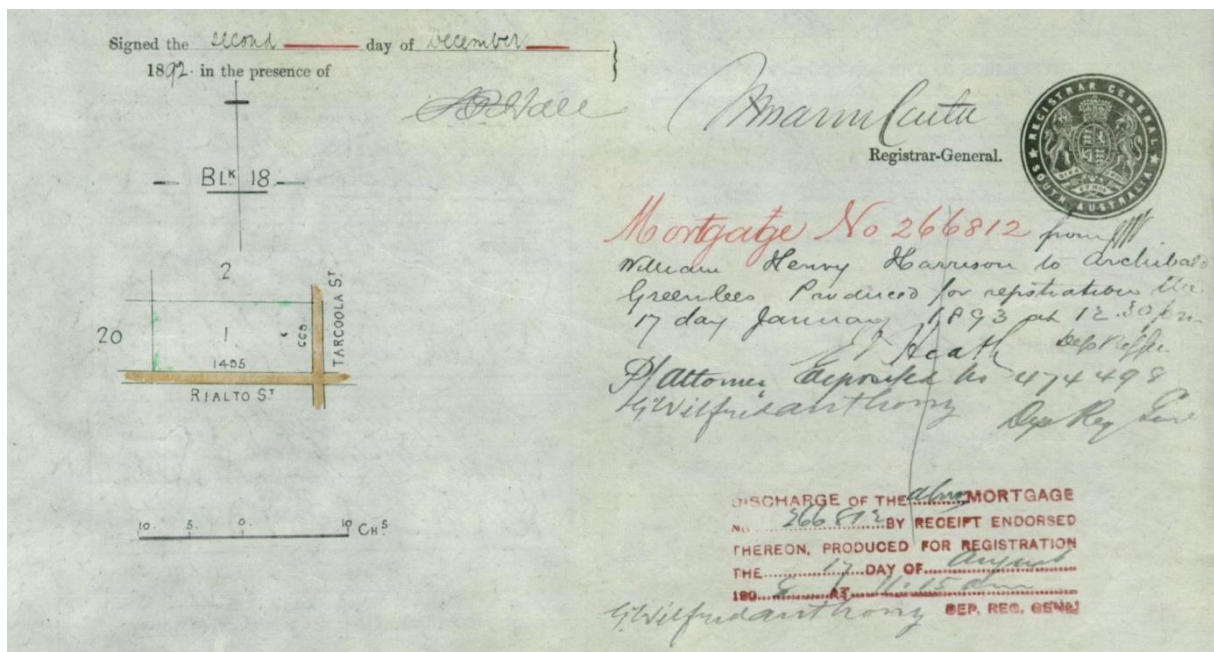
Maurice returned to the Merchant Navy and his former family name of Noding during the First World War.

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- ¹⁶ Land Title 576/22
- ¹⁷ Land Title 568/149
- ¹⁸ Sydney Anglican Parish Register 1892. There are inconsistencies in this source if Maurice's family name was Noding before 1892 and Fitzgerald after 1892. Another source suggests that the mother of Maurice was Louisa Eusevia Noding. Presumably the Anglican Parish Register details were provided by Maurice.
- ¹⁹ Admissions Register, GBOR_SCHOOL_LIVMAR_D_CON_13_5_0296
- ²⁰ England and Wales Merchant Navy Crew Lists 1861-1913, UK National Archives
- ²¹ <https://probatesearch.service.gov.uk/Wills/MyWills>, the will contains no requirement for Maurice to change his name.
- ²² Phillimore, WPW and Fry, EA, An Index to Changes of Name 1760 1901, Fitzgerald
- ²³ Sydney Morning Herald, 3 December 1892, Marriages, p1
- ²⁴ Sydney Morning Herald, 23 November 1893, Births, p1
- ²⁵ Sydney Morning Herald, 26 October 1904, Family Notices, p8
- ²⁶ Board Minutes 10 June 1895
- ²⁷ Daily Telegraph, 30 January 1897, Personal, p9
- ²⁸ RIT Rate Assessment book 1899
- ²⁹ Renmark Pioneer, 12 Feb 1904, War Memento for South Australia, p5
- ³⁰ Ward, Bernard Torrens, Boer War Dossier, 1902-1951, NAA, B4418
- ³¹ NSW marriage certificate 3419/1910

William Henry Harrison M.A.



Source: Olivewood Group Photograph 1910 Show Society



Harrison Property on Rialto and Tarcoola Streets

Source: Sailis Certificate of Title 569/96

Property: William Harrison purchased 10 acres on the corner of Rialto and Tarcoola Streets on 2 December 1892. The mortgage was discharged on 13 November 1911 and the property sold to Edgar Williams et al.³² The house that William built on his property was named 'Millington' after Millington Hospital School where William and his first wife were Headmaster and Headmistress circa 1863.³³ William also purchased two town lots 5 & 6 on Block 32 on 12th Street, Renmark. On the 6 January 1903 those blocks were sold to Emily Bastian, wife of James Bastian, a RIT employee.

Family Background: William Harrison was born on the 8 May 1835 in a house on Windsor Park, England and was raised in the town of Sheerness. He studied teaching and found a position in Worcester and later one in Yorkshire. He resigned from the government system after he led an unsuccessful deputation to protest against teachers being paid by results. He became a science

master at a famous Shrewsbury private school and then Headmaster of another Shrewsbury school. His interest in science led him to make illuminating gas from water, involvement in early electricity experiments and an interest in aeronautics. He visited Paris and made several ascents in a balloon around 1865. He was one of the founders of the Shrewsbury Horticultural Show³⁴ and later the originator of the first ever show in Renmark.³⁵

William Harrison was an expert on strawberries. He wrote a book about them and had large experience of them in England. He regarded Renmark as a highly suitable place for their cultivation and in the early days grew 12 varieties.³⁶ He wrote extensively on horticultural topics and helped popularize the process of cincturing to increase crop yields in currants.³⁷

William claimed to have been seated opposite and chatted with Charles Darwin while he was at a Trinity University dinner in Dublin. He also claimed to have been patted on the head as a young boy by the Duke of Wellington. He was at the seaside and was guilty of nearly hitting the Duke with a stone that he threw. It was noted that it was not certain if the Duke patted him on the head or the other end.³⁸ A more lengthy description of his life appeared in the local paper and included an extensive list of famous people with whom he had an association.³⁹

William came to Renmark in 1889 with his three sons, the children of Sarah, his second wife. Sarah Harrison arrived in Renmark in the 1890s after William and his sons. Their daughter was a gifted musician studying at the Royal College of Music in London when she died just prior to the family departure. One son, John Bede Harrison, died of a spinal injury in Kapunda Hospital in 1899 while another son, C A Harrison, was a doctor in Renmark (see James Price story) but later returned to England. The third son, Frank Harrison, married Ethel Rhodes at St Augustine's Church in April 1901. Mrs Harrison was present but William Harrison had left on an 'important' overseas trip and missed the wedding of his youngest son.⁴⁰ Francis and Ethel Harrison moved to Western Australia in 1911 where Frank was described there as an experienced manager who had been fruit growing in Renmark for 21 years.⁴¹

RIT: William Harrison was an inaugural Board member who served until July 1896 when he was replaced.

Departure: Sarah Harrison, the second wife of William, died in July 1902 in Renmark. William Harrison left Renmark in September 1911 to join his son Frank who was an orchard manager at Katanning, WA. He returned to Renmark on occasions over the next six years and died aged 81 on the 28 May 1917 at Wittenoom, WA.

³² Certificate of Title 586/96

³³ Everingham, Heather, 2021, private correspondence,

³⁴ Murray Pioneer and Australian River Record, 6 July 1917, The Late W H Harrison, M A., p3

³⁵ Murray Pioneer and Australian River Record, 31 October 1913, Renmark Show Society, p7

³⁶ Renmark Pioneer, 2 June 1911, The Strawberry, p5

³⁷ Murray Pioneer and Australian River Record, 29 June 1917, Obit – W H Harrison M A, p5

³⁸ Renmark Pioneer, 22 December 1911, Personal, p4

³⁹ Murray Pioneer and Australian River Record, 6 July 1917, The Late W H Harrison, M A., p3

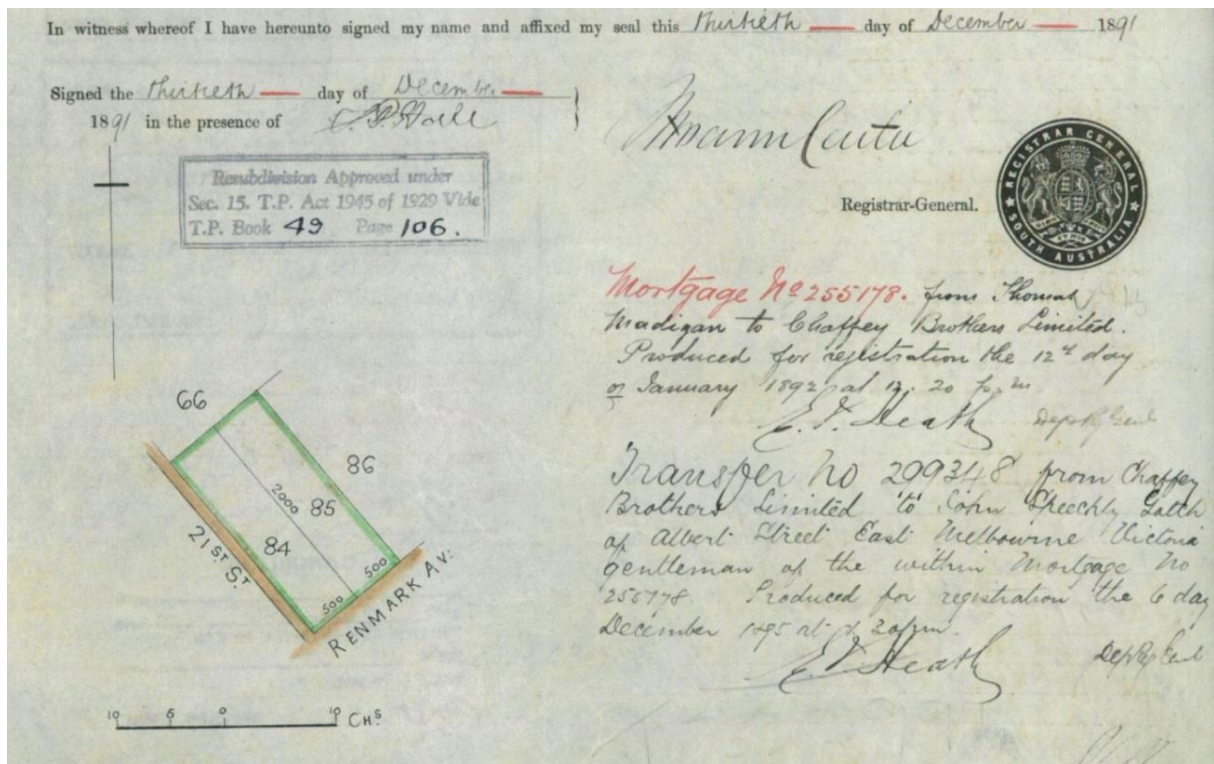
⁴⁰ Renmark Pioneer, 20 April 1900, Local News, p3

⁴¹ West Australian, 13 July 1912, Our Vineyards, p7

Thomas Patrick Madigan



Madigan House 2020



Madigan Property on 21st Street
Source: Sails Certificate of Title 556/128

Property: Thomas Madigan owned 20 acres in Renmark, the two ten acre properties sections 84 and 85 Block A, on the corner of 21st Street and Renmark Avenue opposite Olivewood. The family home, called *The Palms*,⁴² is now on the corner of Wattle Street (created much later) and 21st Street. Thomas began to build his original house in mid 1889 of pine logs plastered on the inside.⁴³ Water supply was by channel from Pump Station Number 2. Thomas was one of the first purchasers of land in Renmark and was a shareholder in the Renmark Irrigation Company in 1891. The close association of Madigan and the Chaffey is reflected in the fact that the mortgage on his property was transferred from Chaffey Brothers Ltd to a private investor on the 6 December 1895, shortly after companies, including Harris Scarfe Ltd in Adelaide, applied to the courts in both South Australia and Victoria to declare the Chaffey insolvent.

Family Background: Thomas Madigan was born on the 7 February 1859 at Mintaro to Irish Catholic immigrants, Denis and Bridget Madigan. He grew up on their farm at Mintaro and in 1885 married a Protestant, Mary Dixie Finey⁴⁴. Religious differences were a hurdle that Mary had to negotiate. Mary (called May by the family) was a child at Farrell Flat where her parents owned the general store. By the time that she married Thomas the family had moved to Hamley Bridge. The Madigan family struggled financially for many years for a variety of reasons. Mary's sister Ethel had no such problems as she married Richard Butler, later Sir Richard and Premier of South Australia. The sister of Mary's mother, Pauline Bunn, married Edward Ward who, in an unlikely coincidence, had a strong family connection to two other RIT Pioneer Board members, Maurice Fitzgerald and Richard Turner.

The Madigans were amongst the earliest settlers of Renmark after Tom gave up on a property to the north of Peterborough because he could not pay the government rabbit levy. He took his family to Renmark in May 1888 after seeing the Chaffey advertisements. Four children were born in Renmark, Brian Marmaduke Madigan in 1888, Cecil Thomas Madigan in 1889, Gertrude Josephine Madigan in 1892 and Paul Edward Madigan in 1894. An older sister Mary (Molly) Ethel Madigan was born in 1886 in the Clare area. In 1911 Molly spent some time living with her mother's cousin, Regina Turner (nee Ward), in Sydney.⁴⁵ Unfortunately the first recorded burial in the Renmark Cemetery was the child Brian Marmaduke Madigan in 1889.

Thomas Madigan died on 25 June 1897⁴⁶ aged 38 of acute peritonitis, probably from a burst appendix, at St John of God Hospital, Kalgoorlie. He is buried under the name Thomas Maddigan in the Catholic section of the cemetery. He left Renmark to go to the West Australian goldfields where he initially worked for wages at the Boulder Half-Mile South mine. He managed to send Mary and his children £1 per week most weeks but she found it difficult to survive. He took a lease on a store for a year in April 1897 and by mid-June it seemed to be flourishing. However he fell ill and failed to receive medical treatment in part due to the cost. After several days of ill health he was finally admitted to hospital but died soon after. His younger brother, Denis Maddigan, and his brother in law, Tom Finey, were nearby at Menzies and arranged the funeral.⁴⁷ The death certificate informant was Denis Maddigan who indicated that Tom was a mine manager and that he was unsure of the names and number of Tom's children.⁴⁸

As a consequence of his death, Mary, was left with four young children in Renmark. She struggled on trying to survive by arranging for another grower, Rice Kelly, to run the block in return for half the crop.⁴⁹ In 1899 she and the children moved to Hamley Bridge enabling her to take the position of provisional teacher at Salter Springs.⁵⁰

The Cutlack family moved into the Madigan house in 1899 with 6 (4) children⁵¹. The house consisted of two stone rooms at the front and an older part of mud and stakes at the back. On the 5 November 1899 there was an enormous thunderstorm that washed away some of the mud wall and caused flooding. At 2.00 am 13 year old Fred Cutlack and his father had to rescue their recently acquired *Encyclopaedia Britannica* in its revolving bookcase. They forgot about their other recent acquisition, Lizzie Heinzmann, their domestic help who had arrived to look after the eight day old baby, Thomas Cutlack. When the gale abated they found her terrified but unharmed, huddled under a pile of blankets in a corner of the room.⁵² It is extraordinary that one modest house in Renmark was the childhood home of two remarkable achievers, CT Madigan⁵³ and FM Cutlack⁵⁴. Mary Madigan sold the property in 1903. It was sold again in 1909 this time to the Dix family.

Mary Madigan valued education highly. Her eldest son, Cecil, attended Adelaide High School and then received a scholarship to attend Prince Alfred College. He went on to Adelaide University where he completed a Bachelor of Science. He was selected as a Rhodes Scholar in 1911 but deferred the scholarship as he was chosen to go with Mawson to Antarctica as a meteorologist. Following his adventures there he went on to Oxford but his studies were interrupted by the war. He joined the Royal Engineers, fought in the war, married an Adelaide woman, Wynnis Wollaston, in England and returned from France to complete his studies at Oxford. In 1922 he accepted a position as lecturer in geology at Adelaide University where he remained until his death in 1947. Dr C.T. Madigan also led an expedition across the Simpson Desert which he named in honour of the patron of his trip.⁵⁵ The Howie family property was adjacent to the old Madigan property in those days and a Howie family story was passed on that huskies wandered over to their fruit property after Cecil Madigan's trip to Antarctica in 1912-13. It is possibly the same husky that became a local media celebrity when it accompanied Miss Madigan on a visit to Renmark in 1914.⁵⁶

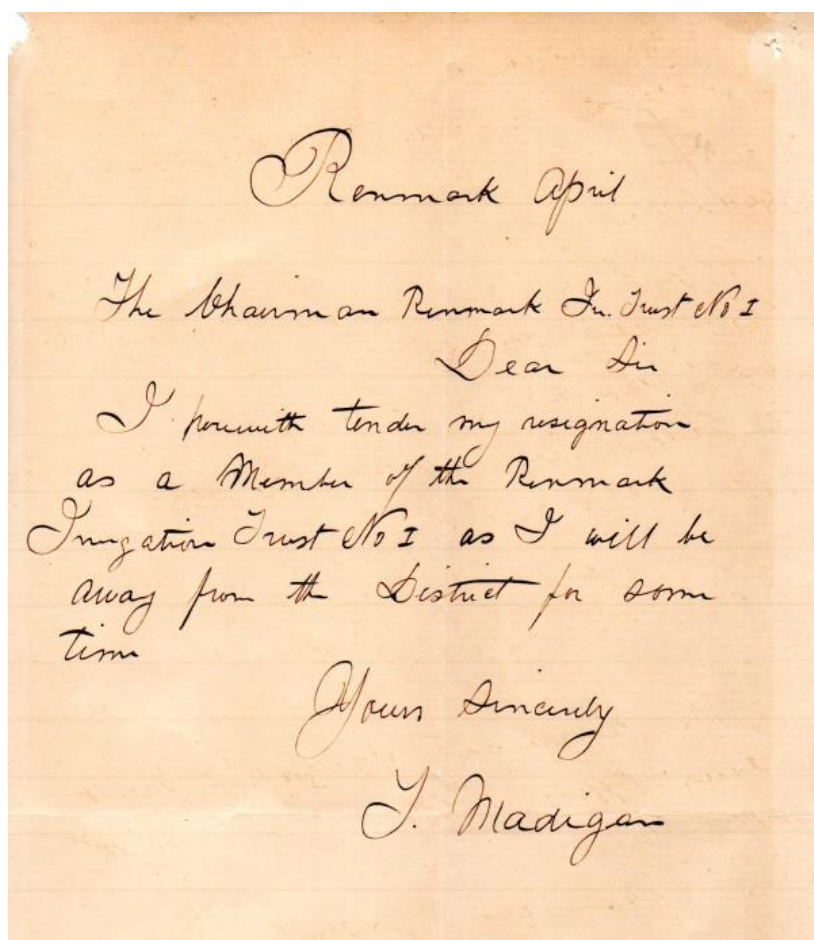
Mary Madigan returned to Renmark in 1914 with her daughters, Mary and Gertrude, and taught at the Renmark West School until 1919⁵⁷. By 1914 the 21st Street property was owned by George Dix. Both daughters are mentioned frequently in the newspaper as they became involved in the local community, particularly in the war effort. The eldest daughter, Mary, joined the Inland Mission and moved to Halls Creek to help run a hospital in outback Western Australia⁵⁸ in what was described as a 'Daisy Bates stunt among the blacks'.⁵⁹

Paul became a lawyer and enlisted during the Great War. In France he was wounded twice, the second time seriously with a gunshot wound to the thigh.⁶⁰ He spent over a year in hospital in both England and Australia. When he was fit to travel he spent some time recuperating with his mother and sisters in Renmark. During the Second World War he became a censor for the army. Mary Madigan returned to Adelaide in 1919. She died at St Peters on 14 October 1934.

RIT: Thomas Madigan and his family arrived in Renmark during 1888 where he secured a contract from the Chaffey's to excavate the first irrigation channels. He worked hard, employed 4 men to successfully complete the contract and seemed to be getting ahead. He was involved with the Renmark Irrigation Company and signed documents that helped create the Renmark Irrigation Trust. He was 34 years old when he was on the first board of the Trust in 1894. He was very active on the board and served until 28 May 1896 when he resigned. Following his death in 1897 Mrs Madigan wrote to the RIT Board regarding arrears of rates. At the time the board was preparing to sell properties that were in arrears. They did not accept her plan for payment but suggested to her that

one third be paid now in cash and the balance, including interest, in two portions on 1 October and 1 April next.⁶¹

Departure: Thomas Madigan left his family in Renmark for the Western Australian goldfields around June 1896 where he died a year later on 26 June 1897.



Renmark April

The Chairman Renmark In. Trust No 1

Dear Sir

I herewith tender my resignation
as a Member of the Renmark
Irrigation Trust No 1 as I will be
away from the District for some
time

Yours Sincerely

J. Madigan

Letter of Resignation: RIT Archives

⁴² Everingham, Heather, 2021, private correspondence

⁴³ Madigan, D C, 2000, Vixere Fortes: A Family Archive, p108

⁴⁴ Hoerr, W N, c1997, Clipped Wings: Memories of my Childhood and Youth, p69

⁴⁵ Madigan, D C, 2000, Vixere Fortes: A Family Archive, chapter 4

⁴⁶ Advertiser 3 July 1897, Family Notices p3

⁴⁷ Madigan, D C, 2000, Vixere Fortes: A Family Archive, chapter 4

⁴⁸ Western Australia Death Certificate, 532L/1897, 44222850

⁴⁹ Madigan, D C, 2000, Vixere Fortes: A Family Archive, chapter 4

⁵⁰ Chronicle, 1 Nov 1934, Mrs M D Madigan

⁵¹ Cutlack, F M, 1988, Renmark: The Early Years, Six children appears in the book but twins were born in 1902

⁵² Ibid, p58

⁵³ Cecil Thomas Madigan wrote *Crossing the Dead Heart* about his exploration of the Simpson Desert

⁵⁴ Frederic Morley Cutlack wrote *Breaker Morant* in 1962 after meeting him in Renmark in 1899 and becoming convinced of his and Hancock's mal treatment. He also wrote official war histories, edited the *War Letters of General Monash*, wrote *The Manchurian Arena*, worked for Prime Minister Bruce and was a journalist with the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Bulletin*.

⁵⁵ Australian Dictionary of Biography: <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/madigan-cecil-thomas-7455>

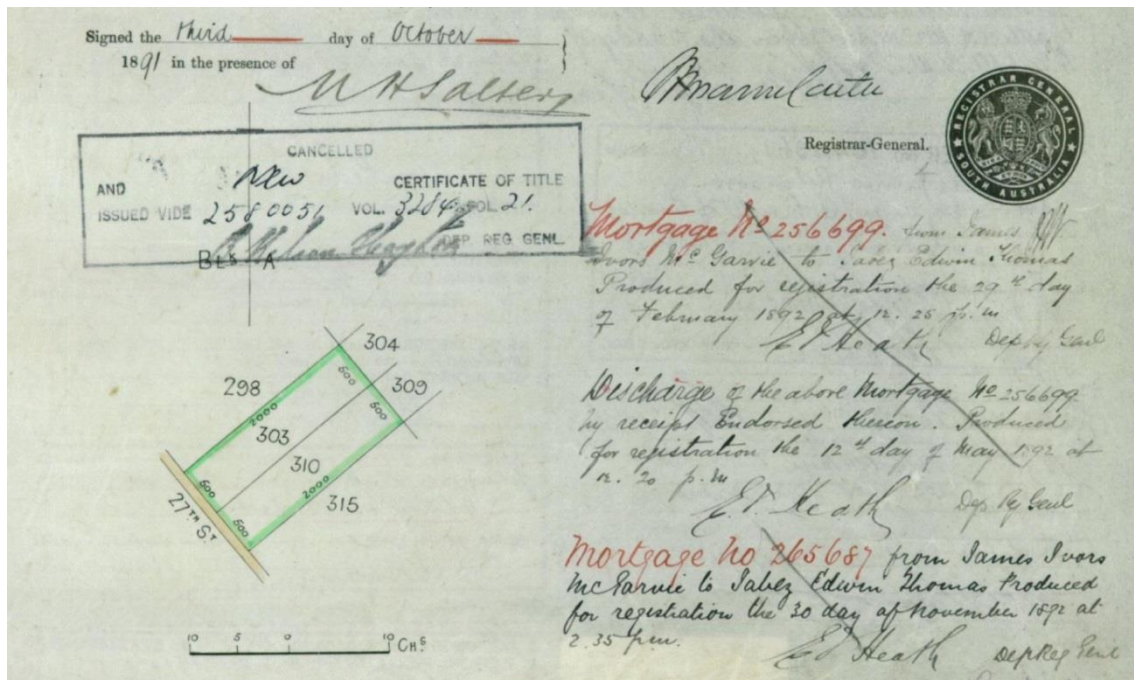
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- ⁵⁶ Murray Pioneer and Australian River Record, 11 Jun 1914, From the Antarctica to Renmark, p5
- ⁵⁷ Ibid, 8 Oct 1914, District Notes, p7
- ⁵⁸ Ibid, 18 Apr 1919, A Church Parade, p5
- ⁵⁹ Ibid, 9 Sep 1921, Old Renmark Lad's Success, p13
- ⁶⁰ National Archives of Australia, Service Record WW1, Madigan, Paul Edward, service number 3208
- ⁶¹ Board Minutes 4 April 1898

James Ivors McGarvie



James McGarvie, Renmark 1897⁶²

Property:



McGarvie Property on 27th Street
 Source: Sailis Certificate of Title 553/15

James McGarvie purchased 20 acres, lots 303 and 310 on Block A, 27th Street on 3 Oct 1891. A year later, on 29 Oct 1892 he bought two town blocks on Renmark Avenue, 19 and 20 of Block 41 but his home, called 'The Hermitage', was on 27th Street. He was on the Renmark Irrigation Company

shareholder register in December 1891 as the owner of 20 shares and was a director of the company.⁶³ The horticultural land was transferred to Robert Malcolm in 1927⁶⁴ and the town properties to George Kuhlmann on 25 September 1896 and then to Mrs Lilian Saies on 7 October 1902.⁶⁵ In the 1890s James rode his penny farthing bicycle the four miles into Renmark⁶⁶ and he must have tired of this by 1904 when he became one of the first locals to 'purchase an infernal-machine-motor bicycle'⁶⁷. In 1921 he purchased a Chevrolet.



The Hermitage, 27th Street, Source McGarvie Family History, p23

Family Background: James was born in Colac in 1854 and died there on 29 December 1934, aged 80. His father was William McGarvie from Creaghadoos, Donegal and his mother Charlotte Fleming from Dublin. William was an illiterate farmer who migrated to Victoria with Charlotte in 1844 and worked as a bullock driver in the Colac area where he took up some land.⁶⁸ James' brothers inherited the family property in 1922 and James remained unmarried. In his younger days he worked in outback Queensland where he overlanded mobs of cattle and horses.⁶⁹ He spent 32 years in Renmark but maintained a close connection to his family in Pomborneit near Colac.⁷⁰ He also spent some time in Kerang in Victoria. A nephew of James McGarvie, Keith McGarvie, became a MLA in Victoria while a great nephew of James, Richard Elgin McGarvie, had a distinguished legal career, became a Supreme Court judge and later Governor of Victoria.⁷¹

RIT: In 1877 James McGarvie owned some land at Leaghur, 15 miles south of Kerang on the road to Boort in Victoria. There was much debate about irrigation trusts in the district (Kerang East Irrigation Trust was established in September 1889) although he did not appear in the rates book after 1882. James became a board member of the Renmark Irrigation Trust in January 1894 at the age of 39 after being a director of the Renmark Irrigation Company. He served on the board until part way through his term in 1896. In September 1896 Mr McGarvie wrote to the board resigning his position. It was resolved 'that the Trust accept Mr McGarvies (sic) resignation with regret'.⁷² He suffered some

health issues and spent time convalescing with his family in Victoria but by 1901 he was back in Renmark and served again on the RIT Board after being re-elected from a strong field of candidates.

Departure: James left Renmark in 1896 but returned a few years later and continued to grow fruit. He sold his property in 1928 and at the age of 72 'Mac' was reportedly heading to Queensland to look for a pastoral property.⁷³ A few months later he was reported to be in Western Australia soon to be joined by Mr and Mrs Arthur Robertson and family in a joint farming venture.⁷⁴ By the end of 1928 a further report was received in Renmark that Arthur Robinson (sic) was in Western Australia on 1000 acres 100 miles north of Perth with his uncle, James McGarvie⁷⁵. They were well satisfied with the land that they had secured.⁷⁶ It was a wheat farm at Ballidu which, unknown to them, contained poison weed⁷⁷. They struggled on for 6 years trying to make a living. They cut sandalwood on the property for the Chinese market and they also distilled eucalyptus to try to make ends meet. By 1933 James was penniless and being supported for a short time by his sister in Aldgate in the Adelaide Hills. He returned to Pomborneit and died in the Colac Hospital on 29 December 1934.⁷⁸

⁶² McGarvie, Graham A, 1995, McGarvie Family History 1844-1994, p23

⁶³ South Australian Register, 28 Dec 1892, Provincial News, p5

⁶⁴ Certificate of Title 553/15

⁶⁵ Certificate of Title 567/44

⁶⁶ McGarvie, Graham A, 1995, McGarvie Family History 1844-1994, pp23-25

⁶⁷ Renmark Pioneer, 5 Aug 1904, What the Folks are Saying, p6

⁶⁸ Australian Dictionary of Biography, McGarvie, Keith, 1891-1969

⁶⁹ Murray Pioneer and Australian River Record, 13 Apr 1928, Mr McGarvie Revisits Renmark, p10

⁷⁰ Camperdown Chronicle, 5 January 1935, Obituary: Mr James McGarvie, p7

⁷¹ <https://www.smh.com.au/national/from-farm-boy-to-states-first-citizen-20030606-gdgvuc.html>

⁷² Board Meeting 21 September 1896

⁷³ Murray Pioneer and Australian River Record, 13 Apr 1928, Back to Queensland, p4

⁷⁴ Ibid, 29 Jun 1928, Renmark West, p8

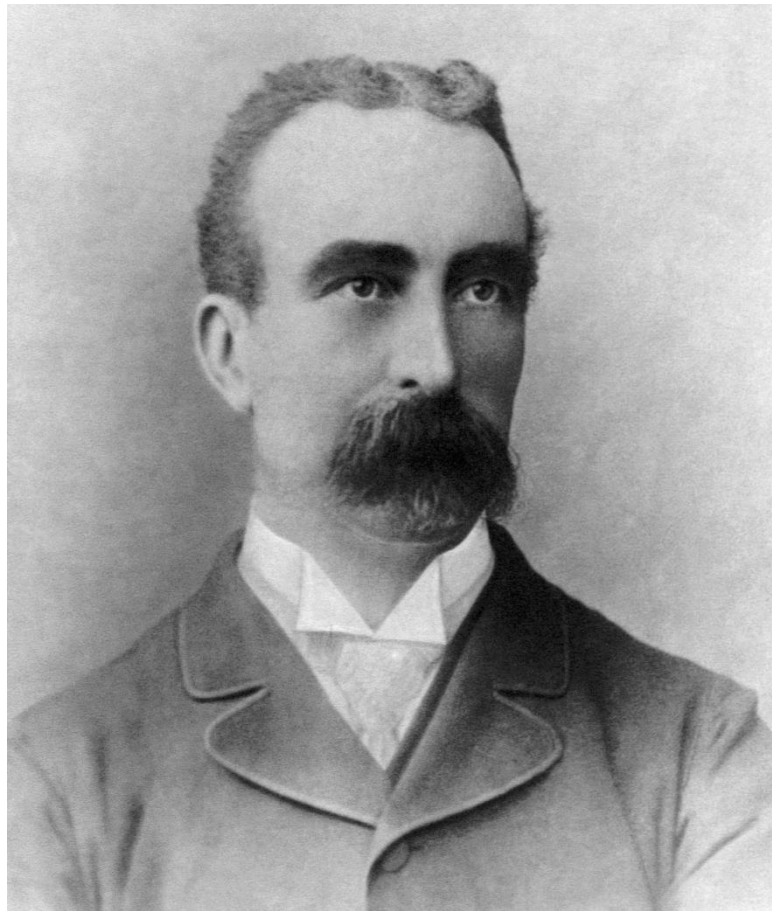
⁷⁵ Arthur Robertson's wife, Clare Campbell, was James McGarvie's niece. Arthur Robertson's brother, Sgt W H G Robertson, lived with James McGarvie for three years and played football in Renmark. The two brothers tried to enlist together but Arthur was rejected. Sgt Robertson was killed in action on 3 Oct 1917 leaving a wife and two children in Geelong.

⁷⁶ Ibid, 30 Nov 1928, Personal, p12

⁷⁷ Spike Poison, *Gastrolobium glaucum*, now a rare and endangered plant in the Ballidu area

⁷⁸ McGarvie, Graham A, 1995, McGarvie Family History 1844-1994, pp23-25

Colonel Charles May Allan Morant



Morant Property on Renmark Avenue
Source: Sailer Certificate of Title 557/78

Property: Colonel Morant first came to Renmark via Hobart and Melbourne in May 1891. He arrived from Mildura to Renmark aboard the *Gem* on the 28 May 1891⁷⁹. He was convinced that the cost of water supply would be cheaper in Renmark than Mildura and so purchased property there.⁸⁰ He quickly returned to England and then arrived back in Adelaide on the 5 November 1891 aboard the *Orient*. On the 23 January 1892 Colonel Charles Morant finalized the purchase of around 100 acres of horticultural land on Renmark Avenue making him the largest landholder, apart from the Chaffeys, in Renmark. During his short visit to Renmark in the middle of 1891 he made arrangements for planting it before he left for England. When he returned later that year he found that he had to start all over again.⁸¹ There is a family story that the Morant house was built initially by a French couple who disappeared one night.⁸² The house has also been attributed to Fred Matulick who built it in the same log cabin style as Olivewood. It was then occupied by Colonel Morant and later with his son Charles and called '*Walteela*'. Charles junior eventually built a stone house nearby that he called '*Walteela*'. A second son, Arthur Morant, occupied the original house and property which he named '*Bangalore*' after his birthplace.⁸³ It was subsequently occupied by the Morant family until the death of Arthur's daughter, Beryl in 2007. In 1898 the mortgage was transferred to Colonel Morant's absent wife, Catherine Morant and then in late 1902 to the State Bank of South Australia. In 1906 the entire property was transferred to their two sons as tenants in common and then shortly afterwards the elder son Charles was given an undivided two thirds share and the younger son, Arthur, an undivided one third share. In 1907 the land titles were then divided and allocated to each son in the previous proportions.



Exterior of '*Bangalore*' in 2020

On 11 December 1891 Charles also purchased two town allotments, lots 16 and 17, in Murray Avenue, now James Avenue, opposite St Augustine's Church.

Family Background: Charles May Allan Morant was born on 21 May 1844⁸⁴ in India, in Kotagiri (Kotagherry). In the 1851 England census he was in a school in Somerset with three of his brothers aged from 3 to 11. They were called ward scholars (except for 3 year old Edward) and all were born in India. At the age of 16 on 20 September 1861 he became a cornet in the Madras Cavalry based at Bangalore. This was the lowest level of commissioned officer in the cavalry. On the 20 September 1862 he was promoted to Lieutenant, on 20 September 1873 to Brevet Captain and on 1 August 1875 to Captain.⁸⁵ Around this time he married Catherine Lushington who was born in Calcutta in 1847. In the 1860s Charles was in the 1st Madras Cavalry but by the early 1870s he was an adjutant and drill instructor, Mysore Sillander Horse and became closely associated with the 4th Madras Cavalry.

Lieutenant Colonel Morant, aged 46 and retired from the army in India, arrived in Adelaide on his second trip to Australia on the 5 November 1891 alone aboard the *Orient*. By the 8 November he was aboard the paddle steamer *Pearl* on the Murray in order to settle in Australia permanently. He purchased a large parcel of land with the intention of setting up two of his sons in a new agricultural enterprise. Colonel Morant died twenty years later in Renmark in 1911 at the residence 'Walteela' (possibly an Aboriginal word meaning meeting place) of his son Charles jnr, aged 67. He spent the last years of his life living and working during the day at 'Bangalore' and spending the nights at 'Walteela'.⁸⁶

Colonel Morant's two eldest sons, Charles and Arthur, were both educated at one of England's top private schools, Cheltenham College in Gloucestershire. They were then sent to the Colonial College, Hollesley Bay in Suffolk which was later referred to by the Morants as Hollesley Agriculture College. Its purpose was to prepare upper and middle class boys for life in the colonies. They learnt practical skills needed in the colonies such as how to use an axe and saw, how to milk a cow, sow seed and reap their harvest.⁸⁷

Charles Morant jnr., born circa 1875 in India, arrived in Adelaide aboard the *Orient* on 21 March 1893. The seventeen year old Charles jnr worked with his father to establish the property over the next few years. Charles Ansell Lushington Morant married Madeline Robertson from Calperum Station in 1908. They had three sons, Lionel (AKA John), Deryck and Henry. Charles never committed to horticulture as his father expected and looked for other opportunities. After 1925 Charles was a manager employed in Adelaide by the international shipping and mercantile company Gibbs, Bright and Co. Ltd. In 1928 he was found with two bullet wounds to his head in an office in Adelaide.⁸⁸ He recovered but shortly afterwards was declared insolvent⁸⁹ with assets of nil and liabilities of £6,064-2-9. The inquiry into his insolvency found that his wife's medical bills were high, he led an extravagant lifestyle and he had tried to lessen his debts by gambling.⁹⁰ Charles recovered and died in 1966 aged 91.



Charles Ansell Lushington Morant and *Walteela*
Source: *Cyclopedia of South Australia 1907-1909* Vol 2 p938-939

Arthur Franklyn Morant was born in Bangalore, Mysore, India in 1876 and came to Renmark aged 17 in 1894. He enlisted in the 2nd Battalion of the Australian Commonwealth Horse to fight in the Boer War on the 16 January 1902 and was promoted to the rank of lance corporal. Arthur married Isabella Robertson Steele in 1908 and they spent their life developing the property and living in the original house then called 'Bangalore'. They had three daughters, Beryl who never married, Eileen later Loveday and Margerie later Penfold. Arthur died in June 1949 aged 73 having committed to life in Renmark as a fruit grower.



Arthur Franklyn Morant and *Bangalore*

Source: *Cyclopedia of South Australia 1907-1909* Vol 2 p939

There were at least 4 other brothers and sisters of Charles senior; James, George, Emily and Edward. The boys were all sent to boarding school in England from a very early age⁹¹. Charles and Catherine had 9 children of which 5 survived to adulthood. The eldest was a daughter, Catherine, the two older sons who came to Australia, Charles and Arthur, a daughter, Beryl, and a young son Ernald who may have been one of the reasons that Catherine Morant (the wife of Colonel Morant) is unknown in Renmark. Ernald was born on 20 May 1889 in England when Catherine was 42 and around the time that Charles became interested in the Chaffey enterprise in Australia. Catherine Morant (nee Lushington), although born in India, was from the landed gentry of England. Ernald Lushington Morant grew up in England not knowing his father, joined the Navy, fought at Gallipoli, rose to the rank of Lt. Commander and then lived in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). Catherine Morant, the estranged wife of Charles May Allan Morant, died in Kent in 1914. In 1945 the local Renmark paper reported that Squadron Leader Roy A L Morant, son of Ernald Morant, spent a week in Renmark visiting his uncle Arthur.⁹² Roy later migrated to Australia, lived in NSW and following his death in 1988 was buried near his grandfather in the Renmark cemetery.⁹³

RIT: Colonel Charles Morant was on the first Board of the RIT and was its first chairman. He served from 1893 to 1896.

*'By reason of his position as a foremost settler Colonel Morant was forced during many troublous years into a leadership of the public, from which his retiring disposition would have repelled him. This notice would be incomplete if we omitted to refer to the high respect which he won from his neighbours of every class and degree. A certain sardonic humour, which all will recall, never veiled his great kindness of heart and unvarying courtesy; and he never deviated from his course of just, fair and honourable conduct'*⁹⁴

Arthur Morant served four years on the Board, 1912-1915

Departure: Colonel Charles Morant left the board of the Trust and continued to assist in the management of the property until his death on 22 July 1911 aged 67. He also became involved in the Renmark Defence Committee which attempted to get some justice for those affected by the collapse of the Chaffey's who had mistakenly believed that their scheme was backed by the South Australian Government. Eventually a Royal Commission was held into Renmark and the Murray River Settlements. He is buried in the Renmark Cemetery.

Morant Story last updated 4 June 2021

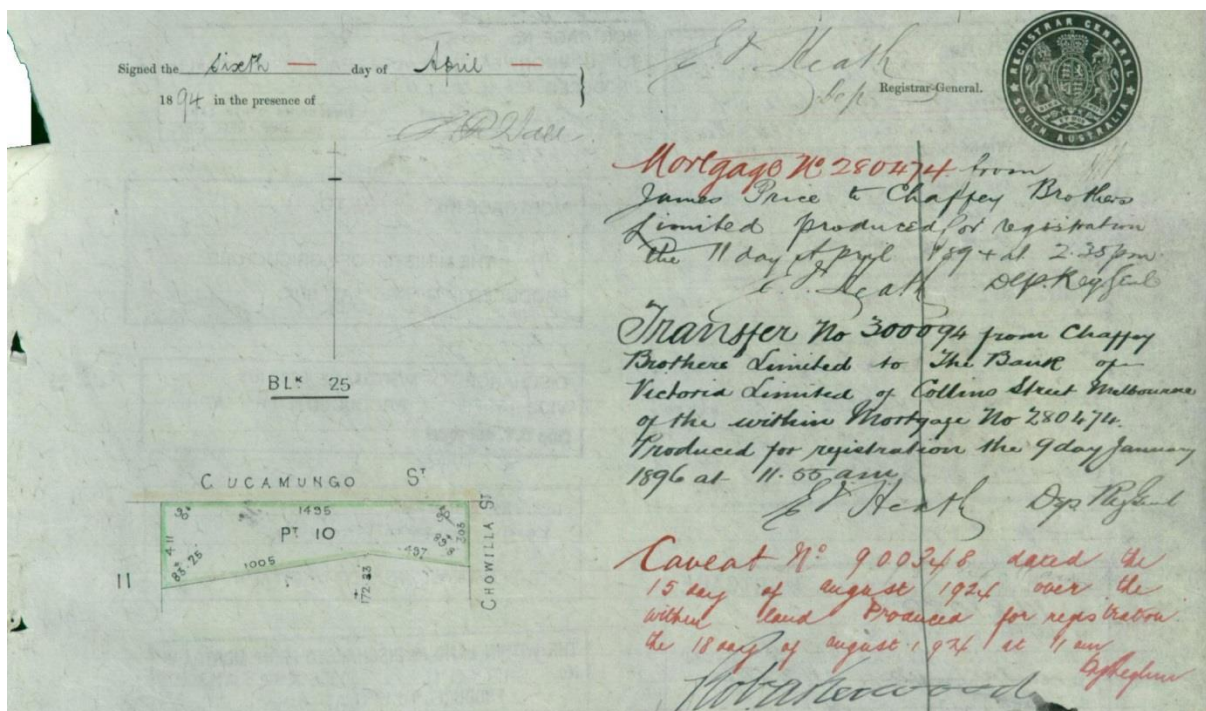
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James Price



James and Louise Price with their daughter Helen

Source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/hwmobs/47461309072>



Price Property on Cucamonga Street
Source: Sailis Certificate of Title 584/155

Property: James Price owned a block on the corner of Cucamunga and Chowilla Streets. James Price was a close associate of the Chaffey's in the establishment of the Renmark settlement but purchased his land soon after becoming secretary of the RIT. He arranged the mortgage through the Chaffey's. Upon leaving Renmark he was reluctant to sell at a low price. He arranged for Harry Little to move into his house and manage his property. This suited Harry as his fiancée of 5 years was soon to arrive from England and he was not keen on tent living for her.⁹⁵ Harry and Emily lived there until May 1898 after which he continued to collect the rent from a tenant and process the property's grapes into wine, which he sold and then forwarded the money to the Price family.

Family Background: James Price was born on 6 August 1864 in Surrey, England, to James and Judith Price. James, the father, was a coal and stone merchant on Merton Road, Wimbledon, Surrey. James, the son, married Louise and with their three year old daughter, Helen, emigrated to South Australia in 1891. While living in Renmark Helen Price was thrown from a horse in June 1895.⁹⁶ She was kicked in the head by the horse and her skull was fractured. Fortunately Dr C. Alan Harrison, son of RIT Board member William Harrison, had just returned to the town from a three day ride up river and, although exhausted, was able to perform a trepanning operation. The Price family was due to be involved in a performance that evening and the town crier was sent around with a bell to inform people that the performance was cancelled.⁹⁷ Helen recovered and after the family left Renmark they returned to London where James and Louise consulted a specialist about Helen. A report sent back to friends in Renmark was that the operation could not have been better and there were no adverse effects⁹⁸. The family then travelled to Western Australia to look for opportunities. In 1905 James was elected to the West Australian parliament and in 1906 became Minister of Works. He resigned in 1909 on medical grounds and left Australia for England. He became ill as he crossed the Indian Ocean and was hospitalized in Cape Town where he died two months later. He is remembered in Western Australia through the naming of a geographical feature, now an ecologically, historically and culturally significant place, James Price Point, 65 km north of Broome.

RIT: James was the first employee as secretary of the Renmark Irrigation Trust from January 1894 to 19 October 1896⁹⁹, appointed at the age of 29. He was paid a salary of £150 per annum and the Board agreed to pay him more if it was possible at the end of the financial year. He was paid £10 extra in 1895. He was secretary at a difficult time for the Trust and was highly regarded. He was given a farewell dinner and he commented in his speech that although he had been attracted by the Chaffey vision contained in the Red Book and the representations of Mr Mathew Vincent in England, he found himself not suited to horticulture and determined to try something else.¹⁰⁰

Departure: The Price family left by coach on 2 April 1897 and were given a rousing send off by the locals. James Price fell ill while at sea and died aged 46 in Cape Town on 2 May 1910.

⁹⁵ Little Family Diaries 1891-1921, pp84-86

⁹⁶ Renmark Pioneer, 15 June 1895

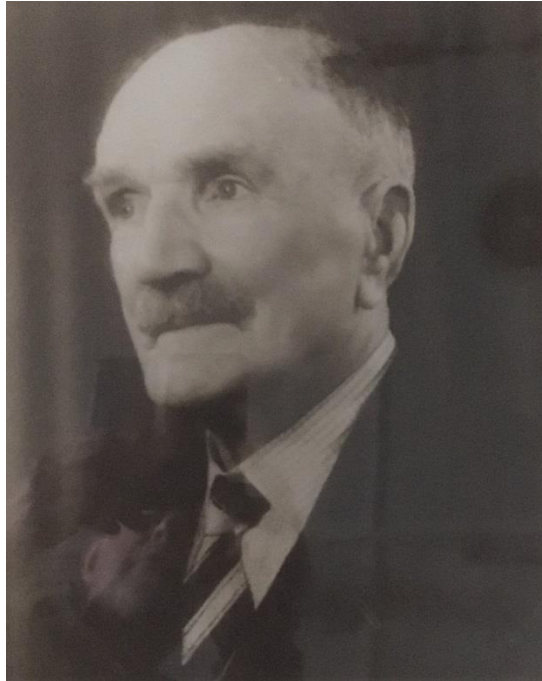
⁹⁷ Renmark Pioneer, 22 June 1895

⁹⁸ Renmark Pioneer, 10 September 1897, Local News, p3

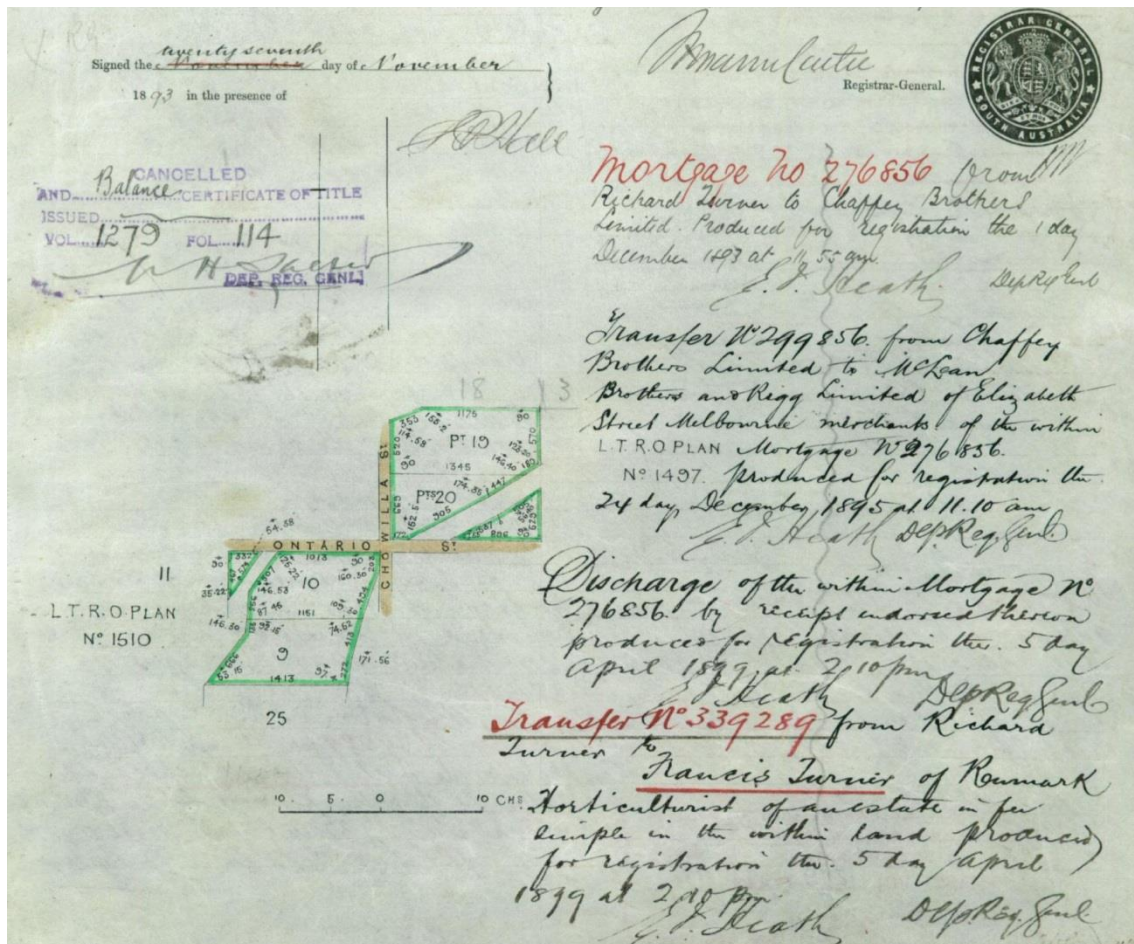
⁹⁹ Board Minutes 19 Oct 1896

¹⁰⁰ Renmark Pioneer, 2 April 1897

Richard Turner



Source: RIT Archives



Richard & Frank Turner Property on the Corner of Chowilla and Ontario Streets

Source: Sailis Certificate of Title 580/146

Property: Three Turner brothers, Charles, Richard and Frank were attracted by the Chaffey advertising to take up land in Renmark. Two of the brothers, Richard and Frank owned a model property of 48 acres on Ontario and Chowilla Streets. Richard purchased the properties in November and December 1893 as the RIT was being formed. He also purchased a town allotment on 27 November 1891 on the western side of Ral Ral Avenue between Renmark Avenue and Murtho Street. Charles purchased 18 acres nearby on the corner of Ontario and Tarcoola Streets in September 1895.

Family Background: The brothers migrated from England in 1891 to take up horticulture in the Chaffey settlement. Their parents were Harold and Mary from Streatham Hill in Surrey. Harold was a master coach maker.

Mr and Mrs Richard Turner (Regina Gertrude Disandt Ward) married on 27 April 1897 in Sydney and returned from their honeymoon in June 1897 to stay at the Renmark Hotel¹⁰¹ until their house, 'Tarnagulla', on Block C was finished by the Little Brothers¹⁰². Cliff Little was the main builder assisted by his brothers Alf and Harry but Cliff died of chronic appendicitis on 18 June with the final touches on the house about to be made.¹⁰³ Richard Turner moved into the house with his wife Regina and younger brother Frank but this living arrangement lasted little more than a year before Richard and Regina left for Sydney leaving Frank to run the property.

The marriage to Regina Ward made Richard the brother in law of Maurice Fitzgerald as Regina was the 4th daughter of Edward Grant Ward. Regina was also the cousin of Mary Madigan. In 1901 Frank Turner went to Sydney to see his brother Richard and his wife off to England.¹⁰⁴ Richard Turner made an impact in the Renmark community very quickly and seems to have been dynamic and immediately recognized as a leader. He never made a long term commitment to Renmark. Apart from being an inaugural RIT board member he was chairman of the Renmark Progress Committee, director of the Fruit Packing Union, Justice of the Peace and involved in the Tintra Tennis Club as well as several other sports.

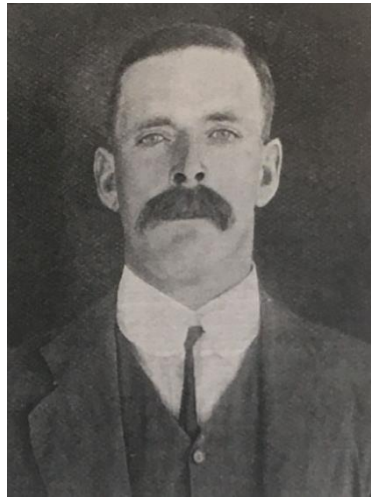
The eldest brother, Charles, was a widower who was called Grandpa by the Cutlack children because he wore spectacles. His wife Ivy died of tuberculosis in London in April 1895 aged 33¹⁰⁵. Charles trained as an architect and although he maintained an interest in horticulture he did not persist with it in Renmark. He also described himself as an artist¹⁰⁶ and designed the Ark logo patented by the Renmark Fruit Growers Union in 1894¹⁰⁷. He 'delighted us (the Cutlack children) with his demonstration of the quick way to sweep our chimney by firing his shotgun up it. The first thing that fell down was a dead magpie.'¹⁰⁸ Charles and Ivy Turner had two sons, Charles Edgar Turner who married Marion Robertson from Calperum Station in 1914 and Harold George Turner who married Ruby Hearnshaw also in 1914.

The youngest of the three brothers, Frank, was the Turner settler who survived for the longest time in Renmark. He married Edith Helen Carruthers in 1906 and the *Renmark Pioneer* reported that in January 1907 Mr and Mrs Turner had returned from a 9 month honeymoon in England and Europe. Two sons, Edward in 1908 and Richard in 1909 were born. Edward later graduated with a Bachelor of Engineering and Applied Science from Adelaide University in 1932. In the late 1920s, well after the family moved to Adelaide, Edith Turner took in a relative a few years younger than her boys whose parents were unable to afford the board at St Peter's College. He later became Chairman of CSIRO, Sir James Robert (Jerry) Price. He described Edith as 'very helpful but something of a dictator'.¹⁰⁹

RIT: The three Turner brothers all had an association with the Renmark Irrigation Trust. Richard Turner was an inaugural Board member and resigned in May 1895 as he was going to live outside of the area.¹¹⁰ In June 1895 a substantial article appeared in the Renmark Pioneer praising the Turner Brothers property as a model.¹¹¹ It was reported that Richard would be absent from Renmark for about a year.¹¹² In July 1897, shortly after his return from his honeymoon, Richard Turner was elected Chairman of the Trust Board. He served one year as chairman, his last association with the Board which he was on for a total of three and a half years, 1893-1894 and 1896-1897.

Charles Turner was on the Board for two years in 1899 and 1900.

Frank Turner was on the Board for three years from 1903 to 1905.



Frank Turner

Source: *Cyclopedia of South Australia Vol 2 1907 1909* p936

Departure: Charles Turner left Renmark in May 1907 to live on Brighton Road at Brighton¹¹³ and the 18 acres that he owned on the corner of Ontario and Tarcoola Streets was sold in October of that year.¹¹⁴ Charles died in Sydney in 1910 at Darling Point aged 49.

Richard Turner returned to Sydney, home of his wife's family, and died in his 91st year on 29 August 1953 in Sydney. He was survived by three of his four children who were all born after he left Renmark. He was described as a retired orchardist.

Frank Turner began advertising their property for sale in 1910 but it had still not sold in June 1914. Frank, Edith and their two sons Edward and Richard left Renmark around 1915 when the family purchased a property in Barnes Road, Payneham. They later moved to Leabrook. Frank died in Adelaide in September 1930 aged 60 from suicide in a bathing box at Grange. He was remembered in Renmark as 'a man of singularly equable disposition and a fine type of an English gentleman'.¹¹⁵ The Turner property was purchased by Yandilla Estate in 1915 and managed by L G Driffield, a Melbourne accountant also known in Renmark as the representative of the Debenture Holders following the collapse of Chaffey Brothers Ltd.

©Pioneers of the RIT was researched and written by Geoff Bull for the RIT in 2020.

Interlibrary sources courtesy of the Renmark Paringa Public Library

Updated 8 Mar 2021

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- ¹¹⁵ Murray Pioneer and Australian River Record, 19 September 1930, The Late Frank Turner, p9