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THE MENTALITIES OF EARLY SOUTH AUSTRALIAN PASTORALISTS: The Angas, Keynes, McBean and Melrose families in central South Australia.

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Thesis presented as a requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of History, Faculty of Arts at the University of Adelaide.

Awarded the degree of Master of Arts

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ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE TEXT

AFP	Angas Family Papers
KFP	Keynes Family Papers
McBFP	McBean Family Papers
MFP	Melrose Family Papers
SAA	South Australian Archives
Register	The South Australian Register

SUMMARY

This thesis discusses the mentalities of the first generation of South Australian pastoralists in the Angas, Keynes, McBean and Melrose families of central South Australia.

The discussion starts by outlining the backgrounds of George Fife Angas, Joseph Keynes, Lachlan McBean and George Melrose in Great Britain. The influences on their minds were identified as the lower-middle class ideals of self-improvement and the religion and love of nature imparted to them by their teachers and family. It was also discovered that these men, despite their relatively lowly position in society were aware of how a gentry functioned.

Attracted to South Australia by Wakefield's scheme of systematic colonisation, which promised a hierarchically ordered society on the British model but with room at the top, these men set about the task of earning a colonial fortune. The thesis next investigates how one of the pastoralists' number, Joseph Keynes, coped with an early setback to his dreams, and how George Fife Angas one of the colony's progenitors and the other pastoralists fared amidst the speculative environment of early South Australia.

Eventually Keynes, Melrose and McBean began to make substantial achievements in their quest for wealth and position. In 1851 Angas arrived in South Australia to collect his ready-made fortune. The thesis then focuses on how these individuals reacted to their wealth. It shows how they attempted to set themselves up with grand estates and retainers, modelling their public facade on the English landed gentry. However, these pretensions towards gentry living were not

met sympathetically by the rest of the South Australian population. The discussion moves to explore how Angas, Keynes, McBean and Melrose responded to these criticisms on a public and private level.

The thesis continues to look at the developing mentalities of this self-styled pastoral elite through their response to some of the great problems in their lives after they had obtained their wealth. When their reactions to death and dishonour are discussed it is found that they respond privately to those dilemmas by reaching back to the teachings of their British youth. They never satisfactorily reconciled their pose as a landed gentry with their private resolves to keep old ways.

Seeing that they lacked the necessary attributes and power to create an Australian landed gentry, they attempted to give their children the education of wealth. Their children were imbued with a mixture of their old lower-middle class ideals and the social accomplishments of an elite. Their children were gradually assimilated into the rest of the colonial elite.

The thesis concludes by noting that the attempt of the pastoralists to create a gentry could not be successful for a number of reasons. Not only was the external opposition formidable, but the pastoralists lacked both the numbers and the intellectual certainty required to give permanence to their dreams.

INTRODUCTION

This thesis focuses on the mentalities of a group of men who rose from the relative obscurity of tenant farming in Great Britain to a position within a pastoral aristocracy at the pinnacle of South Australian society. These men's life experience and thought traversed the route taken by Tennyson's character,

> Whose life in low estate began
> And on a simple village green;
> Who breaks his birth's invidious bar,
> And grasps the skirts of happy chance,
> And breasts the blows of circumstance,
> And grapples with his evil star
> Who makes by force his merits known. 1

Unlike Tennyson's character whose vaulting leaps were made in Great Britain, George Fife Angas, Joseph Keynes, Lachlan McBean and George Melrose made their way to the top under the conditions of colonial South Australia.

A wealth of available documentary evidence makes it less difficult than is usually the case with pioneer families to get at the changing mentalities of these men. Speculating on states of mind, or climates of opinion is not a new activity, but a perennial problem of this type of work has been the struggle to apply randomly acquired information from the public domain to specific cases. However, with these four men in many cases we do not need to guess. This thesis relies heavily not only on diaries, letters, account books and reminiscences, but also on the books these men and their families chose to read. Well-thumbed religious works, guides to manners and morals, school text and exercise books that survive in family libraries and can be traced directly to the original readers.

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1. A. Tennyson, "In Memoriam" stanza LXIV, Poetical works of Alfred Lord Tennyson.

Within these written or studied pages lie the source or outworkings of these men's emotions and beliefs, the foundation of their views of life.

Furthermore, these men left more substantial physical evidence of their evolving worldview; their estates and the contents of their mansions. Paintings done by family members speak of their opinions, while photographs depict the way they wished to be seen by the world. Indeed, not all the evidence put forward will be written, and the reader should pay close attention to visual evidence. The layout of these men's houses, the structure of the properties they ran, their relationship to the towns and districts they patronised, the churches in which they worshipped, even the tombstones over their graves all illuminate their mentalities in important ways.

The study begins with the childhood of three of the men in the early nineteenth century and proceeds to the age of their children at the turn of the twentieth. Psycho-history will not be used to study the formative years of these men. The route traversed starts with the shaping of these men's mentalities in Britain and their settlement in South Australia in the late 1830's. Thence, it will follow through the successful, and turbulent, years of consolidating their fortunes in the 1850s and '60s. Finally, it takes in the 1870s to the early 1900s, a time when pastoral wealth was established and being handed down to the men's undoubtedly privileged children. It is not sufficient in measuring the mental distance travelled by these four men to study their lives alone and to finish with their deaths. Therefore, the lives of their children are studied as they form their opinions on life and take over their fathers' fortunes. In this way the extent of one generation's

influence over the next may be ascertained and the father's mentality measured against the child's.

Initially, the thesis explores these men's images of the British environment into which they were born. Their view of life, in its relationship to God and the Universe, was conditioned by their positions in the lower-middling classes in Great Britain. These men were not wealthy or lettered individuals. They were not gentlemen in the technical sense for they could not survive without their work. As members of the lower ranks of British society, their views of their positions in the social hierarchy were moulded by secular and religious conceptions of an ordered society as part of an ordered Universe. Not that they perceived a well-ordered society around them for their experience told them otherwise. The ordered society was a normative ideal.

This ideal was full of inconsistencies. Although it did not condemn everyone to a fixed position in society, it stressed that an individual should be content with his lot. However, these men were also told that their lives should be improving and their station progressing through their diligence and piety. Plainly this was not happening to them in Britain.

The colonising company of South Australia advertised in their prospectuses that the new colony was to be based on the British conception of an ordered society. Here, as Douglas Pike has so clearly shown in Paradise of Dissent, the values of industry, sobriety, probity and sanctity would be publicly cherished. The only usurper that might challenge this crown would be the individual's ambition and lust for social and financial improvement, but the colonising company believed that this too could be accommodated in

the scheme of things. This offer formed in the minds of men like Angas, proved most persuasive to Keynes, McBean and Melrose.

The settlement of South Australia by a plan of systematic colonisation, which in itself mirrored the ordered society from which it originated, could not guarantee a systematic life. South Australia was by no means the promised land of order. On the contrary, it became a home of self-interested speculation very different from the values that were supposed to be the foundation of its colonial society. Rather than the colony being self-supporting, it depended for its existence on the success of its products in the market-place of the world; a fact only hazily understood by the colonists. When they failed to meet initial success in their colonial lives their instinct was to look for moral answers to economic problems.

When these three men arrived in South Australia they were faced with the lure of rapid enrichment under special conditions. Without a system of order to restrain them and in an environment without order, they took the lure, sacrificing many of their previous religious and moral values to do so. In Keynes' situation, this rush for riches ended in failure and he went through a tense period of self-questioning. Eventually he elected to face colonial life head on and rebuild his position in society through the pastoral industry.

These three men's ambitious struggle for social success paid off beyond their wildest dreams and the new pastoralists began consciously surrounding themselves with the physical environment and trappings that people associated with landed wealth in Great Britain. This sense of how to behave as a landed gentry, although

they had been far removed from it in Britain, appears to have been engrained in their mentalities prior to migration. David Roberts in his work, Paternalism in early Victorian England, argues that this notion of what was expected from a landed elite pervaded the whole of British society from rulers to ruled. It was, he states, "a powerful ideology, widely held, important in politics, connected with vested interests, socially and economically useful, safely conventional, much esteemed, respectable".[2] However, there were many in South Australia who opposed the pastoralists' gentry pretensions. On a public level politicians and writers proclaimed that these men were not fit to assume the role of a landed aristocracy. The workers on their estates also affronted the pastoralists' ideas about how a pliant workforce should act towards their superiors.

At the same time as their lives assumed the outward forms of gentility, their private diaries and jottings reveal that they were very uncomfortable in trying to reconcile their new positions with the sober virtues which they had assimilated in Britain. In the long term they discovered that they could not escape their old mentality. While on the surface they appeared to be social butterflies, their mentalities were those of lower-middle class caterpillars. This contradiction between the pastoralists' public and private image was seen in their reaction to death and dishonourable conduct. Yet, if these men could not resolve the conflict between their old world thoughts and how a landed gentry should behave, they hoped that their children could learn the necessary values.

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2. D. Roberts, Paternalism in early Victorian England looks at the paternalist values of the well-ordered society and the break down of old ways under the stress of the changing bases of English society, p. 269.

The search for a satisfactory form of education posed a dilemma for these men. Their minds still linked proper education with a righteous mentality. However, social forces dictated that their children should have the typical education of men of wealth. As a result the children were subjected to an education combining genteel manners, religious doctrines and the practical skills necessary to thrusting men of business. The new generation of pastoralists received a strange assortment of contradictory messages while being groomed for roles at the top of colonial society.

As these young people accepted their positions, their fathers died without ever resolving the inconsistencies of their thought. The inheritors were raised to know the externals of gentility, the mansions, wealth, and societal position of their class. However, because of their fathers' reliance on the stern morality of their earlier life, they were discouraged from being a frivolous aristocracy. This advice was not always followed by the young, and their society took on a distinctive character of its own. The study of the mentality of this new ruling class, in a new country is best left to another work.

The focus of this thesis is consistently on the mentality of a portion of the evolving pastoral elite. As Patrick Hutton wrote in his recent article, "The history of mentalities: the new map of cultural history", and this thesis follows,

> The historian of mentalities refers to all the forms which regularize mental activity, whether these be aesthetic images, linguistic codes, expressive gestures, religious rituals, or social customs. By describing these forms which shape the expression of ideas, the historian of mentalities maps the

> mental universe which furnishes a culture with its essential characteristics. His is not a history of ideas, but a history of mind. In this respect, his primary concern is to show how the changing relationship between man's rational and emotional faculties reveals the changing shape of human nature. 3

This is not simply a study of a social class, nor does it assume that human behaviour is determined by buying and selling or income figures. Furthermore, because the lives of these men oscillated between city and country one cannot limit the study to a rural land-centred approach, or a dissertation on a district's growth. Certainly the thesis owes much to the fine work of Buxton, Hirst, Kiddle, Waterson and other researchers into Australia's rural past, but it attempts to show something different by concentrating on the minds of four members of the South Australian pastoral elite.[4]

These four were not selected at random. These men knew each other well, mixed in the same circles, thought many similar thoughts and sought to be identified with each other as part of a privileged group in society. Their properties ran contiguously through the Barossa Ranges in South Australia and their rich documentary records show their interplay on many levels. Each life illuminates in various ways the lives of the others and shows the movements both in individual and in collective mentality.

In order to carry on a study of this type of person at all it is necessary to deal directly with religious faith. Religion is often ignored or slighted in Australian historiography. However, to

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3. Patrick H. Hutton, "The history of mentalities: the new map of cultural history" in History and Theory Vol. XX No. 3, 1981 pp. 238-239.

4. G. Buxton, The Riverina 1861-1961; J. B. Hirst, Adelaide and the Country; M. Kiddle, Men of Yesterday; D. B. Waterson, Squatter, selector and storekeeper; S. T. Eldred-Grigg, The pastoral families of the Hunter Valley; E. Williams, A way of life.

understand the world of these pastoralists it is necessary to understand religion and religious people of the Victorian era. Although the pastoralists were dedicated servants of Mammon, they continued to think of themselves and to portray themselves to the world as servants of God.

Thus, the argument of this thesis will be that the mentality of the first generation pastoralists in South Australia was formed by their background in the lower-middling classes of Great Britain. It combined notions of paternalism, deference, strict religious ideals, love of nature, self-help and the idea of a well-ordered society, with the reality of colonial experience to form a unique view of the world. Because these men were not in mind or mentality a gentry, their children, though undoubtedly a privileged class, were a result of their upbringing and education, within and without the Australian environment. They were not like the British in that their parents were not British aristocrats, and they were not wholly Australian for so much of their thought belonged to another land and another generation. They were a special case.

CHAPTER ONE

THE BRITISH BACKGROUND : EDUCATION, RELIGION AND SELF-HELP

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What general opinions about morality, piety and society were held by Keynes, McBean and Melrose on the eve of their departure to South Australia, and by Angas, whose personal beliefs and relationship with the South Australian Company embodied the tensions of these men's world view? A surprisingly large amount of information is available to us. The books they read reveal the opinions they were encouraged to hold, the letters they wrote and received show them translating such opinions into their own language. In the newspapers they are known to have read we can see the advertisements and ideas which were brought to their daily attention. The school books they worked through, family reminiscences and descriptions of the society in which they grew up give additional evidence of their guiding ideas. Using these sources we shall examine the mentalities which three men carried to South Australia where they would begin their climbs to pastoral success. Each of them came from the lower ranks of finely articulated British rural society. Each was inculcated with religions which emphasised the rightness of society as it was and promised heaven to the godly. Each was also inculcated with the belief that godly virtues led to success in this world. Insofar as this belief encouraged men to believe they could rise in society it was subtlely subversive of society as it was and the principle of being happy with one's station. Each recognised that local conditions did not favour rising through godliness. Each saw colonisation not as a way to found a new system of values or social hierarchy, but to make the ones they had work the way they were supposed to.

On 29 July 1810, Joseph Keynes was born at Blandford, Dorset. His father, Richard Keynes, the local Congregational minister and his mother, Harriet, a daughter of the town's mercer, were pillars of respectability in Blandford. Richard ran the Blandford Academy a small school for the children of dissenting families. When the school and stipend did not provide an adequate income he tilled a few acres behind the house, raising crops for market. The family's position in society, although lowly, gained added respect through its connection with Richard's brother-in-law, John Angell James. Blandford born James was one of the most famous nonconformist teachers of his time regularly preaching to congregations of over 3000 at the Carr's Lane Chapel in Birmingham. His books are still being reprinted as advice to the pious.

Joseph's mind was moulded by men who believed that British society with all its foibles was divinely ordained. His uncle John wrote in, The Christian Professor presented to Joseph, "on his leaving England for Australia...for his temporal and spiritual welfare", that each man should accept his situation within this order, "The poor should check all feelings of envy, all disposition of ill will toward the rich, for this of course is contrary to christian contentment. They should...sedulously guard against the insinuations of those persons who would...stir them up to turbulent discontent and insubordination. They should endeavour to combine with a just degree of self-respect an equal degree of respect for those whom Providence has raised to higher stations."[1] James spoke of the "social system" as providentially decreed, each man being, "placed in the midst of it",

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1. J. A. James, The Christian Professor p. 285.

to fulfil his appointed task.[2] The promise for those who respected the established way of things was described by Joseph's father in his sermon, The Aged Pastor; "But surely as this course is not without its difficulties, so neither shall it be destitute of its reward. 'Verily, there is a reward for the righteous, there is a God that judgeth in the earth.'"[3]

From his earliest days Joseph had been encouraged to live according to scripture and the dissenting view of life - "pure and undefiled religion" as his father called it.[4] Joseph's father professed a broad belief in the values of, "inflexible integrity, uprightness...noble generosity...abhorrence of all that was mean, sordid and selfish...unwearied industry and diligence".[5] Richard's own teaching grew out of the thoughts of men like Richard Baxter, whose works like The Saint's Everlasting Rest, were dissenter's favourites, and Phillip Doddridge whose, The Family Expositor, guided the devotional life of many nonconformist believers. When Joseph left for South Australia he took these books.[6]

Joseph's uncle and his father were very explicit about the relationship between good religion and everyday business. They saw no contradiction between piety and success. "Be not slothful" wrote Richard Keynes, have, "faith and patience...in dependence on God...

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2. Ibid p. 188.

3. R. Keynes, The Aged Pastor p. 19.

4. Ibid p. 1.

5. W. Densham and J. Ogle, The story of the Congregational Churches of Dorset, p. 40.

6. In a letter from James Keynes to Joseph Keynes, 18 October 1841 KFP, James gives a list of books shipped to Joseph in South Australia. These books included, "Doddridge's exposition, 6 Chambers' Edinburgh Journals, Campbell's poems, Crabbes vol. 1, Baxter's Saint's Rest, Call to the unconverted, Dying thoughts, Pike's early piety ... Olney's hymns".

aim at self-improvement".[7] More than that he quoted the couplet which argues that often the display of piety, hard work and virtue is good in the eyes of God;

> So let our works and virtues shine,
> To prove the doctrine, all Divine. 8

His uncle John further emphasised this when he wrote, "No man is forbidden to improve his condition in this world nor required to stop short in his ascending path, into which he has been led by Providence, much less to turn out of it."[9]

Joseph's intellectual inheritance also emphasised the spiritual values of a rural life. His father saw that, "Nature in all its beautiful varieties", could open up "the dawn of reason".[10] Richard believed as Shakespeare wrote that there were,

> Tongues in trees; Books in the running Brook;
> Sermons in stones; and good in everything. 11

Combined with the exhortation to pious and industrious habits came a mind which believed in the value of life in the country. Moreover the wholeness of life was thought to be more easily maintained in a rural atmosphere: "An intellectual being, rising into consciousness, and beginning to exercise reflection, surrounded by natural objects, has a great advantage over another, in a crowded city, that sees bricks and stones, men and smoke; 'God, made the country, but Man, the Town.'"[12]

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7. R. Keynes op cit p. 6.
8. Ibid p. 19.
9. J. A. James, op cit p. 259.
10. R. Keynes, op cit p. 8.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid pp. 7-8.

Joseph's decision to take up agriculture after leaving school in his early teens conformed with his father's opinions about work, piety and the superior spiritual atmosphere of the countryside. Some who knew Joseph at Blandford thought his "knowledge of agricultural and pastoral affairs to be worthy [of the] highest commendation." His attitude to life and work mirrored his education, one acquaintance describing him as, "a valuable, industrious man... His manners are rough but his heart is warm and I believe him truly pious."[13]

Without in any way rebelling against his father's advice, Joseph doubted his ability to prosper in Britain, for "after mature reflection he [did] not consider the Agricultural prospects of this country favourable".[14] His father was inclined to agree. He blamed the aristocracy for hostility to both his class and his cloth. "The bigotry of landed proprietors is more and more evinced. To serve God according to the dictates of conscience is a crime which cannot be forgiven. 'Of what persuasion are you?', is the question now commonly asked of those who try to take a farm."[15] Thus it was Joseph's ambition to better his position through self-improvement combined with a desire to escape from seeming injustice which sent him "looking to South Australia".[16]

Joseph's first enquiries about South Australia were directed to George Fife Angas who was looking for, "sober and temperate men" to be, "of essential service to the colony".[17] Angas, the son of a

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13. Spooner to G. F. Angas, ? December 1838; Browne to G. F. Angas, 12 December 1838 AFP.

14. R. Keynes to G. F. Angas, 4 September 1838 AFP.

15. R. Keynes to J. Keynes, 2 June 1841 KFP.

16. R. Keynes to G. F. Angas, op cit.

17. G. F. Angas to E. G. Wakefield, 29 September 1836, SAA PRG/174/10/28.

Newcastle coachmaker, rose to success as an importer of West Indian goods. He was a noted spokesman for the cause of dissent and a most ardent promoter of the South Australian Company. The speed and enthusiasm of Angas' reply to Keynes indicated that Joseph's qualifications and needs were in line with the merchant's own. In December 1838 Angas outlined the plan of a proposed company for the supervision of his land and stock with Keynes as overseer and partner. Angas and his colleague George Miller would provide the capital and Keynes the labour for a period of seven years.

"I learn that you are going to leave your native country and try your fortunes in Australia, and that you are going out under circumstances of a very advantageous nature", wrote Keynes' uncle John. The famous preacher's response to his nephew's promising start in colonial society reflected the dissenter's attitude to material success. Although he warned Joseph to lead a respectable and Godly life and not become, "a greedy, covetous, hoarding, worldling", he applauded Joseph's step as a worthy example of self-help. He ought to grasp "the opportunity thus afforded you of doing better abroad, than on account of the present circumstances of our country, you were ever likely to do at home".[18] Richard Keynes naturally stressed the spiritual side of the migration,

> Happily those called by the leadings of Divine Providence to leave their fatherland can take the God of their fathers with them, can realize and feel his presence, however remote they may be stationed from the endeared scenes of early life. Happily the strait [sic] and narrow path leading to the heavenly world is traceable in every region, and in that blessed home, all the members of families however separated on earth may meet and be reconciled forever. 19

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18. J. A. James to Joseph Keynes, 4 February 1839 KFP.

19. R. Keynes undated letter sermon No. 22 KFP.

South Australia was for both Keynes and his teachers a land of promise, the environment in which their mentality - dissenting religious faith, 'sober, moral and industrious' makeup, love of nature and self-help - could be given a chance to blossom and flourish. The Blandford local grandee Lord Portman though by no means a dissenter, equally applauded Joseph's decision. He hoped that other lowly people would follow him and thereby help to alleviate problems of poverty and discontent in the region.

> I have heard with some satisfaction that a young man of his knowledge and of his steadiness and integrity has determined to endeavour to promote Colonization in Australia and I hope he may persuade many of our poorer neighbours to accompany him and hereafter by their prosperity to induce others who cannot obtain adequate employment here to follow the example which I believe to be the appointed means for peopling what remains unpeopled in this earth. 20

It was not just the underprivileged groups of British Society who saw salvation in emigration.

Viewed against his social background, Joseph's emigration was clearly not a matter of random impulse. Carefully thought out the decision was backed up by a pious uncle and a father who joined with him in a service of dedication before he boarded the ship for South Australia.[21]

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Lachlan McBean came from a Scottish Highland farm called Dunachton-more in the parish of Alvie, Invernesshire, a few miles north of the important Highland town of Kingussie. He was born in

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20. Portman to G. F. Angas 7 December 1838 AFP.

21. J. Keynes to G. F. Angas, 29 April 1839 AFP.

1810, the second son of William and Isabella McBean.[22] Although the McBeans were tenant farmers they had great prestige in their parish for William was granted the tack of Dunachton by the laird.[23] Although the role and power of the tacksman - an overseer of the laird distributing tenancies and gathering rents - was dwindling in many areas of the Highlands, they still retained much of their power and high social standing in Alvie. The McBean's house at Dunachton, a large two-storied edifice insignificant compared to a laird's mansion but on a par with the size of the manse in a community where the kirk's authority was all-embracing, overpowered the crude, small dwellings of the crofters. Its setting on a rising knoll seemed to elevate the position of its inhabitants above the common lot.

The district was conservative in outlook as well. The parish's Presbyterian minister responded to a general survey of Scotland with a report that the members of his flock were, "uncommonly hardy, and capable of enduring much fatigue and privation", a trait shared by many Highland inhabitants. He contrasted his parishioners with the whisky-sodden, disturbed communities that were scattered through other areas of Scotland, "They are sober and industrious in their habits, just and honest in their dealings, and with few exceptions are correct and regular in their moral conduct."[24]

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22. The 'Old Parish Registers' in New Register House, Edinburgh, were used for the McBean genealogical information. The eldest son John was born on 16 June 1809; then, Lachlan 20 October 1810; Margaret 5 June 1815; Alexander 25 May 1817. Alexander followed his brother to South Australia in 1846. Lastly, Isabell 29 October 1819. She married a Grant, and later settled in New South Wales with their son Lachlan McBean Grant.

23. William's headstone at Alvie Kirk reads 'Tacksman'. I. F. Grant's Everyday life on an old highland farm, which centres on eighteenth century Dunachton, records no McBean as tacksman before William.

24. The new statistical account of Scotland (1845) p. 90.

The conservative educational and social system which formed McBean's character was founded on the Kirk. The books McBean read, worn by constant reference, show how closely his thought was conditioned by those religious fundamentals. For example, the sermons of Hugh Blair, the celebrated eighteenth century Edinburgh preacher whose works emphasized order and prudence. "Order", wrote Blair, "is friendly to religion."[25] He stressed that this Christian sense of order was, "highly favourable to the interests of good government among men. It represses the spirit of licentiousness and sedition. It inculcates the duty of subordination to lawful superiors. It requires us to fear God, to honour the king, and not to meddle with them that are given to change."[26] Society was to be maintained in its present form, Blair argued, by a "sense of Divine legislation" which showed "future rewards and punishments...to supply the defects of human government".[27] Religion offered the stability of the present and the hope of the hereafter, for readers like Lachlan McBean.

McBean heard much about the Presbyterian church's ideas on work and achievement. The parish school at Kincraig taught him how to approach the practical organisation of his fortune. The school exercise book which housed this accounting knowledge and a Ready Reckoner for quick tabulation accompanied him to Australia. This teaching was a practical supplement to the reminders from men like Blair that piety and success were inter-related. In his sermons

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25. H. Blair, Sermons vol. 2, p. 2.

26. Ibid p. 419.

27. Ibid p. 421.

the Edinburgh preacher reminded readers that an ordered religion was, "by the appointment of Providence...indispensably requisite to worldly prosperity".[28] Furthermore man should, "Introduce order into the management of...fortune, whatever it be, let the administration of it proceed with order and economy".[29] If one followed this methodical, ordered approach the consequences would affect both the individual and the wider society: "Be assured then, that order, frugality, and economy are the necessary supports of every personal and private virtue. How humble soever these qualities may appear to some, they are, nevertheless, the basis on which liberty, independence, and true honour must rise."[30] The God of young McBean's mentors was a God of order, encouraging men to faithfully act out their role in life and strive to profit from it. God had assigned every man to his proper station, as Blair wrote, "From superiors and inferiors, from neighbours and equals, from friends and enemies, demands arise, and obligations circulate through all the ranks of life", those who did not follow this pattern were described as profligates and the idle whose lives fell under the curse of poverty.[31]

The ordered values that McBean was encouraged to believe in were being disrupted by the vast movements of the industrial and agricultural revolutions. Agricultural improvements in the Highlands unleashed forces that were causing dissension within Scotland's social fabric. Agricultural and industrial workers were learning to combine.

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28. Ibid p. 2.

29. Ibid p. 12.

30. Ibid pp. 14-15.

31. Ibid pp. 5 & 13.

Many years later McBean recounted his sharp disapproval of the agitators. "I know of the evil of societies, clicks [sic] and corruption since 1833 in Kircaldy, when Russels foundry was closed with the villanies of loafers, agitators sucking the wages of working men out of their pockets, then setting idle, exciting, ignorant labourers onto evil."[32]

Despite the conservatism of the Alvie community, overseas emigration was an established outlet for younger members of the district; the 1831 census showing that the area's population had decreased considerably because of this social movement.[33] Local legend still recalls the reason for the great tide of emigration that included Lachlan McBean. A balladeer sang the promise of emigration to Australia,

> We'll get bread and butter,
> and sugar and tea there:
> We'll experience no want,
> In that bountiful land.

The emigrants would escape that system of tenantry which kept them in social subjugation, they could gain independence and live out an ordered life which was nevertheless full of promise,

> When we're gone from this country,
> our rents will be trifling...
> We'll get cattle and sheep;
> We'll get wheat on the fields,
> and it won't be so dear
> as the heath of the North.
> Then we'll get silk and ribbons
> we'll get wool in abundance;
> and the wives will make cloth
> in the style of the North. 34

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32. W. G. Spence, History of the A.W.U. p. 33.

33. An Act for taking an account of the population of Great Britain, (1831) vol. 2 p. 938.

34. The Poetry of Badenoch: Songs of feeling pp. 376-377. The original is in Gaelic.

McBean was probably not leaving Scotland to escape from personal want and distress, but as a man whose family had been rising in the world and whose position was threatened by a new industrial age, South Australia had its attractions. In the promise of new colonies the class dissension that divided McBean from poorer folks was dissolved. Armed with this stern view of Presbyterianism, a sound knowledge of money and a desire for independence he boarded a vessel at Leith in early 1838.

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A different Scottish emigrant was the lowland tenant farmer, George Melrose. Melrose was born on 22 December 1806 in Balerno, a small village not far from Edinburgh that later became known for its paper production but was in his day a noted agricultural area. The local minister in a survey of Scottish parishes believed that his area combined the different ranks in society to further this successful farming the large landholders having, "spirited and liberal views", and the tenantry, "enlightened and well-directed industry".[35]

The parish society again reflected the values of an age which linked success to the application of moral virtues and to an awareness of one's position within the system. Another writer of a parish study stressed that the people were, "sober, industrious and economical".[36] Melrose's mind was formed by contact with such folk who valued a conservative way of life and conformed to the

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35. The new statistical account of Scotland p. 544.

36. The statistical account of Scotland (1794) vol. v no. xx p. 327.

ideals of self-help. Indeed the parish was embedded in religious conservatism, one half of the population being seceders from the mainline Presbyterian church, intent on keeping the old ways intact, as the local physician noted.[37]

The parish school near Balerno catered for some forty to fifty students annually and was said to be a fitting place for the young because it was set, "in a healthy country at a distance from any town where bad examples are apt to be set".[38] The views of this writer obviously accorded with those held by Richard Keynes which stressed the virtuous influence of nature at a time when Britain was threatened by the takeover of machines and new urban communities. Melrose was reported to have a natural flair for mathematics, and his later meticulously kept account books verify that he was well taught in the applied knowledge required by the market-place.[39] With these abilities and what his eulogist later called, in the typical language of self-improvement, "a stern independence, indomitable courage and perseverance and an eminently practical nature", Melrose could emulate others in the parish who were said to "have risen...by their economy".[40]

Melrose's religion was firmly Presbyterian and he became renowned for his stern adherence to simple Calvinism being, "ever a vigorous enemy to any show of pride or vanity", "with a rooted dislike for ostentation".[41] Plainly, his motivation was formed by a faith which could well be seen as hard and imperious, and by the ethic which, as Margaret Kiddle noticed, believed, "that

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37. Ibid p. 316.

38. Ibid p. 317.

39. Melrose family reminiscences, MFP.

40. Register, 12 April 1894; The statistical account of Scotland op cit p. 328.

41. Register op cit; R. Cockburn, Pastoral pioneers of South Australia vol. 1 p. 39.

those who were poor deserved to be so; those who obeyed their Bible, worked and lived frugally must succeed".[42]

There were many in Balerno besides Melrose who felt that emigration was so preferable to their poor local prospects that local authorities became worried about the steady decrease in agriculture. These authorities, claimed the physician William Nesbit in his study of the area, put the social movement down to the disruptive forces of the new progressive age. Nesbit listed the causes as, "the extension of farms by which several small ones have been swallowed up in one large one...the erection of toll bars and the improvement of roads...the modern improvements in husbandry...the preference given of late to the occupation of the mechanic over the husbandman".[43] It was in this context that this particular writer believed that the age of improvement had particularly encouraged emigration from his parish; "for, here as in all situations near a great town where manufactures are flourishing, the young generation, tempted by higher encouragement, have forsaken the employment of agriculture, the inconveniences of which were more immediately before their eyes, and have entered into a new life, the prospects of which are more promising".[44]

Melrose lived in an area where the young actively looked to improve their position in life. An area moreover, where the agricultural base of its life was being eroded by the effects of

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42. M. Kiddie Men of Yesterday p. 22.

43. The statistical account of Scotland pp. 316-317.

44. Ibid.

the industrial revolution. As Melrose recalled in his eightieth year, it was not only the bleakness of life at home, but also the challenge of a pioneer life that brought him to South Australia; a fitting opinion for one from such a disrupted parish.[45]

On every count - their conservative religious upbringing which stressed that society should be maintained in its established order; the belief that the pious, industrious man would be blessed on earth and in heaven; the knowledge that although they fulfilled the required conditions for earthly success they could not achieve it in Britain; the belief that emigration could both preserve their notion of an ordered society and let them succeed - South Australia would seem a logical place for these three men.

The progenitors of the colony offered an apparently paradoxically mixed idea: a settlement based on the British hierarchical order where every man had a chance to improve his rank in society and his fortune. But this offer was not a paradox to Keynes, McBean or Melrose. The sociological intentions of Wakefield's scheme, as the work of John Cashen has shown, was to make South Australia an ordered, hierarchical society.[46] The colonization scheme could be advertised in this way because it was not just the rich who believed in the rightness of such a society. There were plenty of people from all walks of British society to whom this was an attractive proposition. Keynes, Melrose and McBean responded as much to the conservative as to the innovative features of Wakefield's plan. On the simplest material level there seemed to be not only the prospect, but the guarantee of success. "The industrious farmer",

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45. R. Cockburn op cit.

46. John Cashen's thesis on Masters and Servants in South Australia is due for submission in 1983. The section on Wakefield is his opening chapter, read at a staff seminar in July 1983 at the Dept. of History, University of Adelaide.

was told that should he, "turn his attention to South Australia... purchase one hundred acres of land - bring his plough and spades, and two or three active sons or steady labourers to assist him, with a couple of hundred pounds cash...to purchase a pair of bullocks and a few sheep and pigs...he cannot fail to double his property within two years from the day he lands."[47]

In the visionary projects of George Fife Angas the threads of religious ideas and the practical enterprisings of the profit motivated South Australian Company intersect. He was a role model for the minds of Keynes, McBean and Melrose; the men who were later to become his close neighbours.

Angas believed that an ordered hierarchical society was right. In 1836 he wrote to Edward Gibbon Wakefield on, "the importance of raising up a respectable tenantry in the New Colony", and was most concerned about, "the proper feeling of subordination of servants to their masters on which will depend the very existence of the class in the Colony". He maintained that his beliefs would, "accomplish an object which I suppose will have no parallel in the history of colonization, that is the institution of a middle class amongst the cultivators of the soil."[48] Society though was, Angas maintained, ordered and set up by God, "I look to God and to him will I look. America was founded on that basis by God's people in a tempest. This colony will, I hope, be raised upon a similar foundation in a calm."[49]

Angas' mind equated piety with respectability and Divine blessing with financial, just as Keynes, McBean and Melrose were

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47. Register, 12 August 1837.

48. G. F. Angas to E. G. Wakefield, op cit.

49. E. Hodder, George Fife Angas p. 107; D. Pike, Paradise of dissent, p. 129.

encouraged to believe. Angas argued that with religion,

> The mind becomes free from the fear of punishment which is one addition to his happiness; he enjoys intercourse with God by prayer, that is another addition; his conduct is regulated by the precepts of the Bible, and bodily health and peace of mind, order and regularity in his own proceedings and in his family which advance his happiness, advance him another step. He becomes faithful, industrious and economical in the management of his worldly affairs and hence follow comfort and prosperity. 50

Godliness and success were inseparable.

Angas was aware that the system was not working in Great Britain. His answer was to re-establish it in South Australia and in so doing help both Britain and the new colony. Angas looked to offer those dissatisfied, or restless within their own society a land of hope. In a circular he sent to Joseph Keynes he wrote of possibilities like, "Progress", "Advancement", "Improvement", and "The Superiority of South Australia as compared to other British Colonies". For Angas, whose belief in God's guiding power moved him to adopt philanthropic projects - ostensibly directed by Providence - and to chastise those who disbelieved his sincerity when the projects became profitable, saw that the settlement of South Australia had a twofold purpose. It was to be a place in which he could, "help others to help themselves", and at the same time become a venture in which the profit margins of the South Australian Company could be furthered.[51]

There are aspects of these men's worldview which interlock and point to the potential tensions and contradictions within their mentalities. Although they believed that God was a God of

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50. G. F. Angas to Martin, 15 February 1838 in D. Pike op cit p. 127.

51. D. Pike op cit p. 127.

order, and not the "author of confusion", as Hugh Blair put it, and were instructed to be content with their lot in life, they were also aspiring to improve their social standing.[52] Samuel Smiles would later call this self-help. If they failed in their attempt to succeed, their religion and values would paint them as lacking in faith and morality. Success, on the other hand was equated with Divine approval. If they stayed in Britain the chances of failure in their self-improvement were great. Yet, they were by no means averse to climbing to the top and looked to South Australia to fulfil the scope of their talents.

They had been taught the special holiness of rural life and nature. The promise of an 'empty land' was therefore particularly compelling. The promise of South Australia was that the contradictions of their lives in Great Britain would be resolved without threatening the values they had been taught to cherish.

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52. H. Blair op cit p. 3.

CHAPTER TWO

RESPONSES TO EARLY SOUTH AUSTRALIA : SPECULATION

Angas, Keynes, McBean and Melrose expected to see the transposition of a properly organised society onto the virgin soil of South Australia. The land would be the source of their wealth. Moreover, they believed that as they practised the virtues with which they had been inculcated, their advancement in society would be ensured without endangering their mortal souls. None of them seemed inclined to reach for the top. Rather, they appeared to take Angas' suggestion as their own and looked to, "the institution of a middle class amongst the cultivators of the soil". What happened when their expectations collided with the realities of the new South Australian settlement?

Discussion of the changing mentalities of these men from their emigration to 1855 when their fortunes had prospered will be divided into three chapters. This chapter deals with the men's reaction to the uncertain speculative environment of early settlement; chapter three with their setbacks and responses to these reversals; and chapter four with their attainment of wealth and attitudes to it. By way of introduction we will set out to trace what physically happened to them from their arrival in the colony until 1855. For Angas, much of this time was spent in Britain. He did not come to South Australia until 1851. This process of tracing the men's steps is easier with Angas and Keynes than with McBean and Melrose for whom only slim records survive in this period.

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George Fife Angas considered himself, "one of the prominent leaders in founding South Australia".[1] One newspaper report he

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1. Letter to the editor, Register, 6 September 1869.

kept in his office and annotated with marginal comments showed how he controlled the board of the South Australian Company, influenced members of parliament in anything to do with South Australia, and ran the propaganda machine which persuaded many to emigrate to the colony. As Angas wrote, "The testimonies of such eminent men as, Colonel Torrens, Woolnite Whitmore, Montgomery Martin, and others ... have declared it to be their opinion that if I had not pursued the course I did in establishing a Joint Stock Company the attempt to colonise South Australia would have been a failure."[2] However, his private capital did more than spread the gospel of emigration and support the South Australian Company. His money was instrumental in establishing many colonial businesses. He tried to transplant what he believed to be essential to any society: a sound evangelical religious base and a good education system. But, he also had as he wrote to Lord John Russell, "a large amount of my capital invested in Lands, sheep & mercantile operations besides being the largest Proprietor in the South Australian Company".[3] Yet, he insisted that these investments were motivated by Godly principles. He explained to a business associate, Charles Flaxman that, "my desire was rather to do good than grow hastily rich".[4] This attempt to justify commercial investment by religious principle was a feature of Angas' life.

Angas began his private South Australian career with the purchase of 964 acres of country land at the preliminary land sales of July 1835. This entitled him to a further 6 town acres in Adelaide and thousands of acres of pastoral commonage. All the

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2. ibid.
3. G. F. Angas to Russell, 24 October 1840, SAA PRG 174/10/267.
4. G. F. Angas to C. Flaxman, 16 August 1839, SAA PRG 174/10/245.

"country" sections were within a few miles of Adelaide. In July 1837 Angas employed Frederick Lester, a farmer from Kent, to establish farms on his land. In the succeeding months Angas hired and found the passage money for a number of other men. George Clark was employed as a nurseryman and gardener, Richard Bear as a "shepherd, agricultural servant, [and] manager of a dairy", and Frederick Horswill and Thomas Radford as builders.[5] In December 1838, Angas and Joseph Keynes negotiated an agreement with Angas' business partner, George Miller, to manage all Angas' farming interests in South Australia for seven years. The details of this agreement will be set out later in relation to Keynes' movements in South Australia.

During the early period of settlement Angas was also a partner in a colonial commercial firm, Flaxman and Rowlands. Charles Flaxman, one of the firm's other partners, had been the chief clerk in Angas' London office. When Angas took up the cause of some German immigrants escaping religious persecution, he asked Flaxman to be their guide and interpreter on the journey to South Australia. Once in the colony, Angas requested the clerk to establish a "commission Business" with another merchant Edward Rowlands.[6] The firm of Flaxman and Rowlands had Angas as its principal investor.

In addition to these colonial investments, Angas lent money to private individuals trying to establish their place in the new society. George Stevenson, a newspaper editor and vice-regal companion received Angas' money as did the first governor, John Hindmarsh. Both were to repay the sums at the going rate of

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5. "Joseph Keynes' Book", Letters J. Keynes to G. F. Angas, 1840, AFP.

6. G. F. Angas to C. Flaxman, op cit.

interest.[7] All these investments were transacted by Angas from Britain, where he stayed until 1851. Although divorced from colonial reality, Angas was a strong voice on South Australian affairs.

By October 1840, many of the South Australian investments initiated by Angas turned bad. The farming of his lands had not prospered in Lester's hands, his other early employees went into business on their own accounts, and Joseph Keynes & Co. were spending enormous sums on stock without return. Flaxman and Rowlands foundered during the commercial downturn of early 1840 and Flaxman himself spent £28,000 of Angas' money on a land buying spree, and claimed that Angas had given him the authority to make the purchase. Angas furiously denied the claim, stating that Flaxman never received such instructions.[8] At the same time, the South Australian Company demanded payment on its shares and Angas believed himself ruined. Frustrated at every turn he exclaimed, "I am sick of Partnerships!"[9]

As Angas' personal fortune waned so did South Australia's. Angas championed the colony's cause before the 1841 Select Committee which tried to iron out the new settlement's problems. This, however, did nothing to help Angas personally who faced debts in excess of £40,000.

In 1841 Angas sent Anthony Forster to South Australia as his attorney. His task was to salvage what he could of Angas' colonial debts and to bring Angas' wayward employees "back to

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7. G.F. Angas to A. Forster, Letter of Instruction, SAA PRG 174/10/316.
8. G.F. Angas to C. Flaxman op cit, G.F. Angas to A. Forster op cit.
9. G.F. Angas to C. Flaxman, 17 October 1840, SAA PRG 174/10/265.

first principles".[10] Forster put his affairs into a more organised form, preparing the way for Angas' son John to take charge of the South Australian property. Characteristically, John was told by his father to promote, "good in all proper ways", and to advance, "my worldly interests. Be diligent in business."[11]

Although the arrival of Forster and John Angas helped to stabilize his colonial ventures, Angas was still a heavy loser. Joseph Keynes & Co. dissolved partnership with an estimated loss of £10,000, his London commercial house lost ships and trade, and his creditors badgered him for payment. By the end of 1846 all of Angas' prospects looked bad. His health deteriorated and he set off on a, "great journey on horseback for the recovery of my health", traversing England from London to Newcastle, through Durham to Worcester, from there to Devon, onwards through a myriad of towns and villages and after over 2,000 miles arriving back in London.[12] On his return to London in May 1847 many of his problems diminished. He sold off some of his South Australian land, his creditors lightened their squeeze, he managed to sell ships and cargo at an opportune time, and he looked forward to the day he could make his home in South Australia amidst the rapidly increasing wealth fostered by his son. His money was involved in colonial banks, stock companies, pastoral operations, mining, railways and building.

In January 1851 Angas arrived in South Australia to see the fruits of the "work that God has given me a command to perform".[13]

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10. G. F. Angas to A. Forster, Letter of Instructions, SAA PRG 174/10/330.

11. Edwin Hodder, George Fife Angas, p. 279.

12. Great journey on horseback for the recovery of my health, 16 November 1846 to 25 May 1847, AFP.

13. Hodder, op cit, p. 274.

In July of that year he stood for the seat of Barossa in the new South Australian Legislature and was returned unopposed. He took up residence at the newly constructed Lindsay House near the town which bore his name, Angaston, 45 miles north-east of Adelaide. By the end of 1852 he cleared off all his English debts and settled into a life as South Australia's senior spokesman on political affairs. However, even his biographer who otherwise whitewashed his character admitted that, "Egotism was his besetting sin at this time, and it revealed itself in his parliamentary career more than in any other arena."[14]

Angas was at the top of South Australian society by 1855. A wealthy pastoralist and landowner, a man of commerce, a politician, religious zealot and philanthropist were only some of the labels applied to him. In two decades his fortunes had passed from modest success to failure and then to success far greater than any he had ever known. He was established. Much of the investment of his wealth was now left to John who also shared his father's social standing. In 1855 John felt secure enough to return to England and bring a wife back to South Australia to share the estate in the Barossa Ranges.

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Joseph Keynes arrived in South Australia in September 1839. He was co-partner in a company with George Fife Angas and George Miller, Angas' London partner. The intention of the partnership, Joseph Keynes & Co., was to make the fullest use of Angas' property in the fledgling colony, particularly the 964 acres of country land.

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14. Hodder, op cit, p. 353

The articles of agreement of Joseph Keynes & Co., and two letters of instruction from Angas to Keynes spelled out the expectations of the partners and the limits of the enterprise. Firstly, Keynes was employed for seven years to oversee the cultivation of the land, stock husbandry, and, because Angas had received reports of good clay deposits on his land, a brick-making firm. Angas and Miller were to provide a maximum of £5000 capital for the company, mainly to purchase stock. Each partner was expected to receive a minimum return of 5% per annum on his investment, Keynes being given a yearly retainer of £200. When clear profit was earnt, Angas and Miller would share two thirds and Keynes one third of the amount. Keynes further agreed to keep proper accounts and send quarterly summaries to Angas. At the end of each year the books were to be written up and sent to London for ratification. Keynes was not allowed to use any of the company's funds without the consent of the London partners. The land on which the firm would run its stock, plant its grain and make its bricks would be leased from Angas at, "a fair moderate rent".[15] Keynes could be dismissed from his employment if he put the partners into debt without their consent, or negotiated contracts which exposed "himself to risk or hazard in any gaming transaction", or if his actions caused the company's stock to be seized by a bailiff.[16]

When Keynes arrived in South Australia, Angas directed him to Charles Flaxman who would point out the position of his land, help purchase stock, and generally ease him into colonial life. However, Flaxman left for England before Keynes reached South Australia,

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15 Clause 9, Joseph Keynes & Co. articles of agreement, AFP.

16 Clause 14, Joseph Keynes & Co. articles of agreement, AFP.

and so Keynes was without the advice of Angas' right-hand man. The selection of land, the treatment of employees, and cooperation with the German settlers, whom Angas believed could be housed in villages by Keynes, all depended on Flaxman.[17]

Keynes was left to fend for himself in a South Australia that appeared very different from his imagined pictures. Angas' lands and affairs were in chaos. His employees were selling all or part of their labour for higher wages on the open market, and many of the country sections were rented out to other settlers. The unsatisfactory state of Angas' land near Adelaide contrasted with the 28000 acres which Flaxman purchased in the Barossa Ranges. In the seven special surveys which Flaxman negotiated to gain the property, there was an abundance of pasture and water without the risk of stock disease which afflicted herds nearer Adelaide. Believing that his employer wanted the land stocked and supervised Keynes set out for the Barossa in December 1839.

For nearly four years Keynes made his headquarters in Flaxman's Valley, near Angaston, and superintended the flocks and herds of his company. Some errors of judgement in stock purchases and some speculations which transcended the company's terms of agreement resulted in Keynes overspending his funds. Angas, beleaguered by financial troubles, refused to honour a number of the bills which Keynes presented for payment. In turn, Keynes saw the company's stock seized for non-payment of debts and was left without a job.

Keynes wrote to Angas in February 1843 requesting a dissolution of partnership. Nearly a month earlier he had been granted an

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17. G. F. Angas to J. Keynes, Letter of Instruction, 15 May 1839 AFP.

occupation licence in his own name at the White Hut on the Murray road, near the present town of Truro. He acted as an overseer to a flock of sheep owned by George Morphett, an Adelaide businessman. By 1846 Keynes was known to have moved residence to a leasehold run on the North Rhine River, not many miles from his first station at Flaxman's Valley, while still maintaining the White Hut property. Keynes remained at the North Rhine until 1849 when he moved his station further north to Cadlunga , near Penwortham. In June 1851 after lasting a little over a year at Cadlunga during which he married Ellen Robinson the daughter of a neighbouring squatter, Keynes returned to the North Rhine. During the next four years Keynes consolidated the property in the Barossa Ranges. By 1855 he was recognised as a pastoral leader in that area.

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Lachlan McBean arrived in South Australia on 15 December 1838. Pastoral Pioneers of South Australia claimed that, "he almost immediately found employment with the Hon. William Younghusband, an early Chief Secretary, who combined a mercantile business with pastoral pursuits."[18] However, McBean's first recorded venture in South Australia was a pastoral occupation licence granted to him and Archibald Jaffray, an Adelaide draper, on the 29 March 1843. They set up the station at Mount Observation near Ashbourne, south of Adelaide.[19] When the partnership was dissolved just over a year later, they were listed as, "sheepfarmers, on the River Murray".[20]

In December 1845, McBean's account book contains its first reference to the ownership of The Dustholes near Truro. At the

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18. Rodney Cockburn, Pastoral Pioneers of South Australia vol. 2 p. 82.

19. Register, 8 July 1843.

20. South Australian Government Gazette, 30 December 1844.

same time, McBean held land at Rivoli Bay in South Australia's South East. By 1847 McBean was known to be a commission agent, and the proprietor of an Adelaide butcher shop. His brother Alexander arrived at The Dustholes in 1846 to oversee that portion of Lachlan's property.

From 1847 to 1855 McBean's movements are uncertainly known. Even Cockburn writing in the 1920's found it difficult, "to break into the obscurity" surrounding McBean's life.[21] In the slim records available, McBean is described as a cattle dealer and self-employed drover.[22] His account books show that in June 1853 he overlanded a large herd of cattle from Sydney to Adelaide, and Cockburn adds another venture from the Darling Downs to Adelaide. He purchased a further large section of land at Mount Remarkable in March 1854. In November 1855, McBean bought Woorooma station on the Edward River, New South Wales. This 60000 acre property became the centre of all his operations.

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George Melrose arrived in South Australia in November 1839. His first movements brought him to the Mount Barker area 20 miles south-east of Adelaide, as a sheep-farmer.[23] Between 1841 and 1845, when he moved to the South Rhine area in the Barossa Ranges to establish his headquarters, Melrose was involved as a stock-keeper for W.W. Hughes and Robert Lawson, two other pastoralists. These partnerships were all in the Mount Lofty Ranges, first at Macclesfield, then extending to the River Bremer and Reedy Creek, and finally to Nairn.

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21. Cockburn, op cit, p. 82.

22. ibid.

23. Cockburn, op cit, vol. 1 p. 38.

Family reminiscences recorded by Cockburn, speak of Melrose taking several exploratory trips in search of new country after his settlement at the South Rhine. On one journey he nearly died of thirst in the scrub country between the River Murray and Victoria, and on another he headed north, passing through Canowie, Booborowie, Mt. Remarkable and the Mt. Bryan Ranges.[24]

In late 1845, Melrose's expeditions took him to the Upper Murray. He formed sheep stations at Lake Victoria, the Rufus River, and Anabranch. He lost these properties in 1852 after a dispute with the New South Wale's government, and the South Rhine land took the greater part of his attention. Between July 1853 and December 1855 Melrose began converting the leasehold property on the Rhine to freehold, purchasing some 28 sections. (Unfortunately, Melrose's records of this time were burnt in the 1950's having been damaged by vermin in the intervening period).

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The reactions of Angas, Keynes, McBean and Melrose to their varying fortunes in newly founded South Australia reflected both the limitations and the variability of mentalities formed in pious, lower-middle class Britain. The overwhelming paradox presented to them by the colony was that because it was new it inevitably could not conform to the ideal of a hierarchically ordered and settled society which the Company's promoters had touted. Its resources were mostly unknown, the adaptability of European crops and stock to its environment had not been tested. In the absence of an established market for the buying and selling of land the value of every plot was necessarily speculative. At any time the vagaries of the global market in commodities could ruin the prospects of

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24. ibid.

even the most careful husbandman, as settlers throughout the Australian continent discovered when the "hungry forties" succeeded the sustained boom of the eighteen twenties and thirties.

Political economists of the Manchester School could explain and justify these phenomena. But Angas, Keynes, McBean and Melrose were not trained by the disciples of Adam Smith and Ricardo. They spoke in the language of the Bible. While they hoped for legitimate opportunities to present themselves as they had in the Parable of the Talents, they had learned to number "speculation" among the worst of human vices along with drunkenness, fornication, prodigality and prevarication. How were they to cope with an environment in which the most carefully thought-out ventures of the most prudent, pious men could be later proved to have been risky "speculations"?

The mental difficulties were greatest for the self-righteous George Fife Angas who suffered the added disability of continuing to reside in England until 1851. He anticipated that the men he sent to South Australia would faithfully follow the doctrines that had guided their lives in Britain, or at least had guided his. Each of his employees was given frequent reminders of the correct approach to life. He wrote to Frederick Lester emphasising the values of improvement and religion, "I shall rely on your perfect integrity & economy without which no good will come from your labours however great, because it is the blessing of God that causes our prosperity".[25] He gave his son, John Howard Angas, similar advice to prepare him for colonial life, "nothing good is given to man without labour. Every pursuit and business of life must be followed with industry and application, or there can arise from it neither pleasure nor profit."[26] The idea of a new

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25. G. F. Angas to F. Lester, 22 July 1837, SAA PRG 174/10/116.

26. Hodder, op cit, pp. 277-278.

colony being a place where men earned fortunes through speculation, without physical effort, was foreign to Angas' opinion of how others should act - his South Australian Company investments were always seen in a different light. The way he set out for others to follow was explained to his son John, and repeated by his biographer, "set Joseph in Egypt before you as your example of prudence and wisdom. Do not gratify the pride of your heart by 'doing exploits', by great out-of-the-way adventures, but let moderation in all things be your motto."[27]

Early South Australians though, found a doctrine of moderation hard to implement. Angas' employees in the colony fell quite easily into the pattern of life which brought high returns for their initiatives. Angas' reaction to their actions was twofold; firstly, he judged the men's characters, and secondly, the environment.

When Angas wrote to Edward Stephens, the manager of the South Australian Company bank in Adelaide, in October 1840, he listed his grievances against the first settlers and what he considered to be their immoderate behaviour. He spoke of the, "extravagant & expensive habits" of Adelaideans, "their neglect in making timely remittances", and strongly argued that, "their erroneous speculations [were] very unfavourable omens", for South Australia's future.[28] These opinions were based on bitter experience with his own employees. He was hard put to explain why men whom he had judged righteous had let him down. As he wrote to William Keynes, Joseph's brother, who also joined his staff in the colony, "How men of prudence could ever think of acting so is to me a perfect mystery. I have in all my transactions of life studied to meet my engagements with every

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27. Hodder, op cit, p. 283.

28. G. F. Angas to E. Stephens, 12 October 1840, SAA PRG 174/10/263.

man & to keep myself & my mind comfortable & free from anxiety with God's blessing as much as possible".[29] Angas, however was still living in a society where the constraints of generations made it difficult to depart from settled habits in life and work, to jump the barriers of rank, or gain sudden wealth. In South Australia, men could not rely on proven techniques. On the other hand, they could see on all sides the possibility of quick success; men of all the lower classes could fulfil the promises of self-improvement if they took the initiative. Charles Flaxman was one who took that initiative.

When Angas heard of Flaxman's land speculations he tried to persuade him to toe the line by appealing to religion. He accused the servant of appearing, "to exhibit a seeming distrust in Providence", and urged him to follow a more moderate approach claiming that, "the goodness of the Lord has been singularly displayed in our being able to procure for you the consignments of so many vessels & goods".[30] However, Angas had yet to learn the full extent of Flaxman's land buying spree, and when he did pious warnings gave way to bitter recriminations. "Mr. C.F.'s conduct has been one of the greatest afflictions in my life", he told Edward Stephens. David McLaren, manager of the South Australian Company, was further told, "I have been so disappointed in the want of prudence in Flaxman... in respect to the management of business that I can repose confidence in no man until he is thoroughly tried & tested."[31] Yet, Flaxman had 9 years in London with Angas and had seemed to pass the test there.

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29. G. F. Angas to W. Keynes, 21 November 1840, SAA PRG 174/10/300.

30. G. F. Angas to C. Flaxman, 16 August 1839, SAA PRG 174/10/245.

31. G. F. Angas to E. Stephens, op cit; G. F. Angas to D. McLaren, 27 November 1840, SAA PRG 174/10/307.

In Angas' eyes Joseph Keynes passed the necessary tests in England as well, but failed the colonial trial. Soon after Keynes' arrival he used Angas' money to buy a large herd of cattle. This event will be dealt with in a following section, as will Keynes' inability to understand the sharp practice of Adelaide businessmen. Angas reminded Keynes that, "the great object you went out for was to carry on the sheep & other farming, but not to become a stock-jobber".[32] Later, the merchant learnt that Keynes was sending more bills to London to be cashed and pay for stock purchases, and blamed him for the same conduct as Flaxman emphasising, "surely the good people in So. Austa. must suppose I have an exhaustless mine of gold to draw upon here, for certainly it seems as if men at Adelaide with one consent had determined to draw every shilling out of my hands."[33] Angas' reaction was to advise him, as he had done Flaxman, "It would have been far better to have gone on moderately than to jump at once as you have done to a large expenditure, I expected to have found you more prudent and cautious".[34] Keynes too, was urged to look to religion to help work through his difficulties, "& smooth your path under the blessing of Divine Providence".[35]

Angas found it hard to reconcile his servants' personal performance with their known characters. His reponse was to exhort them to greater diligence in religion and business. However, he believed that the speculative mania prevailing in Adelaide was due to a more general factor, "surely there must be something in the climate & society of South Australia that completely metamorphoses

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32. G. F. Angas to J. Keynes, 26 May 1840, SAA PRG 174/10/260.
33. G. F. Angas to J. Keynes, 12 November 1840, SAA PRG 174/10/279.
34. G. F. Angas to J. Keynes, 13 November 1840, SAA PRG 174/10/287.
35. G. F. Angas to J. Keynes, 12 November 1840, SAA PRG 174/10/279.

the people for they were not so before emigration".[36] Later in life, not long after arriving in South Australia, Angas believed that, "the tendency of the climate is to produce nervous excitement. The novelty of everything round you, and the multitude of things requiring personal attention, has a very dissipating influence adverse to spirituality and holiness of heart."[37] Before the 1841 Select Committee on South Australia, Angas looked at the speculations of the first settlers again, and once more blamed it on the environment, "In a new colony it should be observed they cannot be so orderly and systematic in all their transactions as in an established civilized country. There are a thousand difficulties arising in the course of the establishment of a new colony, that can never be known in this country".[38]

After personal reprimands to his employees and statements to his colleagues such as "vain glory is the crying sin of Adelaide", Angas came to believe that colonial conditions not only encouraged speculation, but discouraged the formation of the ordered society which his propaganda had sold as a reality to many emigrants. Flaxman's land purchases and Keynes' business failures were soon to threaten his own financial security. These setbacks revealed even more of Angas' mentality.

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Joseph Keynes' initial response to South Australia was to express dismay at the barren and dusty land and to exclaim to his commercial mentor, Angas, "we found on our arrival things very different from what you thought they were".[39] This difference

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36. G. F. Angas to W. Keynes, op cit.

37. Hodder, op cit, p. 335.

38. Reports from Committees: Six Volumes (1) South Australia, Session 26 January - 22 June 1841 VOL. IV, evidence, 18 March 1841.

39. J. Keynes to G. F. Angas, 30 October 1839, AFP.

not only appeared in the physical environment, but also in the human environment of the new society. His brother William later wrote to Angas, "I am quite certain there cannot be more drunkeness and demoralisation in Sydney or Van Dieman's Land than is to be found here."[40] Joseph found it difficult to comprehend this state of affairs and wrote Angas, "I shall need...your best advice and prayers in the concern I am engaged and hope I may be able by divine assistance to conduct myself as merits your esteem".[41] However, Keynes did not wait for his senior partner's advice before acting.

As Keynes' instructions from Angas depended a great deal on help from Charles Flaxman, and as Flaxman left South Australia for Britain before Keynes' arrival, Keynes sought help elsewhere and found it from Edward Rowlands, Flaxman's partner. Rowlands, already embroiled in Flaxman's speculations, offered Keynes the chance of earning some quick money through what was termed, "a cattle concern".[42] Keynes accepted the offer, promised £800 of Angas' money and presumably waited for his profit to come in. Unfortunately for Keynes, his jumping in at the deep end of colonial speculations had far reaching consequences. In October 1841 both Flaxman & Rowlands, and August & Cooke, the other partners, ceased payment and left Keynes to claim an £1800 bill on Angas. Angas repudiated the bill. Further, this partnership was outside Keynes' terms of agreement with Angas and Miller which restricted his business solely to Joseph Keynes & Co.

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40. W. Keynes to G. F. Angas, ? April 1841, SAA PRG 174/7/603.

41. J. Keynes to G. F. Angas, op cit.

42. Joseph Keynes & Co., "Cash Book", AFP.

Keynes, however, who could justify his action on the ground that man should, "not...be idle", thought it was better to do something than nothing.[43] He trusted his own counsel in the new environment against all the advice of prudence and caution from Angas and his family in Britain. By March 1840 he bought 1600 sheep at 25s. each without recourse to Angas and he left the country sections near Adelaide and set up his farms on Flaxman's surveys in the Barossa Ranges. Unlike Adelaide, which Keynes called "a wilderness", the Barossa was described as, "the Garden of Eden".[44] The fast moving, money-centred environment of Adelaide and the unexpectedness of his new life, left Keynes pondering his course of action.

> The concern I am engaged in is very different from anything I have been accustomed to in my own country and is to me a very formidable undertaking, a great deal more so than I expected it would have been for though a person that has been accustomed to agricultural pursuits in one part of the world can pursue them in another, yet there is a vast deal of difference between a new colony like this and a country like England that has been cultivated for ages past. In the one you have the experience and improvements of a long system of husbandry to assist your judgement in the other everything is in a new and crude state.[45]

Perplexed by the virgin environment which his upbringing taught him to appreciate as a source of morality, and the rapid movement of town society for which he was unprepared, Joseph became a recluse in Flaxman's Valley. He preferred to rough it in the bush than face the canny businessmen of Adelaide, and when Angas told him that henceforth Anthony Forster would handle his business, Keynes responded, "I am neither fitted by habits or by inclination to do the business you require at his hands besides my hands are quite

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43. J. Keynes to G. F. Angas, op cit.

44. J. Keynes to G. F. Angas, 27 March 1840, AFP.

45. ibid.

full and it would have been impossible for me to have attended to it. [If] you had wanted me to I should have given you the same answer Joseph told his brethren to give Pharoh [sic] thy servant has been a shepherd from his youth."[46] After plunging in to the speculative whirlpool and finding it attractive, but not as rewarding as hoped, Keynes concentrated on the occupation for which his upbringing had prepared.

When Keynes assessed his actions he admitted to George Miller, Angas' partner, "I ought strictly to have adhered to the letter of my instructions and not to have jumped to conclusions."[47] Although he deviated from that part of his education which at times urged moderation in all things, Keynes had attempted to live out the doctrine of self-improvement. His father had urged him in this, as had his Uncle John, and Joseph took a major step in that direction by gaining the partnership with Angas and settling in South Australia. Further, he left colonial town life after a stay of only three months and made his headquarters in a rural atmosphere well suited to his inherited inclinations. He certainly did not think of himself as the, "greedy, covetous, hoarding worldling" which his uncle John warned him against. He told Angas, "For the expences of myself and brother I have drawn but a very small sum... You fixed my salary at 200 a year if the thing should not answer... I will give it up, indeed I should not think of taking anything for my labour if the thing should not succeed."[48] Keynes brought his British worldview to South Australia, and although part of it

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46. J. Keynes to G. F. Angas, 18 June 1841, AFP. The scriptural reference is to Genesis 47:3.

47. J. Keynes to G. Miller, 1 February 1841, AFP.

48. J. Keynes to G. F. Angas, 23 September 1840, AFP.

disintegrated under pressure of speculation, most of it held firm. However, the speculation and the advice of men introduced by Angas proved Keynes' bane; it remained to be seen how he dealt with failure.

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Lachlan McBean's first years in South Australia are not well documented. Any later descriptions of his time in the colony invariably mention his early position with William Younghusband & Co..[49] However, Younghusband did not set up business until 1842. Nevertheless, Younghusband and McBean shared similar ideas on life. Eric Richards summed up Younghusband as a merchant who believed that, "Talent, energy, and opportunism were rewarded to the benefit of individual, colony and mother country."[50] McBean too, had an upbringing which taught him the elements of commerce, and the value of discerning the path of profit. The pastoral industry offered attractive returns at a time when speculation in real estate often yielded transitory gains. Younghusband certainly believed this for he wrote that pastoral returns, "offer for a clever man who can raise £700 to £1000 according as he may wish to employ it in sheep or agricultural farming, or to any extent above that amount, a remuneration for his capital, the equal to which I have not met during my Travels in any other part of the world."[51]

McBean's choice of occupation in South Australia appeared to blend neatly with his British training. While speculation brought fast money for some and great losses for others, he stayed with a moderate approach to making his fortune. His job as a commission

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49. L. McBean, "obituary", Pastoral Times (Deniliquin) 20 January 1894, Cockburn, op cit, p. 82, The McBeans, Founders of Australia and their descendants, p. 1.

50. Eric Richards, "William Younghusband and the overseas trade of early colonial South Australia", South Australiana, vol. 17, no. 2, p. 151.

51. Ibid, p. 158.

agent with Younghusband, his partnership with Jaffray, and his purchase of The Dustholes and the Rivoli Bay property were achieved over seven years. The forays he made into any risk ventures were written up in his book marked, 'Speckulations'. These accounts describe a series of stock transactions from 1850 to 1853 and the figures and comments show the detailed preparation he gave to each venture. However, these speculations were made after twelve years in Australia during which his travels and jobs taught him the pros and cons of stock dealing. Although he had a policy of nothing ventured nothing gained, which the writer of his obituary pointed out in later years, the ventures were always planned around the things he knew best. He distilled from his own pious upbringing a series of simple maxims: a penny saved is a penny earned, waste not want not, opportunity knocks but once, which made him appear to his contemporaries as a living caricature of Scottish tightfistedness.[52]

George Melrose's reaction to the speculative environment of early colonial South Australia can only be gleaned from the thin records his family left in a four page typescript of reminiscences. These notes said that Melrose went straight into the business of sheep farming, both on his own account and with wealthier partners. From the evidence it appeared that he too stuck with what he knew rather than trying for the quick dollar. He like Keynes, rejected the town and looked to the rural environment to provide for the future.

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The reaction of the four men to the feverish times of early settlement was mostly in keeping with the views they held prior to

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52. L. McBean, "obituary", op cit.

arrival. For Angas who did not arrive until 1851, the reactions occurred in Britain removed from the sphere of action. Keynes, McBean and Melrose at the centre of the activity acted as their old world mentality indicated they would. Even Keynes' performance as a "stock-jobber" was in keeping with the mind which urged a man to improve his lot.

What South Australia lacked was an established system to work in. As Keynes indicated the "new and crude state" led to a system of trial and error, with society as well as the land. The three men wanted material success and perhaps a rise in social position. However, the eventual attainment of these goals was not without pitfalls.

CHAPTER THREE

RESPONSES TO EARLY SOUTH AUSTRALIA: REVERSALS OF FORTUNE

In many of the histories of South Australia the period of the early 1840s is described as the unfortunate phase of settlement when the first settlers reaped the distress of their early speculations. Hodder's, The History of South Australia, for example, patronised by the Angas family and compiled from George Fife Angas' notes and manuscripts, wrote that, "at as a stroke the condition of the colony became one of absolute insolvency." As the new government's economy withered so colonists fell under, "trial and discontent,.. bankruptcy and insolvency...are themselves the rule,..ruin, destruction and dispersion...are here and in full activity."[1] Both Angas and Keynes were mentally and financially shaken by the economic collapse, while McBean and Melrose, from the meagre sources available, seemed to weather this storm.

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Angas saw the hand of God in all of life. Providence motivated his interest in South Australia, guided his choice of servants in the colony, helped frame the advice and reprimands he sent them, and judged his own performance. One instance of this was seen in his urging his son John to make the property in the Barossa Ranges, "a moral and terrestrial paradise".[2] Yet, at the same time as he was encouraging John to create a piece of heaven on earth his own business affairs were in disarray. As he watched the results of Flaxman's and Keynes' speculations send his money to the wind he summed up his situation as being like that of a

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1. E. Hodder, The History of South Australia Vol. 1, pp. 170 & 172.
2. E. Hodder, George Fife Angas p. 280.

sick, giddy man on horseback trying to cross a rapids, "If he looks at the opposite bank, or at the sky, all is steady; if he looks around he is almost sure to lose his balance. My only hope of a safe crossing of this 'sea of trouble', is to look upward."[3] Angas' reaction to misfortune and failure was invariably to seek religious solace and from this analyse his own motives. From this position at times he spoke out against his adversaries and worked out a new plan of attack, but at other times there was no-one else to blame.

To write Angas' biography much time would need to be spent explaining his relationship to religion. He interpreted his personal history as a pilgrimage in religious self-discovery, and the events of the 1840s show a part of that journey. After hearing of his first reverses of fortune in 1840 he questioned, "whether these calamities are the work of Satan to frustrate the accomplishment of benevolent plans or whether they are the work of God".[4] This internal debate revealed in his diary a thought that had long perturbed the merchant,

> What lesson is this to teach me? Is it that the principle which I have so long been contending for, namely, to make commercial business instrumental in promoting religion, is a fallacy? that the Lord will not spread His cause by such means, but by the pure preaching of the Gospel alone, by His own ministers set apart for this very work, and that the commerce and trade of the world is not to be so honoured? If so, I must have mistaken my way and still do so, and henceforth my course should be to follow the example of my brother, W. H. Angas, and give up secular business in order to become a lay preacher of the gospel. 5

Adversity obviously heightened a conflict between religion and wealth in Angas' mind. Moreover, the danger of poverty humiliated him and he was, "stripped of that imaginary importance attaching

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3. Ibid p. 250.

4. Ibid p. 245.

5. Ibid pp. 245-246.

to men who are supposed to have property".[6]

Failure was a chastening experience to Angas. Yet, the man was under such constant pressure at this period that he was always on a mental tightrope. In a moment of unburdening his soul to R. B. Beddome, his solicitor, he brought out the sides of his character formed under duress, "a constant morbid sense of fear and apprehension of coming evils; an extraordinary weakness of memory and great indecision, and irresolution of mind, with great sensitiveness and irritability".[7] He maintained that these quirks were, "kept in constant operation during the past seven years by real occurrences...almost every effort of body and mind which I have put forth in business has been unprofitable, almost every transaction has been vexatious in all parts of the world, whether in relation to my private affairs or partnerships or trusteeships".[8] Never before had Angas suffered such an unmitigated series of reverses. Diary entries, and letters to friends and family all emphasised the dismal appearance of the future. The inspiration of so much of South Australia's settlement idealism, was constantly depressed by the financial crash which resulted from his South Australian partnerships, "the cold, damp, gloomy weather, with occasional blasts of the hurricane and showers of sleet, is a perfect emblem of my mind. O God, help me while walking in the darkness to trust in Thee."[9]

By June 1846 Angas' troubles had come to a head. The enormous

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6. Ibid pp. 249-250.

7. Ibid pp. 294-295.

8. Ibid.

9. G. F. Angas, personal diary 7 February 1843 Ibid p. 275.

debts incurred from the Barossa land purchases, the dismal performance of Joseph Keynes & Co. which was dissolved in 1843 some £10000 in debt, the failure of Flaxman and Rowlands, the loss of his company ships and a downturn in his Honduras and British trade, presented an overwhelming picture of misfortune. As if to cap it all off Joseph Keynes declared himself insolvent and left Angas liable for his colonial debts still lingering from the former partnership. These pressures broke Angas' health and he resorted to a get-away-from-it-all treatment by riding around Britain for six months.

The, "great journey on horseback for the recovery of my health", was recorded by Angas in daily diary entries from 16 November 1846 to 25 May 1847. These personal jottings reveal Angas' response to a once unimaginable failure. He showed an increased tendency to wipe out his commercial life and apply himself to religious causes, "I bless God that my hopes are above the world & that I feel more satisfied than ever to be forsaken & forgotten by the world...now that my work in the establishment of the New Colony of South Austa. is completed, throw all thine energies into the cause of Jesus & the progress of piety in thine own soul."[10]

Angas had lost a fair amount of the prestige he once held in London commercial circles, and his efforts in the political arena where he had often represented South Australia were virtually curtailed. The colony had lost its interest to British investors, who were more concerned with saving their own necks at home, than in opening up a settlement which had already bubbled and burst once.

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10. "great journey on horseback for the recovery of my health", diary 1 December 1846, AFP.

His business affairs started to clear up as he neared the end of his journey and he surveyed the depressing wake. His diary showed the efforts of a mind trying to come to grips with the knocks it received,

> I have thought it hard that my efforts to do good in South Australian affairs have been so little appreciated and that I have been cast away by men as nothing, but now I see that this has been the only method by which God could save me from the world's influence and fascinations. I have been desirous of public usefulness in the promotion of useful public measures but my talents and knowledge and experience have not been at all appreciated by others, therefore I have been kept in obscurity to which my ill health is greatly contributed; now in this also God has shown his love to my soul, for had I been in public life, I should have been very soon destroyed by over-labour and probably my soul injured with secular public affairs. 11

So much of Angas' upbringing dominated his mentality during thoughts on failure. The lower-middle class mind which valued self-help, moral goodness and religious idealism came to the fore.

Humble reliance on the values of his ethical beliefs coexisted with the uncharitable feeling that others had wronged him. When it was at all possible to blame others for his failure he did so. When Edward Stephens accepted some of Joseph Keynes' drafts on Angas in London when Angas was short of cash and credit, Angas fumed; "all I can say to such a course is, that my greatest enemy could not have done me a greater injury!!"[12] After berating the bank manager he held forth on Keynes and Flaxman accusing them of violating every principle of their agreements. His overall summation showed the full force of his distress,

> My ruin seems to be determined upon by the very men who have received from my hands nothing but kindness! I ask what is the course? What evil have I done that men act with such total disregard of consideration? What benefit or satisfaction to you, Keynes, Flaxman or Rowlands, to cause my commercial

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11. Ibid 9 May 1847.

12. G. F. Angas to E. Stephens, 11 March 1841 SAA PRG 174/10.

> destruction? What have I done to deserve this at your hands? Well! God will judge between you and I, into His hands I commit my troubled heart! and my most distressing case!!! 13

Even within a couple of days of seeing his affairs greatly relieved, Angas wrote of a colleague, "acting very traitorously towards him".[14]

Angas certainly held his grudges for a long time. Eleven years after Keynes dissolved partnership with him, Angas sought the opinion of counsel to see if he could still prosecute the now wealthy pastoralist for misappropriation of company funds.[15] When Richard Keynes observed Angas' failure in his South Australian interests, he took stock of the merchant's character and wrote to his son, "Looking closely at the proceedings of Mr. Angas so far as I know them, I cannot discover anything of a generous description, & you do not wrong him by being on your guard".[16]

In short George Fife Angas did not cope well with failure. He did not blame the market-place or the laws of political economy. His mentality ascribed success to godliness. His way of explaining the downturn was to look for the fault beyond his person or to ascribe it to Providential interference. Yet, the same worldview which urged him to look to God in times of trouble also urged him to climb out of the rut through industry. By June 1847 Angas was certain of the better times that lay ahead, but rather than thank the economic forces which had turned his fortune onto a more pleasant road, he thanked moral and religious ones, "Now my way is greatly simplified & by faith & patience & trust in God I cannot doubt but he will complete the work of my deliverance so conspicuously begun.

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13. Ibid.

14. "Great journey on horseback for the recovery of my health", diary 27 May 1847, AFP.

15. Bartley, Bakewell & Stow, "Joseph Keynes & Co., Case for the opinion of counsel" AFP.

16. R. Keynes to J. Keynes, 19 May 1843 KFP.

He said 'I will deliver thee & thou shalt glorify me.'...thus my mind & body will be relieved & at liberty to prepare for So. Austa. if God designs me to go there."[17] He reached South Australia in January 1851.

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When Joseph Keynes contracted to become Angas' servant in South Australia the hopes for the future seemed very bright. His first years in the colony had shown him that there were no sound ways of conducting business and one had to guess about which way to gain one's fortune. His entry into the cattle speculation with Flaxman and Rowlands, and the other partners August and Cooke, set a series of events into play which led to the financial collapse of Joseph Keynes & Co. and added to Angas' problems in Britain.

The steps to Keynes' downfall started from the words of advice given him by Angas on his departure. These gave him to understand that a farm was well established and that the projected operation included cattle, sheep, horses, cultivation, market-gardens, vineyards, and a large brick-making works.[18] The colonial reality and prospects differed markedly from this assessment. By March 1840 the brick-making business had cost Keynes severe losses and was closed. He paid out money to some of Angas' former employees without his permission when they claimed lost wages. He recompensed land-sharks who had rented Angas' property from Flaxman and demanded retribution for their lost prospects when Keynes took back the land. Furthermore, he had drawn on Angas for well in excess of the £3,000 mentioned in their agreement. His method of coping with these

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17. "Great journey..." op cit.

18. J. Keynes to G. Miller, 1 February 1841 AFP.

problems was to place the affairs into Anthony Forster's hands and get on with his sheep-farming.

These early errors cost him dear. In November 1841 Keynes was left holding all the debts of the cattle speculation when the other partners were declared insolvent. His reaction was to explain to Angas in terms he would readily understand,

> It is a most unhappy affair I was very foolish and thoughtless to have entered into anything of the sort...Ifeel it the more that I have endangered the property of other people, if it was my own it would not signify but I trust if God gives me my health and strength to be able to work out the debt during the next five years and then should I be so poor as when I left England I shall have the satisfaction of saying I owe no man anything... believe me my dear Sir that as sure as God is my master before whom I must stand to give an account of the deeds done in the body, that I sought not my own private advantage in this or any other concern in which I have been engaged since I entered the Colony but I have solely and entirely devoted myself to the interest of the firm and your private advantage. 19

These remarks are in keeping with what one would expect from Keynes' mentality which valued piety and integrity. With all the problems he encountered Keynes could still say to Angas in the language of religion and self-improvement, "I am sure that the crisis is past and that with the blessing of Divine Providence we must and shall progress."[20] However, Forster's business diary showed that Keynes' optimism was without foundation and wrote of, "the sad consequences to GFA & Co. of Keynes' ill conduct".[21]

Over the next year and a half there was plenty of time for Keynes to ruminate over his errors and contemplate failure. His affairs went from bad to worse when a bill he drew on Angas was protested for non-payment and eventually he lost all the company's flocks to his creditors. His reaction in his letters was to set

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19. J. Keynes to G. F. Angas, 30 November 1841 AFP.

20. Ibid.

21. Anthony Forster's business diary, 19 November 1841. This MS is found in J. H. Angas papers, SAA PRG 175.

forward his own faults and look to the future with confidence. Writing to George Miller, Keynes invoked the words of a collect from the Book of Common Prayer in an attempt to explain the turn of events, "We down from the highest to the lowest [have been] doing things we ought not to have done and neglecting things we should have done."[22] This confession led on to a summation of the sins of first settlers, which started with a statement that re-emphasised his father's belief in the goodness of the land, "A new colony ought to begin with cultivation combined with the breeding of sheep cattle and horses instead of which they all staid [sic] in the town dabbling in bricks and mortar building large houses and Public Buildings and fine houses with no earthly excuse that I can see except as monuments to future generations of the folly and absurdity of the first settlers in South Australia."[23] Keynes believed that this part of colonial life was past and in concluding his letter to Miller explained why the setback to his affairs would eventually bring fruit, "The fact was we all came out here with mistaken ideas we thought to amass large fortunes in a few years and then to have returned to enjoy it, but we now begin to look on the place as our home wherein we get not that fortune we expected yet we are sure of moving to a far better rank of society than we could at home of being surrounded in a few years by every comfort and of leaving our children, those that have any, the benefit of our labours."[24] Keynes' concerns evince a characteristically British idea of society. His view of success remained within the bounds established by his upbringing, and his idea of penance was

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22. J. Keynes to G. Miller, 6 December 1841 AFP.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid.

formed within this same mentality.

Though he and Angas were at odds in their reckoning of who was to blame for the failure of the partnership, they fell back upon similar sources of explanation and comfort in their time of adversity. Until 8 June 1843 when Joseph Keynes & Co. was, "dissolved by mutual consent", Keynes kept up the front of adhering to his inculcated British values.[25] He was forever apologising to Angas, as well he might, for his indiscretion and claimed in his letters home that, "I have been more sinned against in this affair than sinned".[26] His writings contained much of this biblical apologia, for his mentality relied strongly on Divine support. In a flurry of reassurances to Angas he could write, "you may depend I will see justice done you ever to the cutting off of my right hand or plucking out of my right eye".[27]

However, within a year of his writing Angas about his willingness to work out the debt and to do him justice, Keynes changed his tune. In September 1842, when he lost his flocks through a court order by his creditors, he left Angas' employ and went out as an overseer to another sheep farm and told Angas, "when there was nothing to do I could not eat the bread of idleness".[28] His sense of failure also had him repeating the words used so often by Angas, his insufficient, "prudence and caution". Just as the minds of these men were shaped by the positive language of religion and self-help - industry, piety, sobriety - so also in their failure they turned to the negative forms of that dialect - prudence, caution, moderation, penitence,

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25. South Australian Government Gazette, 15 June 1843.

26. J. Keynes to G. Miller, op cit.

27. J. Keynes to G. F. Angas, 22 February 1842 AFP.

28. J. Keynes to G. F. Angas, 6 February 1843 AFP.

confession. They assigned moral causes to economic distress.

The change of employment and acceptance of colonial life gave Keynes a fresh start on his road to the pinnacle of pastoral society. However, the bogy of the cattle speculation still haunted him. In 1845 he was hounded by the creditors of Joseph Keynes & Co. for payment of debts and was constantly being detained in Adelaide. In an effort to get help from Angas he wrote the merchant that, "my ideals of serving you were not ideal but within the bounds of reason and probability", and he urged Angas to vindicate his character.[29] Angas however, remained bitter and in the scrap notes he compiled on the company to use as an opinion for counsel he wrote of Keynes', "villany...and mischief".[30] The pressure of the cattle debt overtook Keynes and in January 1846 he filed a declaration of insolvency and in July was registered as such by the Supreme Court in Adelaide.[31]

Keynes and Angas, after their initial confessional responses to failure, looked to the future with optimism. South Australia, they believed, still contained the elements necessary for their success. One of McBean's books also contained the idea that even in the midst of trouble success stood on the horizon, "the glimpses of hope and glory in the distant view, after the dreary and desolate regions through which we have passed, is beheld with feelings which can only be adequately intimated in the simile of the poet:-

> As when a scout
> Through dark and desert ways with peril gone
> All night, at last, by break of cheerful dawn,
> Obtains the brow of some high-climbing hill,

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29. J. Keynes to G. F. Angas, 20 February 1845 AFP.

30. This phrase and other sharp comments were made by Angas on scraps of paper in a wrapper marked, 'Joseph Keynes & Co., Bills & C, Case for opinion of counsel', 1854 AFP.

31. SAA GRG 66/5, 66/1.

Which to his eye discovers unaware
The goodly prospect of some foreign land
First seen,- or some renown'd metropolis
With glist'ring spires and pinnacles adorn'd,
Which NOW the rising sun gilds with his beams." 32

The path of success lay before the pastoralists. Their response to good fortune was yet to be discovered.

The reaction of Angas and Keynes towards adversity was not an isolated example amongst the population of newly settled South Australia. Even though there were Utilitarians and Benthamites amongst the colony's founders most responded like Angas and Keynes and looked for moral reasons for economic problems. Robert Gouger, one of South Australia's progenitors, wrote that the downfall of the early settlement was due to the settlers' minds being, "injudiciously filled in England...with too high an idea of their own importance, with too elevated anticipations of the future...and it has not been until they found it necessary to go to work in earnest that the illusion has been apparent. When the mistake is first discovered disappointment takes the place of their castles in the air."[33] J. G. Johnston, the writer of, THE TRUTH: consisting of letters just received from emigrants to the Australian colonies, warned the intending settler, "Let it not be forgotten that every one carries in his bosom the elements of his happiness or misery, and to a great extent of his good or ill fortune."[34]

One visitor to South Australia examining the fortunes of some and misfortunes of others noted, "in all my travels, I have always found the religious the most happy and prosperous", and a young

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32. J. D. Kitto, The Bible History of the Holy Land p. 496.

33. R. Gouger, South Australia in 1837 pp. 90-91.

34. J. G. Johnston, The Truth: consisting of letters just received from emigrants to the Australian colonies (hereafter The Truth) p. x.

Scots settler echoed this by looking at man's failure and writing, "They may go anywhere, but if they continue their evil ways they cannot prosper".[35] The stress was laid on man's moral conduct dictating his prosperity or failure in worldly terms, so just as one person could write, "no person of talent here can miss making money, if he is sober", so another could say that improper conduct in business "would bring down the curse of the Almighty".[36]

Although men's lives in the colony were directed by the inflow of capital from Britain, or by inter-colonial trade, they habitually sought more personal answers to their immediate problems. Their religion and their understanding of God not only helped provide an answer but a palliative as well. When a well-known colonist, Thomas Williams, was thrown into Adelaide Gaol by his creditors he wrote a long letter to George Fife Angas and concluded,

> But however these things turn out we know they are ordered for the best, that although we could have desired to have a different result to our colonial enterprises yet that He who sees not as man sees & works all things after the council of His own will and unerringly for our real good, will dispose of all that concerns his people here that they shall have cause for endless rejoicing. When the time of trial is over they are able to know even as they themselves are known. To Him let us look in humble earnest prayer that affliction may be sanctified to us & that we may be able to forgive those who we fancy trespass against us. 37

The language of the Bible provided the reasoning behind many of the first settlers' notions of existence. Just as Williams spoke of his 'time of trial', others wrote of, "severe trials", "earthly turmoil & vexation", or a "season of affliction".[38]

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35. Ibid pp. 32-33.

36. Ibid p. 35.

37. Thomas Williams to G. F. Angas, 1 November 1842, 17 August 1843 SAA PRG 174/6.

38. W. Randell to G. F. Angas, 21 September 1843 SAA PRG 174/6/73; M. Gawler to E. Hawker, 30 March 1841, SAA PRG 174/1/1753; A. Kavel to G. F. Angas, 7 January 1842, SAA PRG 174/6.

The hope of these people and of Keynes and Angas was that such sufferings would adequately prepare them for future earthly and heavenly rewards.

Augustus Kavel, a pastor over many of the early German immigrants to South Australia, told Angas, "I trust the time is not far when you will see that your great trials you have met with for the last four years have been permitted to befall you for some good and great end which will make you to bless the Lord for all his dispensations like Abraham and Job."[39] Maria Gawler faced with the news that her husband had been unceremoniously dumped from his vice-regal position wrote, "how sweet to experience that 'the Lord reigneth' & that not even a sparrow falleth to the ground without his knowledge, that 'every hair of our head is numbered', that He will not see the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. These are precious promises & the privelege of every believer to claim as his own."[40] William Randell of the South Australian Company wrote to Angas, "I am persuaded none but a Divine Hand could have borne you up...the Hand that has holpen you is Omnipotent and will I have no doubt bring you through it all."[41] The mentalities of these people were grounded in a belief that life was ordered from a Divine source. Success and failure were part of the individual's religious life. When things went well they were blessed by God; if they went badly, either God was testing and preparing them for future blessings or they like the disobedient Israelites of the Old Testament were being chided for their faithlessness.

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39. A. Kavel to G. F. Angas, 2 October 1843, SAA PRG 174/6/77.

40. M. Gawler to E. Hawker, op cit.

41. W. Randell to G. F. Angas, op cit.

The early settlement was full of people questioning the actions of Providence or declaiming the failures of others as proof of irreligious conduct. The settlers seldom looked at the total colonial economy, much less the World and British trade, and when the stability of the colony was doubted by an outsider, "he was looked upon as an evil wisher to the colony, he was avoided and shunned as an enemy."[42] The colonist believed that life was shaped by spiritual forces acting through men. A man's physical state was of little importance if his soul was in disorder, "What is life? A vapour. What is the world? The enemy conquered by Christ! What are earthly treasures? Though the means of doing good but also the causes of many pains and sorrows."[43] The reality of colonial life was that many righteous men went bankrupt, not necessarily through any fault other than their inability to cope with the sharp practice of businessmen or to see the importance of a wider world than their own doorstep. But, just as Angas, Keynes, McBean and Melrose looked forward to the future through present gloom, so other colonists could share a similar hope, "we must all put up with many inconveniences for a time for the sake of the comforts that are in store for us."[44] They shared the belief of the Psalmist who wrote, "For thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous; with favour thou compass him as with a shield."[45]

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42. D. Pike (ed), "The diary of James Coutts Crawford: extracts on aborigines and Adelaide, 1839 and 1841" South Australiana Vol. IV. No. 1, March 1965 p. 10.

43. A. Kavel to G. F. Angas, 7 January 1842 SAA PRG 174/6

44. J. G. Johnston, op cit p. 45.

45. Psalm V, verse 12.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE ATTAINMENT OF WEALTH

"Prosperity", wrote Joseph Keynes' uncle John, "is a state of danger." The Birmingham minister declared that often when pious men improved their position in life through persevering industry their religious values decayed. He warned Joseph just before his departure to South Australia not to be enamoured with worldly wealth.[1] Yet, Joseph and his neighbours actively sought material success and justified it by appealing to other exhortations of their religion. Even the hymns they sang exhorted them to labour continually at their work, and to give God glory in their success,

> Awake my soul, and with the sun
> Thy daily stage of duty run;
> Shake off dull sloth, and joyful rise
> To pay the morning sacrifice.
> Redeem thy mis-spent time that's past,
> And live this day as if thy last;
> Improve thy talent with due care;
> For the great day thyself prepare. 2

By 1855 Angas, Keynes, McBean and Melrose had attained a high degree of success. Their responses to this success reveal important shifts in the evolving mentality of four members of the South Australian pastoral elite.

In 1849 George Fife Angas' son George published a book of sketches with a text apparently written by his brother John entitled, Description of the Barossa Range and its neighbourhood in South Australia. The paintings of George French Angas have been celebrated for depicting some of the pastoralists' lifestyle; however the text is equally important for documenting the hopes of the pastoralists,

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1. J. A. James, The Christian Professor pp. 254-255; J. A. James to J. Keynes, 4 February 1839 KFP.

2. Hymns Ancient and Modern, No. 3 p. 5.

The pride to rear an independent head,
And give the lips we love unborrowed bread;
To see a land from shadowy forests won,
In youthful beauty wedded to the sun;
To skirt our homes with harvests widely sown,
And call the blooming landscape all our own,
Our children's heritage in prospect long. 3

The writer described the successful transformation of the Barossa land into a civilised, pastoral enterprise. The families who achieved this were called, "respectable" and were said to, "form a good society".[4] They were beginning to view themselves as a landed gentry. The youthful Mr. J. H. Angas was not only described as the proprietor of his father's estate but the progenitor of a village, "connected with his extensive establishment".[5] It was here that the young man claimed that his success had made him,

Content with the Present, at peace with the Past,
No cloud on the Future our joys to o'ercast. 6

The son of a middle class London merchant was being groomed as part of a gentry in a country where the middle class was intended to have reigned supreme.

Although South Australia had not initially been kind to the Angas family, the arrival of John Howard Angas and his subsequent work saw a revival of fortune. Edwin Hodder said that at John's touch, "the wilderness had been made to blossom as the rose, order had been evolved out of chaos".[7] Initially Angas built a small cottage at Tarrawatta, but the arrival of George Fife precipitated the building of Lindsay House near Angaston. This structure was an outward exhibition of what success meant to the Angas family.

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3. G. French Angas, Description of the Barossa Range p. 14.
4. Ibid p. 19.
5. Ibid p. 16.
6. Ibid p. 17.
7. E. Hodder, George Fife Angas pp. 317-318.

The mansion, even in its embryonic form, surveyed a vast property and looked towards the village of Angaston almost as though proclaiming the village a part of the manor. When George Fife Angas first glimpsed this landscape, he thanked God for his temporal preservation, and the achievement of his son, writing in his diary, "Truly I have around me as extensive and as beautiful an estate as falls to the lot of men".[8]

George Fife Angas took worldly success in his stride. He still adhered to the sober religious thoughts experienced in failure, and even amidst the splendour of his estate he spoke of the pious beliefs of his upbringing. A successful man should not show an extravagant front and should "let...his moderation be known unto all men".[9] He qualified this statement by adding another dictum for the man whose labours were blessed by God, "It is lawful for a Christian to enjoy every comfort and convenience of life, and beyond that he has a wide field in the world for doing good to others".[10] Just as he spoke of failure in religious terms, so Angas ascribed good fortune to, "a deliverance from captivity & a plentiful shower from the grace & mercy of spiritual & temporal blessings."[11] The language of success and its external show were apparently as deeply embedded in Angas' religious mentality as the doctrine of accepting one's place in a society planned by God.

Angas' position in South Australian society, was reinforced by others who accorded to him the language and habits of deference. Government officers wrote asking him to consider hiring more servants.

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8. Ibid p. 318.

9. Ibid pp. 418-419.

10. Ibid.

11. "Great journey on horseback for the recovery of my health," diary 31 December 1846 AFP.

Men in Adelaide tried to solicit their employment and were, "honoured and gratified" by a response, and his country tenants referred to him as, "your Honour".[12] The legal documents signed by his country tenants for their lease arrangements always referred to Angas as, "Esquire".[13]

There were others in South Australia who refused to conform to patterns of deference. Robert Harrison in Colonial Sketches provided a derogatory description of South Australia and its inhabitants, and more especially, of Angas. Harrison claimed to have, "no class interests to support or selfish objects to assert in publishing", and to have merely, "expressed his disinterested views on South Australia".[14] The list of friends he mentioned in his introduction included many amongst the Adelaide elite who were strongly religious people and whose views would have been those of many other colonists. It was surprising therefore that Harrison's work was so critical.

On the cover of a reprinted edition of the book it was stated that "every copy available was purchased and destroyed by the Angas Family". George Fife Angas was satirised: as, A Christian Philanthropist. This description was introduced with the verses,

> So for good old gentlemanly vice,
> I think I must take up with avarice.
> So thank your stars that matters are no worse,
> And read your Bible, Sir, and mind your purse. 15

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12. G. V. Butler (Immigration Agent) to J. H. & G. F. Angas, 24 June 1851 AFP; J. G. Andrews to G. F. Angas, 14 June 1851 AFP; J. Noonan to G. F. Angas, 2 July 1851 AFP.

13. For example see "G. F. Angas Esqre. to Messrs. J. A. Radiger and S. Muller; Lease of section 6578 in the special surveys of the tributaries and western sources of the Torrens, 24 June 1849" AFP.

14. R. Harrison, Colonial Sketches p. iv.

15. Ibid p. 83.

The writer claimed that the main object of Angas' life was, "to accumulate cash, study the principles of banking and investment, with a little theology read backwards to lull him into the pleasing belief that he was eminently adapted for a celestial sphere."[16]

One of Angas' tenants also spoke of his landlord's supposed honour and adherence to the golden rule and wrote, "however the rich may take advantage of the poor under such circumstances as these God must and will take notice of it and write it in the book of his remembrance and...you have the satisfaction of depriving a poor man of his bread and bringing his wife and children to beggary and want."[17] Assuming a new social rank exposed Angas to the barbs of envy which have always stung the wealthy, and to the malice of people from the class which nurtured him and whose values he appeared to have abandoned.

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On the 21 June 1855 Joseph Keynes joined the elect of South Australia, including Angas, to sit on the lawns of Government House and welcome the new Governor, Richard Graves MacDonnell.[18] In less than a decade he had risen from an insolvent debtor to a pastoralist at the top of the social scale.

Keynes' climb to the top was accomplished by his own expertise in stock breeding, a solid partnership until 1849 with his brother William, an upturn in the economy and the luck to gain a series of good properties and stock purchases. In 1849 after 3 successful years in partnership Keynes struck out on his own and bought the

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16. Ibid p. 85.

17. E. Wyett to G. F. Angas, 6 May 1851 AFP.

18. Register, 21 June 1855.

leasehold of Cadlunga station on the Skillogelee Creek not far from Clare in South Australia's mid-north. He felt he had obtained a bargain by getting 12,000 sheep thrown in with the purchase price of £2050. He quickly sold off half the sheep on a rising market and recouped £1368/8/-.[19] His Adelaide business advisor John Hamilton, the owner of a brewery, congratulated him on making a sound investment and justified the success in the pious terminology of improvement: "When I know your endeavours are those of an honest man I have no doubt but Providence will smile upon them".[20] His family in Britain too, believed that success would come to their Joseph. They even believed that his early failure in the colony had been an essential part of his training, "for that temporal prosperity, which without previous discipline, such as yours, is often ruinous to the soul".[21]

As Keynes began to prosper, he began to think of marrying. When he left Britain his Uncle John, ever the advisor, warned him, "Do not be in haste to marry. Be very cautious on this point, this is a step that will do much to make or unmake you for life."[22] Marriage went hand in hand with Keynes' views of a successful life. As John Angell James wrote, and Keynes read, in marriage, "There must be a general suitableness in age, rank, education, temper, and taste" and one should not take the step, "of imprudently marrying before [one] had a rational prospect of supporting a family."[23] In March 1850 at the age of 40 Joseph married Ellen Robinson, the

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19. J. Keynes, Day and Cash Book, 17 December 1849 KFP.

20. J. Hamilton to J. Keynes, 24 December 1849 KFP.

21. Elizabeth Keynes to J. Keynes, 29 March 1850 KFP.

22. J. A. James to J. Keynes, op cit.

23. J. A. James op cit p. 247 and 249.

young daughter of another pastoral family at Watervale only a few miles from Cadlunga . The arrangements for the marriage, which included the transfer of some mid-northern property, appeared to be enacted very, "pleasantly & profitably", as Keynes termed it.[24] The caution urged by his Uncle was duly observed. His wife's family were religious people, attending the interdenominational Watervale chapel. Her uncle William Robinson was one of the wealthiest pastoralists in that area, owning Hill River station near Clare.

The wedding ceremony and honeymoon were the only events Keynes allowed to encroach on his ever busy life. Even the marriage and his failure to write up his property's daily journal were apologised for by writing in the journal, "clarifying the fat and getting the place in order for dressing the sheep. I was married on Thursday the 21st and could not think of anything else."[25] Keynes seemed to have set his mind on achieving something worthwhile to hand over to his children: that which he once termed, "the benefit of our labours".[26]

In January 1851 Keynes moved his headquarters from Cadlunga to the North Rhine area of the Barossa. He kept on the mid-north land, and the White Hut run that he and his brother took up just prior to his declaration of insolvency. The North Rhine Run was 34 square miles in area and was leased from the Crown. However, under the prevailing land legislation, enacted between May 1843 and June 1846, unsurveyed land like Keynes' could be applied for by an individual who wished to purchase the land. The leasee was given notice of survey, and after the survey was completed he had to bid

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24. J. Keynes, Daily Journal, 17 February 1850 KFP.

25. Ibid 18-23 March 1850.

26. J. Keynes to G. Miller, 6 December 1841, AFP.

for the land at public auction. A minimum price of £1 per acre was set, a deposit had to be payed at auction for the bought land, and the balance payed within a month. There were those who sought to hinder Joseph's increasing prosperity by forcing the survey of the North Rhine Run.

Henry Evans, Angas' son-in-law, threatened the dispersal of Keynes' property into surveyed sections for sale unless Keynes gave up some of the land.[27] Keynes was forced to begin purchasing freehold land in the area in April 1851, and to vie with the other large pastoralists like Angas, and Evans at auction. It must have been with some pleasure that Keynes received Henry Evans' letter in November 1851 offering him the right to purchase the greater portion of Evans' property, and informing him that Evans had given away sheep-farming.[28]

The improvement in Keynes' financial position was marked by a new pattern of consumption. Once used to simple living and utilitarian articles, his expences now included outings to the Clare race meetings, new watches and jewelry for his wife, silver cutlery for the dining room and in February 1851 he purchased an elegant new gig.[29] Keynes' success was based on the continued quality of his stock and an increasing demand for his sheep in the market-place. His Adelaide agent wrote him, "Captain Elder told me the other day that your wool had brought a wonderful high price having netted £16-0-0 per bale you are still fortunate."[30] It appeared that the business which at first cost him failure

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27. J. Keynes, Daily Journal 27 June 1851 KFP.

28. H. Evans to J. Keynes, 7 November 1851 KFP.

29. J. Keynes, Account Book 1850: "Personal expences" March-May 1850, Account Book 4 p. 91 KFP.

30. J. Hamilton to J. Keynes, 13 April 1850 KFP.

would now give him prosperity.

The Keynes family in Britain were full of applause for the bright direction of Joseph's fortune. They did not appear to regard his prosperity as a state of danger. They spoke, in reply to Joseph's letters home, of God's, "bountiful mercy", and the success of, "general & sound maxims."[31] Further, Keynes' success would now make he and his wife, "useful & honourable members of society", their position of being blessed, "in temporal things", was, "providentially ordered" and had raised their, "integrity & honour."[32] Nevertheless, they held a moral radical view of wealth and property. Richard Keynes could not have realised the trend of his son's South Australian life when he wrote, "Agricultural engagements are very far from being of a promising kind in this country. They talk of great farms & great capitalists & this seems to be the favourite notion with many extensive landed proprietors...I must confess rather inclined to a more general diffusion of property & of the maintenance of a middling class...I have my strong doubts whether it can be a national benefit, for a few to be immensely rich, & the great bulk of the people almost hopelessly poor."[33] Joseph however, was well on his way to being just such a capitalist and owner of land.

As Keynes' life revolved more and more around buying land, expanding his stock sales, and giving himself a facade of the well-to-do landowner with his gig and a bigger house, the local community adopted him as a leader. He and his wife and sister-in-law were among those feted at the Angaston Horticultural Show in

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31. R. Keynes to J. Keynes, 29 December 1852 KFP.

32. Ibid 15 November 1852, 23 May 1853.

33. Ibid 3 November 1851.

March 1854, and after the rather costly dinner at night could comment that although the attendance was poor, "there was no drunkenness or disorderly behaviour."[34] Just over a month later Keynes drove into Angaston with his wife and young daughter to attend his first sitting as the magistrate for the local court.[35] Monetary success, increased social standing beyond his early hopes and a family to take over his fortune, were all growing. While many other South Australians, including his brother William, headed to the Victorian goldfields Joseph stayed at home measuring success in increased fleece weights and meat prices rather than nuggets. Although bitter memories of failure sometimes reasserted themselves, like the time in 1852 that Angas bailed him up and wanted to know about his old debts and Joseph wrote in his journal that Angas was, "a deceitful old man, avericious [sic] too", he was himself now a man of substance among his neighbours and fit to represent them at a levee for the new governor.[36]

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In one of Lachlan McBean's books ragged from constant use stood the words, "Surely Omnipotence...will bless your honest endeavours."[37] He had good reason to approve the maxim. By the 1850s much material success had come his way. Yet, unlike Angas and Keynes whose external appurtenances kept pace with their wealth, McBean held tight to his purse. The writer of McBean's family story made it sound as if Lachlan, and his brother Alexander and his wife Margaret after their arrival in 1846, were the embodiment of a successful triumph over

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34. J. Keynes, Daily Journal, 7 March 1854 KFP.

35. Ibid, 20 April 1854.

36. Ibid, 19 January 1852.

37. J. Fleetwood, The life of Jesus Christ and the Apostles (1850) p. 48.

adversity, "On reaching Baldon [the Dustholes] Estate no residence was erected, and they camped in a tent. The natives were numerous, and Mrs. McBean spent many nights alone while her husband was away mustering stock...Lachlan and Alexander... used to walk to Adelaide to transact their business - a distance of some 75 miles each way over rough country, with no roads or bridges."[38]

Thrift was necessary if one was to improve one's station in life. McBean's account books revealed something of that frugality which later became notorious. His personal expences were merely the cost of food and of board in Adelaide. It was reported of him in later years that wherever possible he would camp rather than pay for hotel accommodation in the country.[39] His family recounted that when he moved between the colonies for stock purchases and land deals he always carried specie in a money belt to avoid paying exchange.[40] In all this he felt justified by the maxims impressed upon him in his youth. Blair's sermons, for example, stressed to McBean, "Provide order in the management of your fortune...From time to time examine your situation; and proportion your expence to your growing or diminishing revenue. Provide what is necessary before you indulge in what is superfluous." Blair also wrote that if prosperity was to be a continuing thing, one must, "In a word, fix such a plan of living as you find that your circumstances fairly admit, and adhere to it invariably against

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38. Founders of Australia and their descendants: The McBeans (hereafter, Founders of Australia) pp. 2-3.

39. L. McBean Account Book 8, "1852 Expences"; McBFP Narrandera Argus, 29 January 1894.

40. Founders of Australia p. 1.

every temptation to improper excess."[41] McBean's tight-fisted approach to a successful life was worked out long before he ever achieved that position.

McBean, like Keynes, consolidated his wealth in the pastoral industry. At the same time that the sceptical writer of Colonial Sketches wrote that because of the goldrush to Victoria somebody should put a, "South Australia-TO LET" sign on Kangaroo Island, McBean was overlanding sheep and cattle from Sydney and the Darling Downs to Adelaide.[42] The Sydney expedition of June 1853 gave McBean a profit of £5,500. His response was to immediately spend over half this profit in buying the stock and 40 square mile runs of Thomas Scott and James Milne in the Murray Scrub adjacent to The Dustholes, which itself was 13 square miles in area.[43] Until 1855 when he bought Woorooma station in New South Wales, McBean continued the practice of reinvesting his profits from his commission and sales business, the butcher store and his pastoral properties in the purchase of pastoral land.

In the legal contracts for the purchase McBean did not take the title of Esquire given to Keynes and Angas, he preferred the plain brand of "stock-keeper."[44]

Another thing that set McBean apart from his neighbours in the Barossa Ranges was his continental strategy for increasing his pastoral holdings. Family legend maintains that he first grew

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41. H. Blair, Sermons Vol. 2, p. 12.

42. R. Harrison, op cit p. 8.

43. L. McBean, Account Book, 1 July 1852. McBFP L. McBean's deal with James Milne for the 40 square miles in County Eyre is found in SAA GRG 59/9, No. 290, 23 June 1853.

44. See, for example, South Australian Department of Lands GRO enrolments 209-1854, "John Ellis et al to L. McBean for the sale of land at Mt. Remarkable".

attracted to country outside South Australia during his overlanding venture.[45] The purchase of Woorooma in New South Wales, a run of over 60,000 acres with 10,000 sheep and an annual income of over £4,500 at a cost of £12,000, was an ambitious transaction. Nevertheless within six months he recouped all but £7,500 of the purchase price and three years later divided the property and sold half to a neighbouring squatter for £12,800.[46] As an obituary was later to notice, "He was frequently close and exacting in small matters, but in important transactions he had a bold liberal policy, and was very quick in dealing no matter how large the purchase or sale might be."[47]

McBean's response to initial prosperity was to seek even more prosperity by building up a broad base in the pastoral industry. He appeared determined to avoid the trap of ostentatious living that Blair talked about that would separate the interests of the well-to-do from those around them, "to wrap themselves up in their vain grandeur; and, in the lap of indolence and selfish pleasure, to acquire a cold indifference to the concerns even of those whom they call their friends."[48]

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George Melrose recounted in later life that he was fascinated by the pressures of pioneer life. He shared the urge to overcome the difficulties of an uncultivated environment and like McBean when he gained success he put his profits back into his property and refused to show any extravagant outward trappings.[49] His

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45. Oral interview with Mr. W. J. Kilpatrick, Bimbella, Deniliquin October 1979.

46. L. McBean, Account Book, "Woorooma" McBFP.

47. Pastoral Times, 20 January 1894.

48. H. Blair, op cit pp. 329-330.

49. Melrose family Reminiscences, MFP, G. Melrose's obituary, newspaper cuttings, MFP.

spirit was similar to that which the Adelaide Register spoke of when it printed, "The essential characteristic of Colonial life is progress...We plant our foot on the soil hitherto untrodden by the white man and Cities arise, homesteads are formed...the desert is reclaimed and the foundations of a Nation are established. Britain has sent to her Colonies no ignoble race...they have reared homes which would gladden the eye, even in the parent state, and have equally transplanted that independence of thought, that freedom of speech which we claim as attributes of British birthright."[50]

Between the 2nd July 1853 and the end of 1855 Melrose grabbed a larger share of the colony's progress. When the Government land sales opened for the Hundreds of North Rhine, South Rhine and Sturt he bought 28 sections at a cost of nearly £4,000.[51] Obviously pastoralism was an undoubted success. Melrose achieved prosperity by acting just as his worldview indicated he would, by sticking prudently to the things he knew best.

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Angas, Keynes, McBean and Melrose were very fortunate to be established on the land when they were. By not succumbing to the lure of the goldfields they had reaped the harvest of an expanding pastoral economy. Their reaction to this success varied but was generally confined within the limits established by their education and social background in Britain. They treated success, just as they had treated failure; as something ordained by God. They were blessed by Providence, and were raised, as they thought, to a new level of respectability and honour. Although during their first

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50. Register, 27 February 1851.

51. Records of land transactions in South Australian Department of Lands, file, GRO Old System (lands).

years in South Australia they had appeared content to stay in the middle class, they had almost unexpectedly arrived at a higher societal rank merely by adhering to the maxims of their youth. Angas and Keynes were the first to realise what society expected of them and they took on some of the trappings of wealth. McBean and Melrose doggedly pursued security through increases in their property. McBean underlined and noted the passage in Blair's sermons which said of all things man should hold true to his, "native sentiments", and this was exactly how he was responding.[52]

In their own ways each of these four pastoralists had seen a great increase in fortune and found ways to justify it from their moral, social and religious backgrounds. Rather than seeing the "danger" in the increasing wealth, Angas, Keynes, Alexander McBean and Melrose started to express it outwardly in their houses and estates. Lachlan McBean, on the other hand, continued to live simply as he doggedly pursued unlimited capital accumulation.

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52. H. Blair, op cit p. 337

CHAPTER FIVE

LAYING OUT COUNTRY ESTATES.

In February 1841, Joseph Keynes described the seven special surveys in the Barossa Ranges for George Fife Angas and concluded his picturesque account with the advice that "you could build a capital mansion ... and be the King of the whole district".[1] At that time Keynes was Angas' servant, had passed through the turbulent days of early colonial speculation, and was soon to know the bite of failure. To be the "King of the whole district" was something he could imagine for Angas but not for himself, for he still looked at life from a lowly vantage point. Yet, by 1855 Keynes was aspiring to his own mansion and beginning to lay out the social and physical landscape around him in a grand manner.

This chapter describes the steps taken by Keynes, Angas, Alexander McBean and Melrose to establish themselves in an outward and visible way as a pastoral gentry with great houses, vast estates and dependent retainers. The layout of the mansions and surrounding estates gave vivid physical expression to their beliefs about the relationship of the wealthy and the poor and the landlord and the tenant in a well-ordered society. No economic, climatological or political fact forced them to make this use of the money they made from sheep. The example of their counterpart Lachlan McBean who held tight to every penny he earned and showed considerable contempt for the usages of genteel society proved that wealth could be accumulated without adopting the trappings of a British squire. The religious

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1. J. Keynes to G. F. Angas, 1 February 1841 AFP.

precepts of their youth stressed the virtues of plain living and the counterprevailing perils of outward display. But an equally important part of their mental equipment was a vision of how a wealthy rural landowner situated himself in relation to his neighbours. They could find ample justification for their manorial aspirations in their early training which taught them to associate rural life with godliness and to accept the superiority of the landed gentry as divinely ordained.

To show how much their mansions reflected their desire to be seen as a rural gentry, their house designs will be compared to the ideas of one of Britain's foremost gentry architects, Robert Kerr. Kerr won fame as a designer of English manor houses with the publication of his book, The Gentleman's House, in 1864. This work which Girouard in his extensive study on the English country house called an "invaluable contemporary book", distilled the philosophy of gentry architecture.[2] The reader is led through a detailed account of the functions of each section of the house, and is constantly reminded of what is right and proper in a stately home.

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Between the years of 1857 and 1859 George Fife Angas returned to Great Britain to talk about Sunday Schools to public meetings, to close down the last remnants of his family's coach-making business, and to meet and converse with old friends about the state of South Australia.[3] On his return to South Australia in September 1859 Angas was given a reception by his township of Angaston which enthralled the local newspaper correspondent, "Some hundreds of

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2. M. Girouard, Life in the English country House p. 280.

3. E. Hodder, George Fife Angas pp. 369-370.

people assembled and grouped themselves under the splendid trees which are picturesquely scattered throughout the pretty township, about fifty horsemen formed in procession, and spring carts and waggons brought up the rear."[4] The correspondent emphasised the portion of the ceremony which set Angas physically apart from the townspeople. Upon his entry into the grounds of Lindsay Park, "An address congratulating him on his safe return was presented, and great cheering took place when, having accompanied him to the gates of Lindsay Park, he drove away, through a triumphal arch of green boughs, flowers, and ribbons, to his long vacated home."[5] Within the cloisters of his estate Angas removed himself from the lives of the ordinary people of Angaston. Amidst the surroundings of his stately mansion, with its acres of intricately constructed gardens and orchards, the houses of its servants, and all the trappings that his prosperity allowed, Angas could seclude himself and muse on the beauty of God's grandeur.[6]

Lindsay Park was built around 1848-49 by Angas' son-in-law Henry Evans, whose position in the mansion was usurped when the family patriarch arrived in 1851.[7] It was Angas however, who gave the house and estate its manorial character. It was he who furnished the voluminous library and surrounded the rooms and hallway with mahogany furniture. The property became the expression of the pastoralist's view of the world, and his perception of where he stood in society. Angas' lifestyle was shared by his pastoralist

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4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid pp. 317-318.

7. The uncertainty of the exact date of construction stems from the lack of family documentation in this period. In G. French Angas, Description of the Barossa Range (1849), a very new Lindsay House is painted; hence, the speculated date.

neighbours.

Just as George Fife built his estate up in this grand manner, so his son John followed suit. After living at the small but elegant homestead of Tarrawatta for his bachelor years, John had Collingrove built, complete with its extended servants' quarters, coach houses and circular gardens, after the arrival of his wife from Great Britain.

In January 1857, Joseph Keynes too began to make an outward show of his increased prosperity. His North Rhine section, once the setting for a modest local timber and daubed mud cottage with burlap ceilings, received a group of builders whose instructions were to build a stone house with cedar panelling, architraves and skirtings. The house was initially to have six main rooms opening off a splendid passageway, six feet wide and the length of a cricket pitch. Joseph recorded this important event in his daily journal, "Began the new house today Bessy [his daughter] laid the foundation stone put under it a shilling sixpence four penny piece penny & halfpenny. Mr. Wishart wrote on a piece of paper Bessy's name stating that Bessy laid the foundation".[8] The children who were to inherit the estate which Keynes was founding ceremonially dedicated the symbol of their family's wealth.

At The Dustholes where Lachlan McBean established his brother Alexander, the small stone cottage more like a crofter's hut than their former dwelling in Scotland gave way to a new more spacious house. As Alexander and Margaret's family increased so the house grew to accommodate the numbers. No longer were rough walls sufficient. Plastered rooms with slated or wooden floors, covered

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8. J. Keynes, Account Book 4 p. 121, Daily Journal 5 January 1857 KFP.

with expensive carpets and cedar and mahogany furniture took the place of spartan living. In stark contrast Lachlan McBean at Woorooma, New South Wales took much longer to think about expanding the homestead. He seemed loathe to part with the money he made and while others dressed up their houses he bought properties around Australia preferring land to external grandeur.

George Melrose's first station on the South Rhine river was a well known spot on one of the roads from Adelaide to the Murray River. In 1858 Melrose left his old head station and built his new home 2 kilometres from Mount Pleasant.[9] The house and its surrounding buildings were constructed on a much grander scale than the previous abode. Rosebank, like Keynes' home, had an enormous central passage which ran into a series of warren like rooms. Each of these rooms was assigned a specific purpose in the day to day life of the house. One room for the women and their finery, another for the library and yet others for sitting rooms, studies and offices. The richness of the wood work in the architraves, and skirting boards and the highly polished furniture gave the interior of the house a grand appearance. Externally, the house was even more impressive. Two storied, it was built from local stone. The large dark stone blocks, interspaced with very wide windows and doorways and capped with a slate roof had a feel reminiscent of Scots manor houses. It was a structure built to impress both internally and externally.

In the decades after the houses were first built by the Angases, Keynes, Alexander McBean and Melrose the edifices took on a distinct character shared by them all. The estates these pastoralists laid

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9. G. Melrose's obituary, newspaper cuttings MFP.

out and administered indicated that they took their position as a landed gentry seriously, and had undertaken to live up to an ideal well expressed by the contemporary British architect Gilbert Scott,

> Providence has ordained the different orders and gradations into which the human family is divided, and it is right and necessary that it should be maintained...the position of landed proprietor, be he squire or nobleman, is one of dignity. He is the natural head of his parish or district - in which he should be looked up to as the bond of union between the classes. To him the poor man should look up for protection; those in doubt or difficulty for advice; the ill disposed for reproof or punishment; the deserving, of all classes, for consideration and hospitality; and all for a dignified, honourable and Christian example...He has been blessed with wealth, and he need not shrink from using it in its proper degree. He has been placed by Providence in a position or authority and dignity, and no false modesty should deter him from expressing this, quietly and gravely, in the character of his house. 10

All the dwellings shared common features which reflected the acquired tastes of their owners. Many of the elements of the houses' designs matched the ideas of British architects like Scott (1857) and Robert Kerr (1864) who sought to define a new standard of genteel housing.[11] Kerr, in his renowned work The Gentleman's House, stated that, "Primarily the House of an English gentleman is divided into two departments; namely, that of The FAMILY, and that of The SERVANTS."[12] He informed the reader that the "FAMILY DEPARTMENT" could be subdivided into a series of day rooms, sleeping rooms, children's rooms, the supplementaries and the thoroughfares. The servants' quarters were also subdivided into sections for the kitchen, laundry, bakery, cellars and stores, and

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10. Sir Gilbert Scott, quoted in M. Girouard, The Victorian Country House pp. 4-5.

11. G. G. Scott, Remarks on secular and architecture: present and future; R. Kerr, The Gentleman's House.

12. R. Kerr, op cit pp. 64-65.

servants' rooms.[13] The overall house design would hopefully exude, "Quiet comfort for ... family and guests, - Thorough convenience for ... domestics, - Elegance and importance without ostentation."[14]

All works on British genteel housing stressed the distinction between masters and servants. Kerr put it thus, "It becomes the foremost of maxims therefore, that the Servants' Department shall be separated from the main house, so that what passes either side of the boundary shall be both invisible and inaudible to each other."[15] Moreover, while the physical distance between masters and servants was increasing, so too was that between men and women. Amongst the day rooms Kerr wrote about were the drawing room, "A lady's apartment"; the library, "a sort of morning room for gentlemen"; and the "gentleman's room or Business room".[16] As their wealth increased the power of the British model proved nearly irresistible and a lordly mock gentility became the hallmark of pastoralists whose early horizons had seldom extended beyond country village or farm home.

As each of the great houses exemplified in many respects the concepts of architects like Kerr and Scott, each will be discussed in detail to show the divisions between family and servants, the division between male and female realms and the attempts to satisfy Kerr's criteria of "Quite comfort ... Thorough convenience ... [and] Elegance and importance without ostentation."

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13. Ibid.
14. Ibid p. 66.
15. Ibid p. 67.
16. Ibid pp. 107, 116, 121.

Although much of the original house plan for George Fife Angas' Lindsay House was lost in subsequent alterations in 1908 and the 1930s and 40s, enough remains to give a fair illustration of Angas' genteel pretensions. The servants' area was clearly set off from the family. All workmen were assigned to villas near the stables, 100 metres from the house. The house attendants were either assigned their rooms and living quarters on a separate floor of the house, or relegated to outside quarters. The kitchen, cellar, and food storage areas were removed from the main house across a narrow courtyard. The servants were therefore prevented from imposing on the family life and the kitchen positioned far enough away to guard against any possibility of what Kerr termed the odious "transmission of kitchen smells".[17]

Within the family section of the house the male and female domains were clearly demarcated. The billiard room was positioned, as Kerr recommended, adjacent to "the entrance end of the Principal corridor ... not exactly amongst the dwelling rooms, but still in close communication with them".[18] Likewise the library was separated from the female domain. The woman of the Angas family presided over the large drawing room with its grand piano and blackwood panelling. The drawing room's deep bay window also accorded with Kerr's designs and the room was used as he suggested, as the arena where, "the ladies receive calls throughout the day, and the family and their guests assemble before dinner".[19]

Lindsay House, although an impressive structure from the exterior, was not overly adorned internally. Its rooms were plainly,

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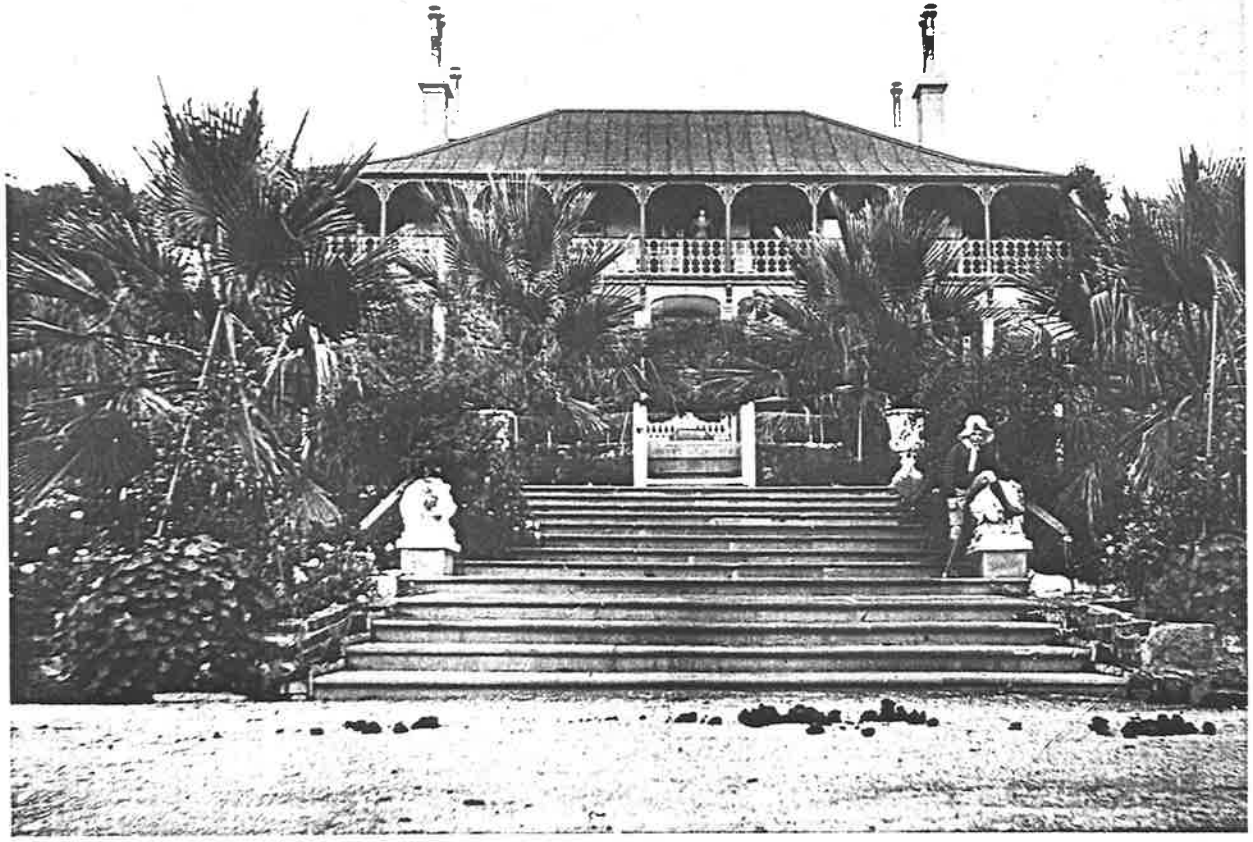
17. Ibid p. 210.

18. Ibid p. 120.

19. Ibid pp. 110, 107.



Lindsay House

George Fife Angas' mansion

but elegantly furnished and the overall atmosphere evoked Kerr's prescription of quiet comfort. Even the lodge at the main gates, as depicted in a George French Angas painting, fitted the overall plan of the estate; a majestic and well-ordered design.[20]

Angas not only kept the establishment at Lindsay Park but like the English gentry, maintained a town house. This, as Hirst has shown, was a practice shared by many other South Australian pastoralists.[21] His North Adelaide home was called Prospect Hall and stood next to two smaller Angas homes for the use of family and friends. These houses were equipped with the finest of china and silver dinner service, monogrammed with Angas' self-made crest. The crystal glasses sparkled in their cabinets and the well-polished furniture reflected a lifestyle well-above anything Angas had personally enjoyed in Britain.[22] The Angas entourage was shipped by the finest landaus replete with the magnificent carriage horses the family took much pride in breeding.

At both Angaston and Adelaide the Angas' homes were placed in positions physically superior to those of the majority of the population. From Lindsay Park Angas could survey his extensive holdings and almost overlook the tenant farmers, both German and British who held their land on lease from him. There were many in the Barossa who owed their allegiance to the Angases. An article in the Barossa News stated that Angas exerted a "powerful and beneficial influence upon the development" of the area; a statement which spoke to his being both a landlord and a philanthropist.[23]

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20. Painting included in; J. Tregenza, George French Angas p. 85.

21. J. Hirst, Adelaide and the Country pp. 37ff "A gentry in Adelaide"

22. The description of Angas' furniture is taken from family pieces in the possession of Mr. Henry Angas, Forfar, Meningie South Australia.

23. Barossa News, p.5 no date, from Mr. D. B. Evans, Ivanhoe, Keyneton South Australia.

In keeping with the same rural English traditions the Angases subsidised the building of local churches and chapels. Various protestant religious bodies in Angaston all received funding from Angas' philanthropy. The same newspaper article which spoke of the family's influence in the district also noted that John Angas "caught the same spirit of philanthropy as his father, and gave generously from his ample store for the furtherance of religious and charitable projects".[24] As an outward symbol of his faith too, John Angas built a chapel at Collingrove for the family and its retainers. Kerr the architect maintained that although rare in the mid-nineteen century, the chapel was included in the manor house for reasons of "traditional dignity".[25] Just as George Fife Angas and his son John shared thoughts about religion and philanthropy, so their houses and estates reflected similar ideas about how a gentry should give outward show to their position in society.

The design of the Collingrove homestead and outbuildings closely followed the advice of the British gentry architects. The divisions between the family and the workers were incorporated into the estate plan. At the house, the wing containing the kitchen, bakehouse, laundry and house servants was separated from the living areas. The main family rooms were spaced out around a wide L-shaped corridor, which gave each of these rooms a sense of individual privacy, and cut them off from the comings and goings of servants.

Collingrove was truly a home for gentry. It was a house for John Angas to live in and to entertain from; a place to relax and think through his business affairs. However, it was not a farmhouse. The farming and husbandry sides of the estate were placed 500 metres

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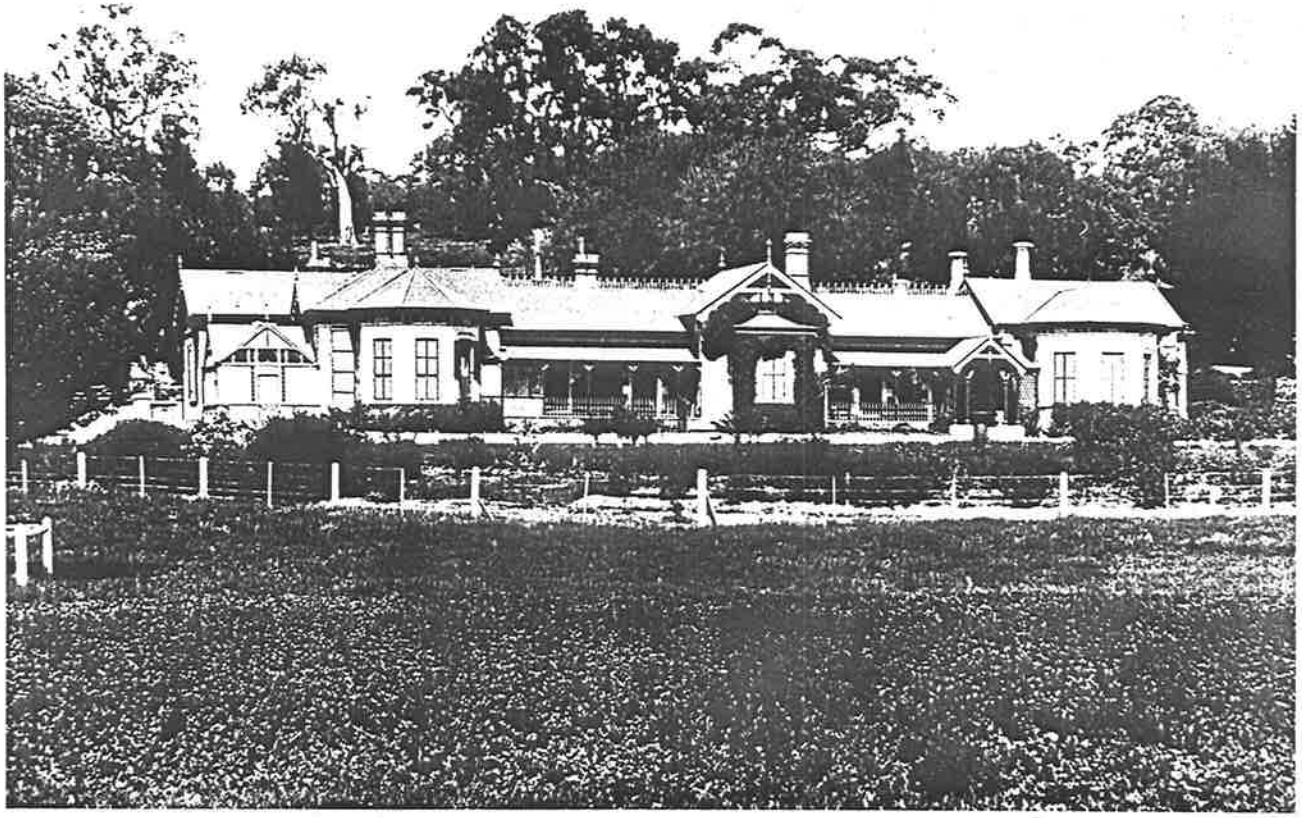
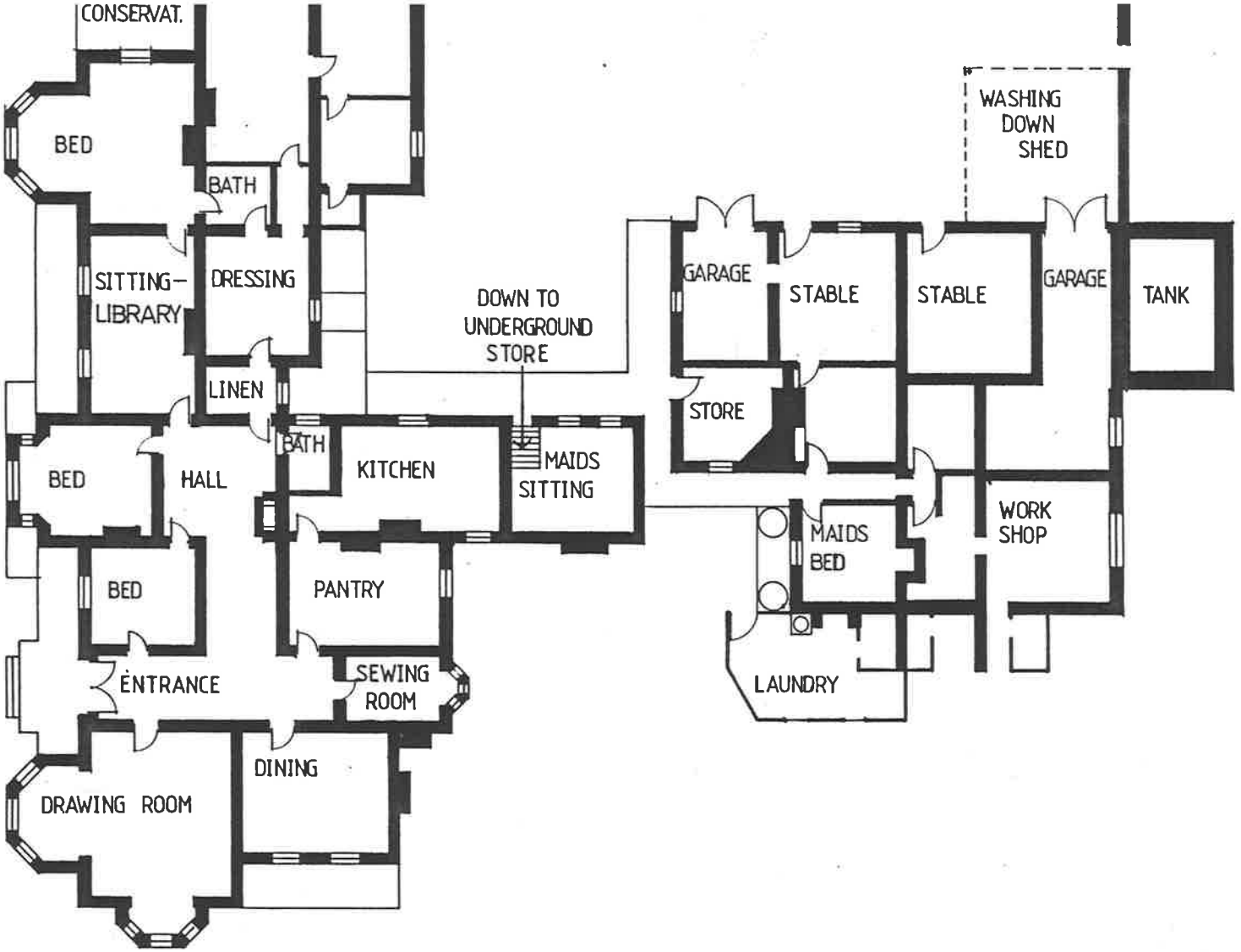
24. Ibid.

25. Kerr, op cit p. 193.



Collingrove

The centre of John Howard Angas' estate



"COLLINGROVE" HOMESTEAD ANGASTON Scale 1:200

away at Tarrawatta, his first home. Tarrawatta was the nerve centre for the farming of the estate. Clustered around the original four room settler's cottage was the village of workmen and their families. The division between servant and served, and the attempt to imitate the English rural gentry were most noticeable here. Robert Kerr maintained that a country gentleman who engaged in farming operations, "either for the amusement of his leisure or for pecuniary advantage", should above all things divide, as Angas had done, his own home from the farm.[26]

At Collingrove as at Lindsay Park the male domains of library and office were distinct from the drawing room and parlour. The ladies could also spend their time in the conservatory if they wished, watching the progress of the various hot-house plants. The interior design was again concerned with beauty without gaudiness and even the safari trophies of later generations have not been able to completely suppress the genteel spirit.

Ten kilometres to the east of Collingrove, Joseph Keynes had set up house in a way which mirrored the aspirations of his pastoral colleagues. The Keyneton homestead was built in three divisions. These divisions corresponded to the guiding ideas of English rural gentry architecture. The servants were set apart from the main living areas. The 'men's rooms' and 'bachelor's rooms' were housed in the wing which contained the stores and station office. The maids' room had a stout lock and its windows were fully barred to prevent any inopportune mingling with the opposite sex. The only other room in the house to receive this treatment was the wine store.

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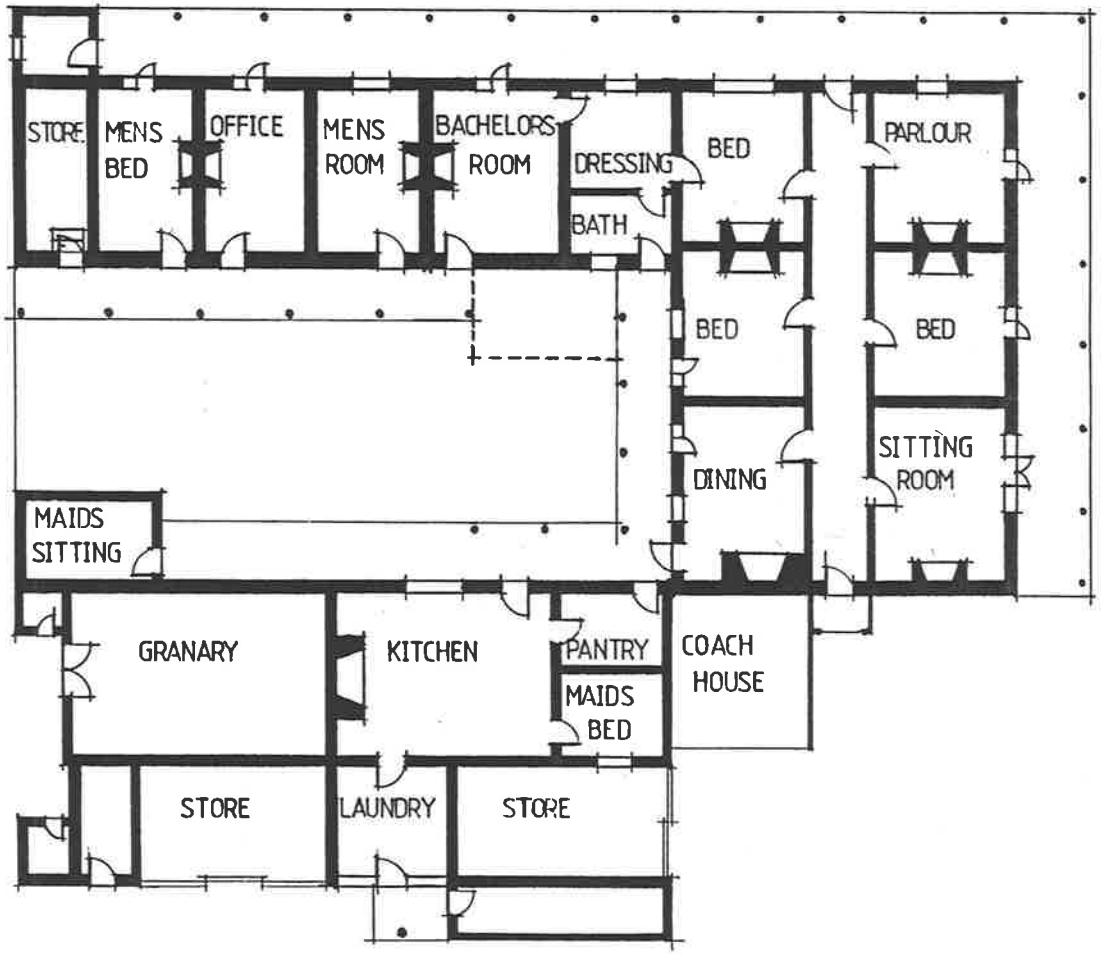
26. Ibid p. 272.

The stately proportions of Joseph Keynes', Keyneton Station homestead



"KEYNETON" HOMESTEAD KEYNETON Scale 1:200

The confined area of the maids' room led into the pantry and large kitchen. The kitchen in turn opened onto a verandah which housed at one end a servants' sitting room and at the other a door which led into the family dining room. The life of the staff was kept as separate as possible from the life of the family. This wing of the house also contained the grain-store and cellar and was in keeping with genteel architectural notions. Kerr denominated this section of the house as the "domestic offices", explaining that while, "the Family Apartments have to be contrived for residence", "Offices [are] for work".[27]

Just as the servants were provided with a secluded area where they could efficiently perform their work so, Kerr explained, "the privilege of the family" was "Privacy" in their selected "place of ... seclusion".[28] At Keyneton the family wing bore all the marks of this privacy and also reflected the need to separate the territory of ladies and gentlemen. In the parlour the ladies could sit in comfortable cedar chairs and read the latest numbers of The London Illustrated News. The station office though, was where Joseph Keynes spent much of his time secluded from the other family members, writing out accounts, reading his correspondence and manufacturing his own replies.[29]

The main rooms of the house were adorned with the luxuries which Joseph Keynes and his wife considered necessary for the house of a man pre-eminent in his local community: cedar tables, hand-carved colonial chairs, the 'best colonial sofa', washstands, toilet tables,

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27. Ibid p. 198.

28. Ibid p. 199.

29. J. Keynes, Daily journal, numerous entries over many years speak of time spent at office work. KFP.

swing glasses and cedar bedsteads.[30] The formidable hallway tiled with the best French ceramics, gave the Keyneton Estate a noble air. It became the scene of local banquets where, "the Pastoral and other Interests, and Jos. Keynes Esq." were toasted by, "numerous gentlemen of the vicinity".[31]

Joseph Keynes attempted as best he could to adjust his mental outlook to fit his new position. When he rode to Truro at Angas' request to join in a dinner given for Angas' tenants he found, "the company rather low".[32] At home he acted out the paternalistic role of squire and tried to form the life-patterns of his employees by getting them to prayers, church, tea-meetings and temperance lectures. He also recorded in his diary that his servants were expected to follow the moral line of his respectability, "William Smith dismissed for acting very improperly on Saturday night. Him & Luke made the two girls drunk & did worse. Margaret jumped in the Rhine 3 times & said she was ruined. I think she is no good."[33]

For all his attempts to play the squire Keynes was faced with the contradiction between his present position and the teachings of his British youth. He was now numbered amongst the privileged classes which his own father decried. Similarly, he was showing the trappings of his prosperity which his uncle John said was "a state of danger".[34] Keynes had been brought up to offset the disadvantages of his lowly material condition with the stern, drab

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30. J. Keynes, Account Book, 1 October 1857 KFP.

31. Register, 26 June 1861.

32. J. Keynes, Daily journal, 18 May 1864 KFP.

33. Ibid, 2 October 1860.

34. R. Keynes to J. Keynes, 3 September 1851 KFP.
J. A. James, the Christian professor pp. 254-255.

comforts of puritanical religion. He was now trying to preserve that religion amongst the grand surroundings and appurtenances of pastoral wealth.

In 1869 Keynes' neighbour Alexander McBean stopped marking his letters, The Dustholes, and renamed the property Baldoon.[35] Imported from the area of his upbringing in the Scottish highlands the name symbolised the movement from a rough settlement to an established abode. 'Bal' was the gaelic word for a small organised township and 'don' a corruption of the word for brown. The property's occupants had also outgrown the unrefined days of pioneer necessity. The young family happily posed for a visiting photographer in different views of the homestead. As if to emphasise the demarcations on the estate the photographs were taken to clearly emphasise the family division from the retainers. The men, women and children of the family appeared in expensive costumes which closely resembled the dress they saw in their library's copies of London Society. The children's governess, although in a fine white dress, stood apart from the family members who were all dressed in the same dark-toned clothes. Further behind the main group on the house verandah stood a maid with a young child. To the right of the central family figures, the two sons appeared in well-cut suits, their heads adorned with bowlers. In stark contrast to the superior dress of the family two workmen are shown on the far left of the photograph leaning on their tools of trade. The second photograph showed the family near their handsome buggy, still dressed in their rich finery, a picture of success.

The house too, mirrored the family's success. The design of

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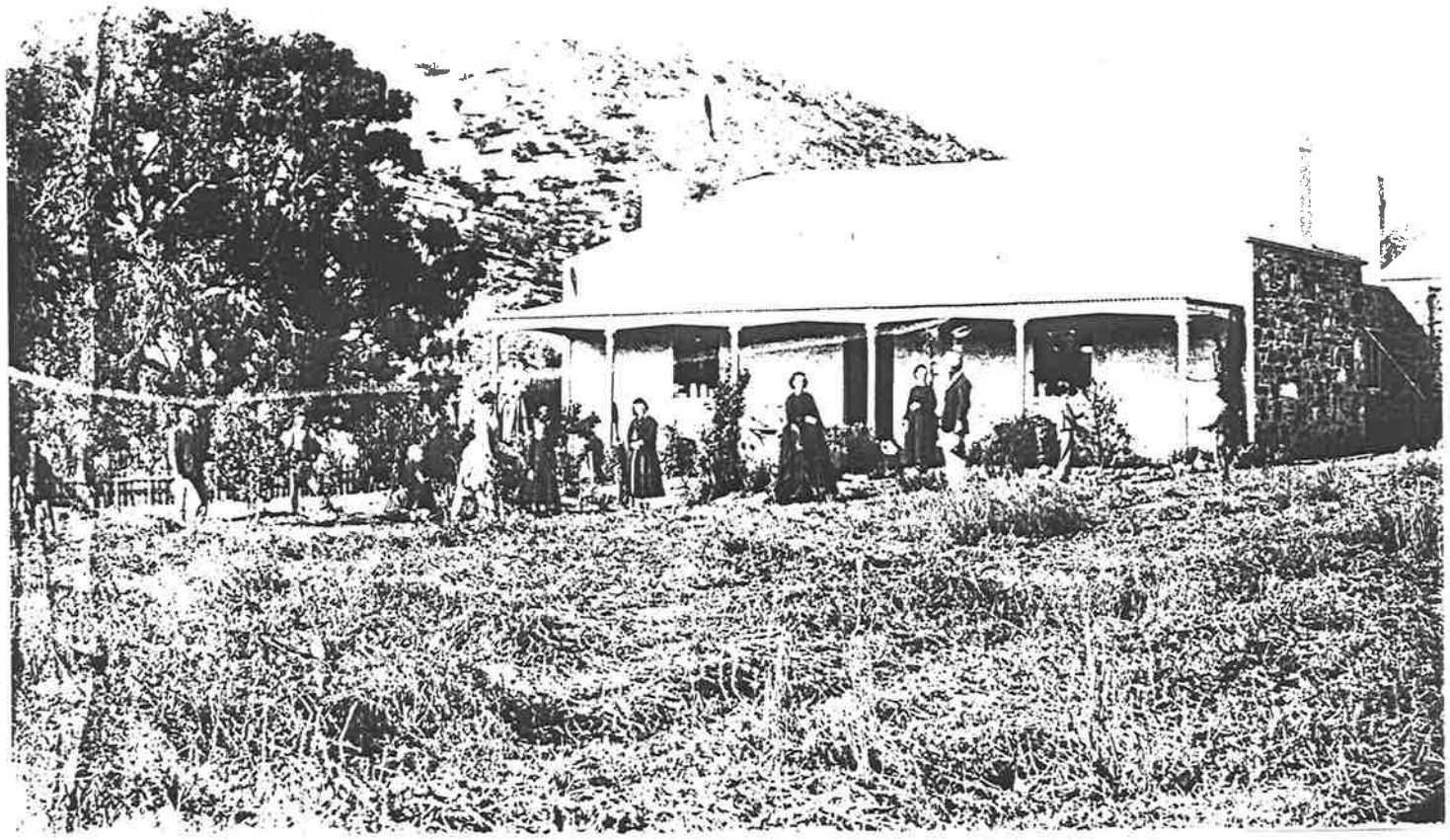
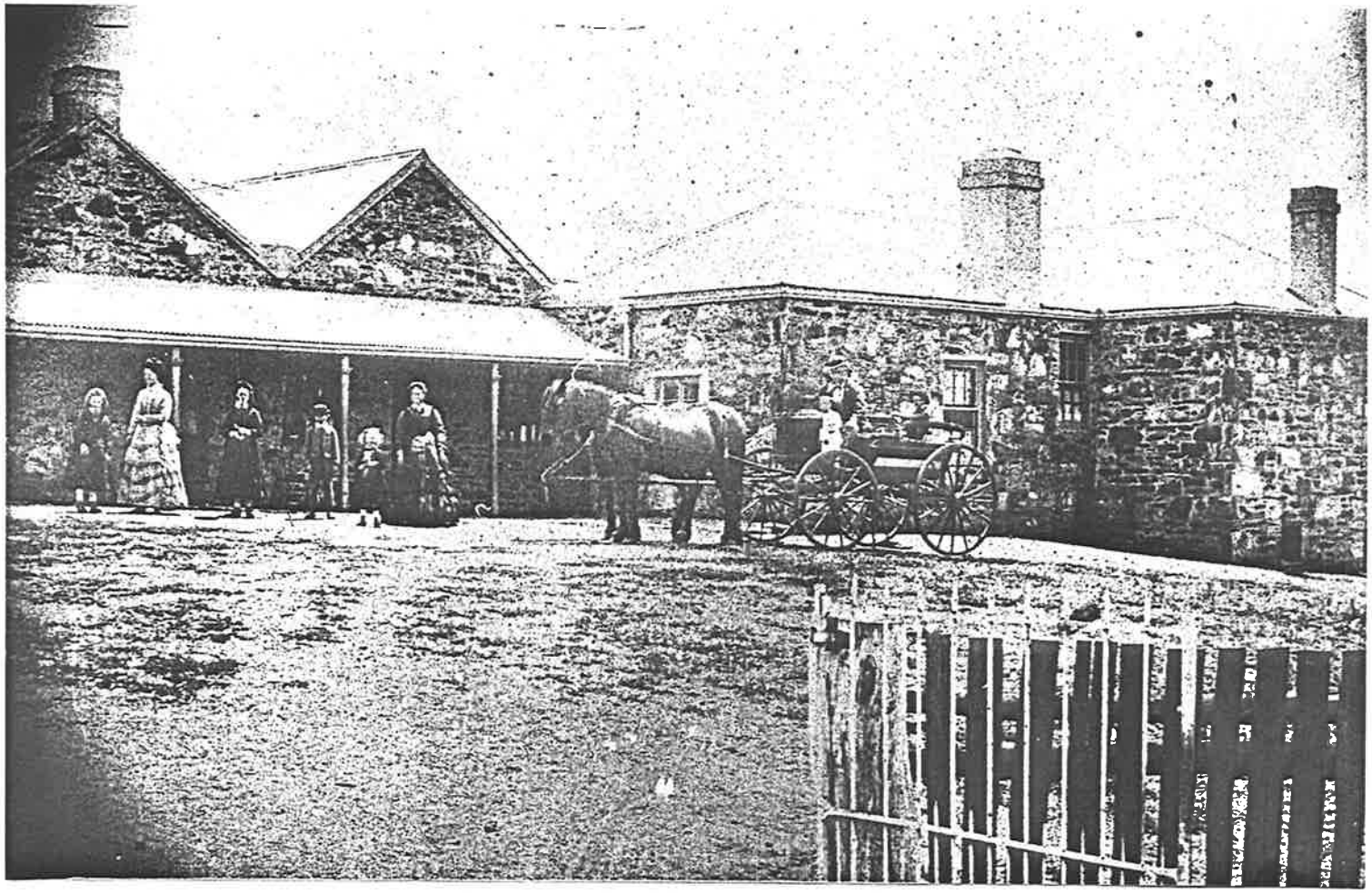
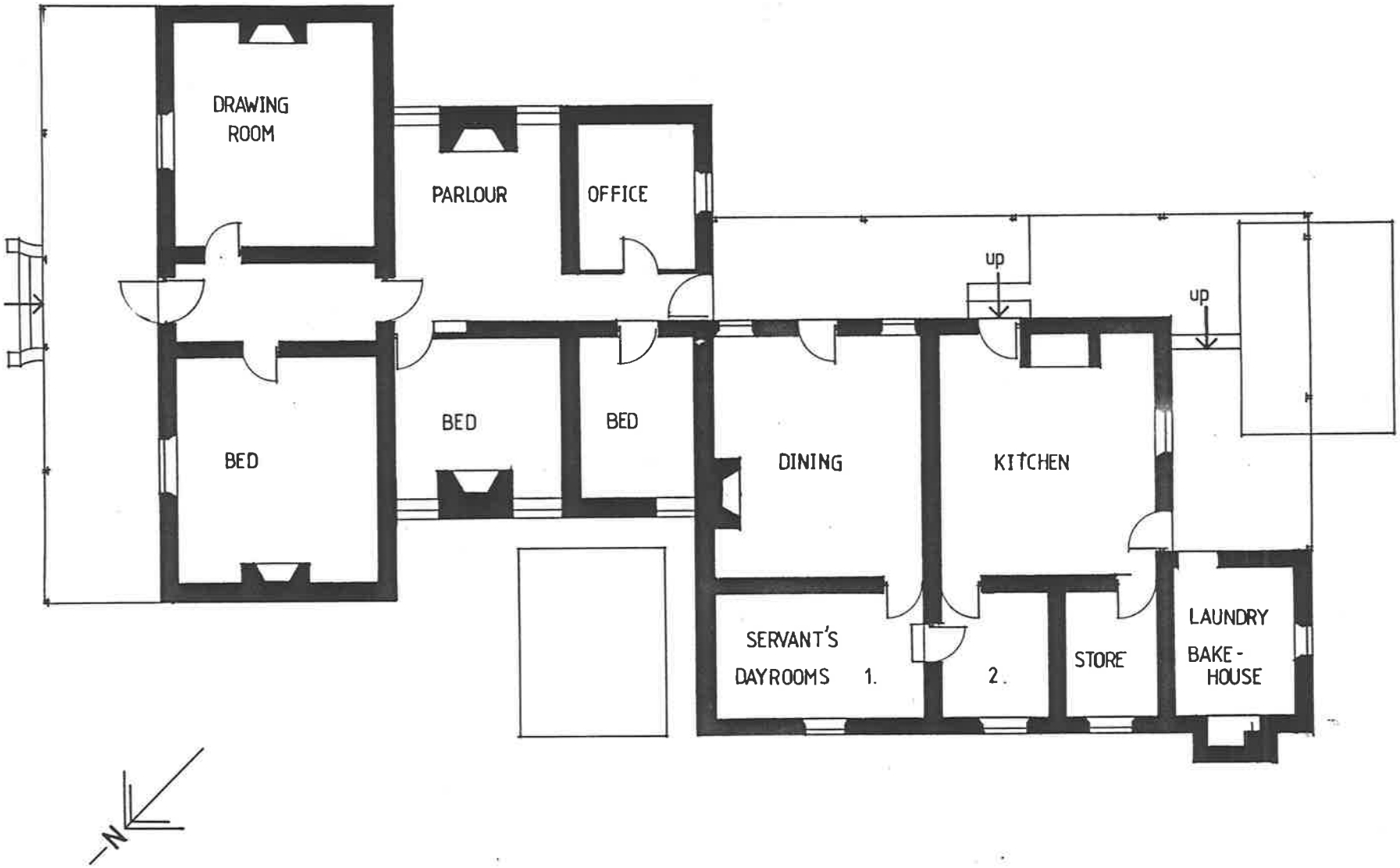
35. A. McBean to Surveyor General, 21 July 1869, SAA GRG 35/2. The property was simplified to Baldon.



Baldon, the McBean homestead
from which the estate grew and grew
from left to right: retainers, maid, governess and children, parents, children



Baldon, the McBean homestead
A rearview of mushrooming grandeur.
The McBean family and its governess



"BALDON" HOMESTEAD - TRURO, SOUTH AUST. Scale 1 : 100

the homestead split it into two separate portions interconnected by a verandah. The servants used the section housing the laundry-bakehouse, kitchen, pantry, and maids' rooms. For ease of access the dining room was positioned in this division of the house but its appearance was markedly different from the servants' rooms. The fireplace was surrounded by magnificent cedar shelving and panelling and the servants could be easily summoned by ringing a bell-pull on the mantelpiece. The servants' bedrooms were separated by some twenty metres from the house, rather pokey quarters constituting a world of their own.

The second section of the Baldon homestead contained the family rooms. Like the other pastoralists the male and female domains were noticeably divided. A front drawing room and interior parlour housed the ladies and their entertainments of pianos, poetry and sewing. The office belonged to Alexander McBean and was filled with the musty smells of sealskin bound account books, housed in a deep sea-chest. This room's very sparseness was in contrast to the rich walnut, mahogany and cedar furniture of the other family rooms. The furniture, much of it hand-crafted by German tradesmen, and silver ware and monogrammed cutlery stood in stark contrast to the dusty scrub of the Murray Flats which surrounded the building. These flats held the McBeans' tenant farmers, mainly Germans, eking out a precarious living year after year in an area which experienced a drought in one out of three years.

While Baldon was taking on gracious airs under the hand of Alexander McBean, Lachlan McBean's head station of Woorooma in the New South Wales Riverina continued to be known as a 'working

property'.[36] Rather than extending a building, Lachlan contented himself with a small house little more than a hut. It was not until 1871 that the local Deniliquin paper recorded, "The confidence in the future of this district must be very great in the mind of so shrewd a man as Mr. McBean who is building a dwelling house at Woorooma, which will eclipse for room and style any known squattage in the Riverina, and probably cannot be equalled in Victoria."[37] This prophecy of the glories of McBean's bachelor residence was not fulfilled.

Although Lachlan McBean continued to have little use for finery and outward show at the centre of his operations the Melroses in the Barossa Ranges chose otherwise. The internal and external structure of their two storied mansion accorded well with Kerr's vision of housing for the rural gentry. The servants were assigned rooms at the back of the house adjacent to their work quarters in the kitchen, laundry and bakehouse. The hallways leading to the family rooms from the servants quarters were barred and doored where one domain finished and the other started.

Within the family rooms the divisions between gentlemen and ladies were as obvious as those between masters and servants. The library and office with their rows of books, letter-books, ledgers and practical guides to animal husbandry were of a very different nature to the parlour and drawing rooms. A photograph of the parlour showed the room full of ornamentation, grand chairs, lace, gilt-framed paintings and even a kentia palm. Women decided the comings and goings in atmospheres like these at the Melrose home. The

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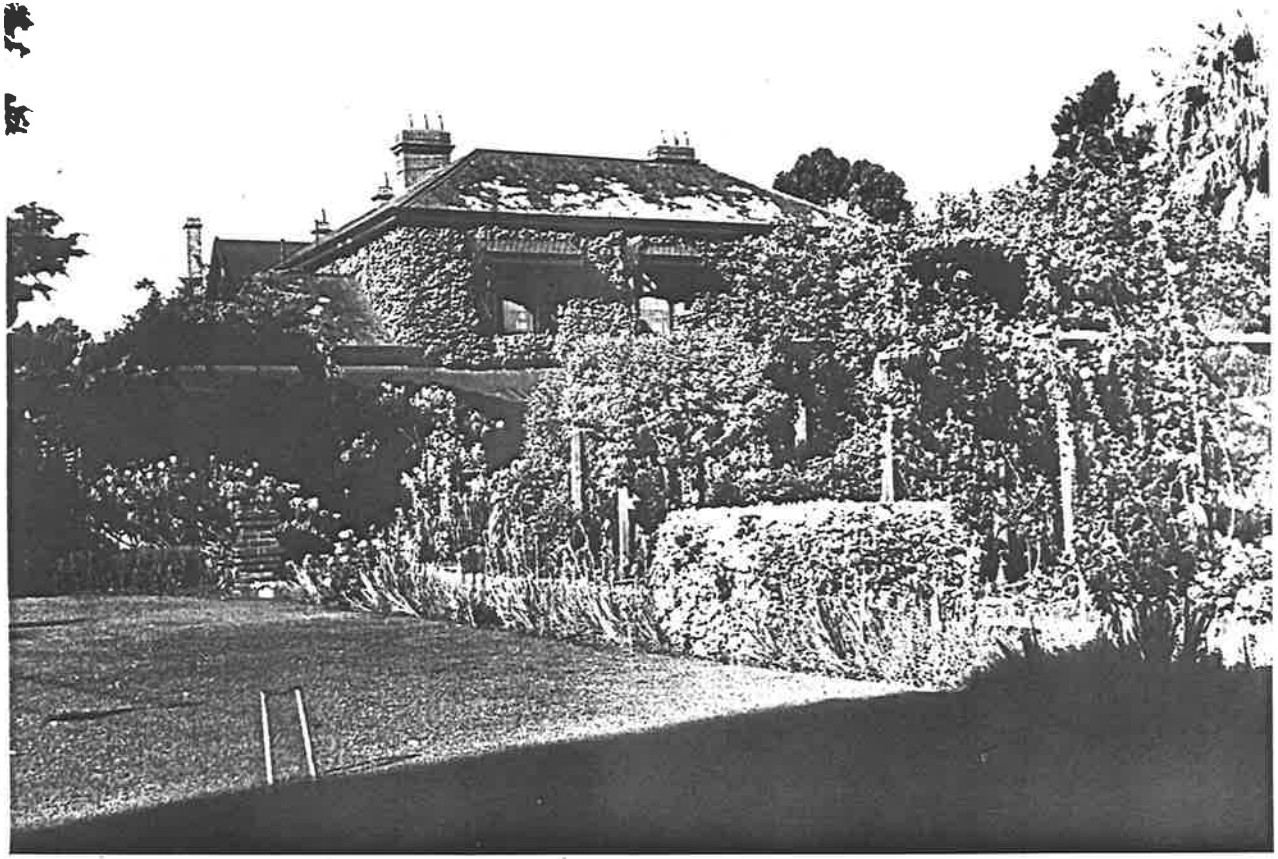
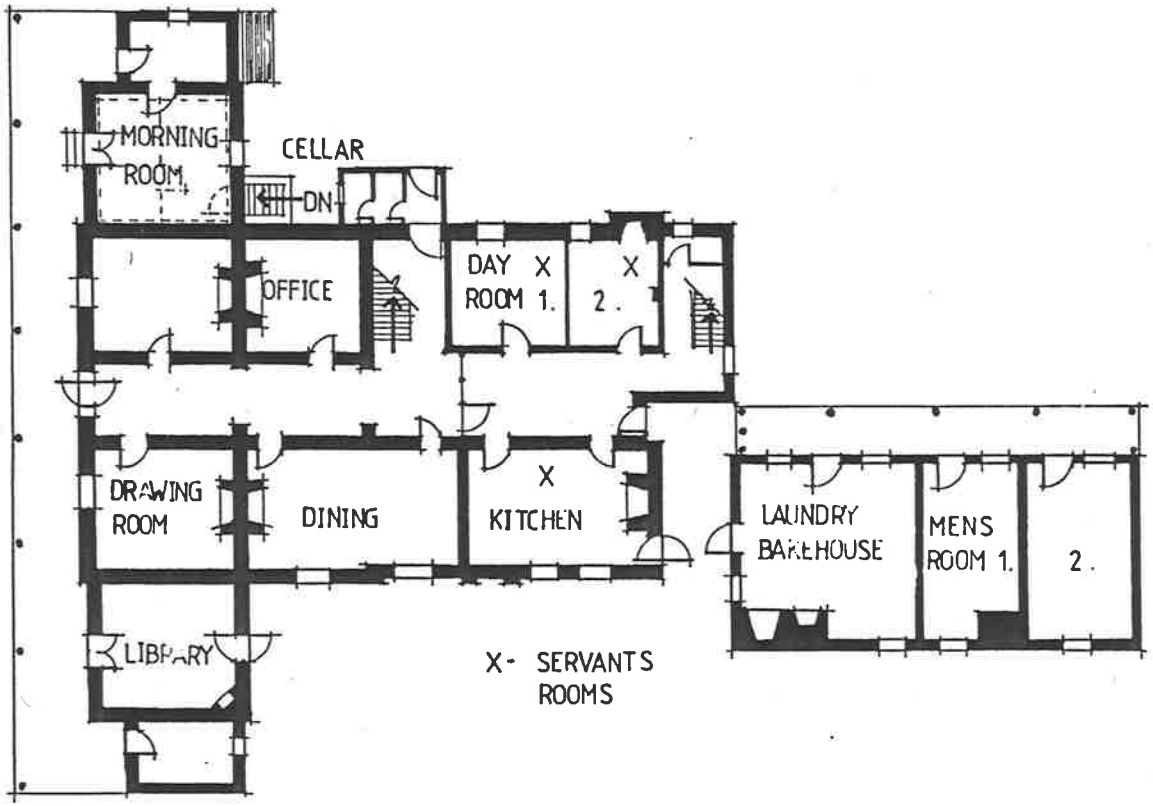
36. Oral interview with Mr. W. J. Kilpatrick, Bimbella, Deniliquin, October 1979.

37. Pastoral Times, 4 February 1871.



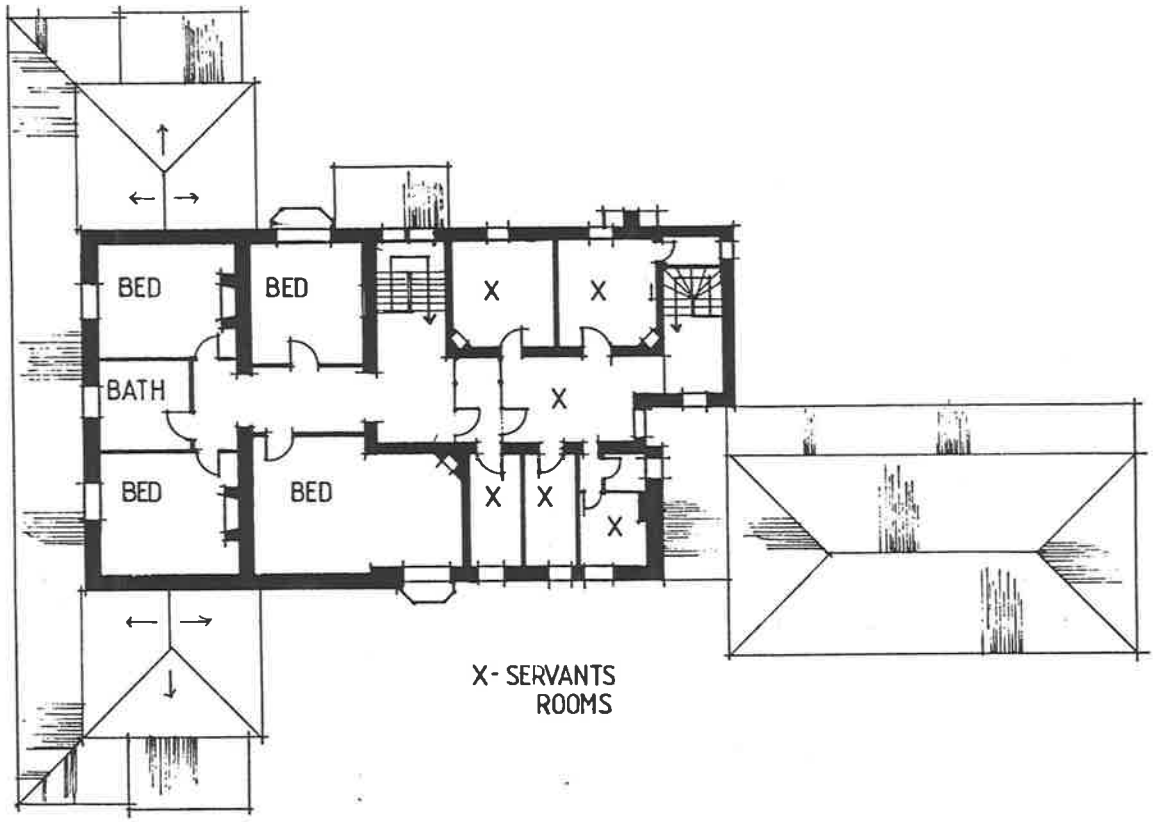
The extravagant garden and splendour of George Melrose's, Rosebank homestead



GROUND FLOOR

"ROSEBANK" HOMESTEAD - MT. PLEASANT

Scale 1 : 200



FIRST FLOOR

"ROSEBANK" HOMESTEAD MT. PLEASANT Scale 1:200

elegance of the interior and exterior design of the house, the division of master and servant, and the separation of men's and women's lives closely followed the doctrines espoused by the gentry architects in Britain.

Around the Melrose property the South Australian station was set out much like an English estate. The house was surrounded, at a comfortable distance, by the coach houses, stables, men's quarters and wool shed. Further removed, a variety of tenant farmers paid their dues to Rosebank. The picture of Rosebank as a landed estate was further enhanced by the close proximity of Mount Pleasant, a thriving country town which acknowledged the Melroses as its principal family. When the Totness steam flour mill was opened in 1863 the dinner commemorating the event was presided over by George Melrose J.P.. He listened to a speaker who told of the town's and district's improvement and the need to "secure and extend its progress" and to notice that, "the world was advancing around them".[38]

The picture which all of our pastoralists, save Lachlan McBean, strove to present to the world was of a divinely ordained landed gentry. It did not appear incongruous to them that cheering tenants tugging forlocks should hail their entrances into their domains. But it was inevitable that less fortunate neighbours and city folk should challenge their right to social pre-eminence. Despite their manors and tied villages, they were in background, education and religion more or less indistinguishable from other white South Australians. Try as they would they could never play

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38. Register, 20 April 1863.

their parts with the tranquil assurance of families born to the manor. Their consciences were occasionally unsettled in their new surroundings, and they faced continuous hostility from other social classes who denied the very idea of a ruling pastoral aristocracy.

CHAPTER SIX

THE COUNTRY GENTLEMAN IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE

On the 1 September 1863 a sarcastic letter to the editor appeared in the Register. Entitled, 'A Squatter's Ball', the article ridiculed the 150 men in South Australia who owned over 3 million sheep and ran the colony, or at least wanted to run it. The writer asked what these pastoralists did to earn their prestige, "Do they squat in the country all year round? When they come to town, where do they go to? Cannot something be done to bring them together - to parade them for inspection - to let us see our squirearchy - to let us see if they be fit representatives of the patriarchs of old?"[1] The sarcastic questioning seemed valid to many South Australians. They too had come from the lower-middle class that these pretenders to power emerged from. They knew what a gentry was and how it ought to behave. How did the new pastoralist gentry of South Australia react when their self-made authority was questioned?

The pastoralists' position was threatened on two fronts; the public arena where non-pastoral men of political and social influence sought to downgrade or qualify these affluent pretenders, and the home estate where retainers, labourers and itinerant workmen sometimes affronted the respectable veneer of pastoral life.

Since the early 1850s Adelaide newspapers had carried occasional articles condemning the ease with which colonial governments granted privileges to large landowners. Most of these men of property like Angas, Keynes, McBean and Melrose, held both freehold and leasehold land from the Crown. The terms pastoralist and squatter became

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1. Register, 1 September 1863.

interchangeable in South Australia. Whatever the name, the entitlement of this group to a privileged position in society was widely challenged. Robert Harrison wrote that the squatters held little claim to their high rank in South Australia. These men had merely gathered money from wool, sheep and cattle at an advantageous time, "and the former shepherd whose tastes and propensities were a little elevated above those of the cattle he was tending, found himself one of the Aristocratic class, and if ambitious might aspire to become an 'Honourable' by Act of Parliament".[2]

Joseph Keynes' brother William felt that the pastoralists' just cause deserved public recognition. He felt that the decrying of the pastoralists meant that they were seen as, "an exclusive class enjoying privileges and immunities at the expense of other colonists, or as a body they had perpetrated or attempted some political outrage against the people".[3] William Keynes and his pastoralist colleagues argued their case on three grounds in the wordy debate which followed the publication of William's letter in an Adelaide newspaper.

Firstly, his public plea admitted that the pastoralists came from the same background as the rest of the population. The principal difference between the "so-called monopolists of South Australia" and the rest was that they had taken their belief in self-improvement seriously and with, "no ordinary amount of energy and enterprise ... embark[ed] on pastoral pursuits". These men, Keynes argued, earnt their position because they had incurred, "a banishment from all the comforts of civilized life and the enjoyments

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2. R. Harrison, Colonial Sketches p. 77.

3. Register, 22 April 1857.

of social intercourse", to pioneer South Australia.[4] This idea of Keynes was further argued in the South Australian parliament by Thomas Strangways, a land reform pioneer, who contended that pastoralists were entitled to special privileges because "It was their part to prepare the interior for the habitation of civilized man, and if we did anything to restrain them we would check the progress of the colony".[5] That is to say, the Australian gentry attempted to argue their case not on the ground of hereditary or divine right but in terms of the lower-middle class, self-help idealism which so many of their less fortunate contemporaries would readily understand.

Secondly, despite the physical evidence of mansions, estates and servants, Keynes insisted that the pastoralists were, "not an exclusive class".[6] The route they had followed was still open. He believed that if the government and public were more open-minded towards the pastoralists that others would be given the chance to rise to the top of society. Keynes stated that, "increased facilities [should] be given for the extension of the pastoral interest, in order that our young and enterprising men of all classes may have a profitable sphere of exertion opened up to them, and make productive that great area of wasteland yet remaining in South Australia."[7] The pastoralists could not argue for their privilege on the ground of hereditary right. Their circumstances and, more important, their modes of thought decreed that their privileges must be defended on Liberal rather than Tory principles. The pastoralists urged the

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4. Ibid.

5. S.A.P.D. 30 September 1858 Col. 698 quoted in, K. R. Bowes, Land settlement in South Australia 1857-1890 p. 119.

6. Register, 12 May 1857.

7. Ibid, 30 April 1857.

less fortunate to persevere at their task and to gain the rewards of self-improvement.

Thirdly, Keynes concluded his essay by pointing to the history and progress, not of the English aristocracy, but of English commerce and stating that if it had not been patronised then Britain would have failed. "And thus was the germ of England's greatness unconsciously sown ... Australia promises to be the England of the southern hemisphere, if her resources are developed and her pastoral industry fostered."[8] If South Australia was to progress those at the top, like the pastoralists, would have to be given "encouragement and protection" by the rest of society.[9] The pastoralists' argument was summed up in the words of James Collier, a later writer on pastoralism, who claimed that,

> All else ... has grown out of this root. The goldfields, and all the transformations they wrought are only an episode in comparison, tending to aggrandise the pastoral and central life of the Australian communities. Other interests rise up by the side of it, its nurslings, like the mechanical industries, or spring up out of it by natural growth, as agriculture and horticulture; but, at the heart of everything the pastoral interest remains ... destined to an unlimited duration. 10

Those who tried to dismiss the pastoralists' pretensions would have to combat them on the ground of social utility.

There were many South Australians who knew very well that self-improvement did not work in all cases. They openly criticised both Keynes and his colleagues on this point, on their claim that they were not an exclusive class, and on their final argument that they should be given increased encouragement and protection for the good of all South Australians.

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8. Ibid, 12 May 1857.

9. Ibid.

10. J. Collier, The pastoral age in Australia p. 5.

In reply to Keynes' assertion that the industry and exertions of the pastoralists created both the basis of their wealth and therefore the colony's, one writer claimed that Keynes had, "let the cat out of the bag".[11] This writer used the same statistics as Keynes to show that in agriculture the chances of self-improvement were far greater than in pastoralism. He asked, "How many [raise themselves] to ownership of flocks? We fear very few. Then can any man who is in favour of the great principle of 'the greatest good for the greatest number' accept Mr. Keynes' long tirade against the interests of men, and in favour of the interests of the wool-grower as anything but a display of selfishness?"[12] Even if due credit were accorded to them as industrious pioneers, a sizeable portion of South Australian people were determined that they should not be treated with the deference accorded to the hereditary landed gentry of England.

As another correspondent to the Register pointed out, neither would the public believe that the pastoralists were not an exclusive, favoured class. This "OBSERVER" opened by saying, "It would have been as well for the pastoral interest if Mr. William Keynes had found some other employment for his leisure hours besides that of drawing comparisons between it and other sources of colonial industry, for he has thereby done more to expose the unwarranted superior advantages it possesses over others than perhaps its most decided opponents could have effected."[13] Furthermore, he noted that others besides pastoralists underwent the rigours of pioneering and that much of the pastoralists' success and societal pre-eminence lay "in the bountiful hand of Nature" rather than any merit of their

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11. Register, 1 May 1857.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid, 6 May 1857.

own. This writer concluded with an ominous warning that, "They cannot expect to be left as they are".[14] The pastoralists' pretensions to constitute a gentry were under threat.

Some rejected Keynes' call for encouragement to the pastoral industry by saying that the squatters were already too highly favoured, and that Keynes' was "blinded by prejudice or self-interest".[15] Others tried lengthy comparisons between the farmers and the pastoralists and came to the conclusion that the prosperity of the latter was "immeasurably great ... as compared with the agricultural".[16] Overall the public response showed that the majority of South Australians would not meekly accept the pastoralists' pretensions. They were unwilling to believe that these men whose wealth was derived from good fortune more than good management should be allowed to maintain their highly favoured position in society. These men like Angas, Keynes, McBean and Melrose came from similar social origins and although they took on the trappings of a gentry they still bore unmistakable marks of their lowly origins.

Melrose and the McBeans for example were incurably poor spellers. In one of Alexander McBean's letters to the Surveyor General there were 37 spelling errors and a host of grammatical mistakes.[17] Lachlan's epistles fared little better and he wrote to the Surveyor General about "the land waisted" on unnecessary roads and at another time asked an official to "recosidr" his actions.[18] George Melrose

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14. Ibid.

15. Ibid, 30 April 1857.

16. Ibid, 6 May 1857.

17. A. McBean to Surveyor General, 3 June 1869, SAA GRG 35/2.

18. L. McBean to Surveyor General, 5 January 1857, SAA GRG 35/1 No. 8. 1857 and L. McBean to Surveyor General, 12 July 1856, SAA GRG 35/2.

was even more incompetent in English usage than the McBeans and his letterbooks are strewn with errors. In one note he sought to "assertain when Mr. Young will take deliverey" of stock, whilst in a letter to the clerk of the local council he sought a receipt for the "purchas money" of some land.[19] These are not isolated examples.

The pastoralists' lowly origins evinced themselves in other ways. A woman who had visited Lachlan McBean in Melbourne described the wealthy landowner "mending his own trousers". McBean's thrift was renowned. The residents of his local town, most of which he owned, knew him as the local butcher and carter as well as their landlord, and if he could save money by walking 120 or 140 kilometres to conduct business he would do so.[20] For all Joseph Keynes' attempts to act out what he thought was expected of a gentry he still fuddled along weighed down by the burden of his upbringing. His religious tastes were still those of the lower-middle class, and each week at chapel he took in the content of the sermon and then returned home to write his views on it in his diary. One particular preacher was, "the best ... I have heard since I have been in the colony" while another was described as being, "a shingle short".[21] Angas too, behind the safe walls of his estate could write in contradistinction to his own position, "Let a man's income be what it may, he acts most like a Christian who avoids display of any kind, and 'lets his moderation be known to all men'."[22] These men had every reason to feel uneasy when their claim to gentility and

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19. G. Melrose to W. Dean & Son, 10 October 1883; G. Melrose to H. A. Fiebiger, 2 January 1881 MFP.

20. The Age, 24 February 1863; The Pastoral Times, 15 October 1887; plaque situated in Moulamein, New South Wales, park on the Edward River; Founders of Australia p. 2.

21. J. Keynes, Daily Journal, 6 September 1858, 18 June 1865 KFP.

22. E. Hodder, George Fife Angas pp. 418-419.

societal pre-eminence was questioned.

On a personal level Angas, Keynes, McBean and Melrose responded to the mounting criticism of their privileged position by moving their interests away from Crown leases, buying land freehold and securing it from legislative interference by outsiders. Moreover they banded together at times to procure larger tracts of land or to hold out against the demands of labour on a united front. The rush to purchase land freehold led Lachlan McBean into conflict with the law when he was caught 'dummying' at government land sales. This notorious practice of substituting younger relations or workmen and their families to gain more land and satisfy the residential qualifications was commonplace amongst pastoralists including John Angas.[23] A map of McBean's Woorooma run, which included the land he purchased on an adjacent property Windouran, clearly showed how he bought all the property along the waterfront sections.[24] By doing this McBean made all the surrounding property worthless through lack of water and could therefore gain possession of it at a minimal rent.

On occasion the Barossa Range pastoralists organised other ways of beating the system. Joseph Keynes recorded in his diary, "Mr. Angas called this morning I arranged with him respecting section No. 94 on the Red Creek and shall not bid for it this afternoon".[25] In September 1866 Keynes met with Angas' bailiff William Clark, George Melrose, and another neighbour John Murray

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23. E. Williams, A way of life p. 105.

24. This map is in the possession of Mr. W. J. Kilpatrick, Bimbella, Deniliquin. Its copying was refused.

25. J. Keynes, Daily Journal, 15 March 1858 KFP.

"to arrange about the land ... in the North Rhine Hundred".[26] The outcome of the land sale caused Keynes to comment, "I got on better than I expected, secured 1000 acres at 22s. an acre".[27] If the other pastoralists fared as well, few new settlers would have invaded their Barossa Range land. At other times the pastoralists arranged with an Adelaide land agent, P. D. Prankerd, to buy their land and in turn they would purchase it from him with a large commission attached.[28]

In 1869 the South Australian government passed Strangways' land act in an attempt to secure land for a larger number of agriculturists and break the pastoral stranglehold. This Act permitted land to be sold on credit as well as for cash. A condition of the sale was that the purchaser had to reside on the land and make improvements at the value of 12/6 per acre. Further, as Epps points out, "The Government was empowered to proclaim certain blocks as agricultural areas, in which land could be purchased on credit only, in areas of not more than 640 acres."[29]

The pastoralists had feared this type of legislation. Only a year before the Act's inception A. B. Murray, another wealthy pastoralist and friend of John Angas and Melrose, wrote to Angas about the necessity for quick action, "the time has come when the producer (to whom the colony belongs) should step in and take the management of public affairs".[30] Keynes' lawyer H. W. Parker felt

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26. Ibid, 19 September 1866.
27. Ibid, 20 September 1866.
28. Ibid, 21 September 1866.
29. W. Epps, Land systems of Australasia p. 120.
30. A. B. Murray to J. H. Angas, 4 March 1868 SAA PRG 259.

that the legislation was ludicrous and that in trying to put small farmers on the land, "The Government set aside all the rules of political economy in dealing with land & will fail to make farmers of men who have neither capital or credit."[31] Keynes would have agreed with this assertion and he noted in his diary that the new regulations would "be injurious to the colony".[32] As Murray had said the colony belonged to the pastoralists and should remain that way.

When the pastoralists were challenged in their social pretensions and economic power, they reacted somewhat schizophrenically. They responded to challenges from outside by appealing to the doctrine of self-help, stressing their solidarity with ordinary people. On their own estates, however, they attempted to behave like a hereditary ruling class. Different elements in their training could be used to support each mode of behaviour.

The way the pastoralists tried to order relations with employees on their estates showed another side to their justification for the division of the world between the haves and the have nots. As we have seen, teachings and readings thrust upon these men in their youth stressed that men were placed in their position by the God who ordered the universe. Although this system had denied them access to the top level of society in Britain, now they had reached a pinnacle in another land the words of the hymnist seemed particularly apt as a justification of their position,

> The rich man in his castle
> the poor man at his gate
> God made them high or lowly
> and ordered their estate. 33

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31. H. W. Parker to J. Keynes, 3 May 1871 KFP.

32. J. Keynes, Daily Journal, 7 September 1870 KFP.

33. Hymns Ancient and Modern, No. 573.

Similarly in books they read, Blair's sermons for example, it was argued that if a man knew God and Christian doctrine he would know, "good government amongst men ... [which] inculcates the duty of subordination to lawful superiors".[34] Further, in a much-marked book of Alexander McBean's which described the history of the home of his youth, a leader of men and the head of the clan was described as,

> The Honest Man, whom Virtue sways,
> His God adores, his King obeys;
> Does factious men's rebellious pride
> And threat'ning Tyrants' rage deride;
> Honour's his Wealth, his Rule, his Aime,
> Unshaken, fixt, and still the same. 35

The pastoralists Angas, Keynes, McBean and Melrose saw their roles as ordained by God. Their aim was to preserve their estates and they expected their workmen and servants to show them the deference due to those called to a superior task and class.

There were times when people in their local communities or workers on their estates took exception to the manorial privileges assumed by the pastoralists. The most common conflicts were with itinerant labourers such as shearers. However, occasionally tenured staff entered the conflict. When Joseph Keynes was going through a time of stress with his first wife he refused to tolerate any sign of "insubordination" towards his family. He discharged a long-serving employee and his wife who affronted Mrs. Keynes, and paid off a maid for using, "insolent language".[36] Later, after Keynes remarried he still refused to tolerate "insubordination", "The two Scotch girls were very insolent to Mrs. Keynes. I gave them a week's wages &

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34. H. Blair, Sermons Vol. 2., p. 419.

35. A. Macpherson, Glimpses of church and social life in the Highlands in olden times, p. 287.

36. J. Keynes, Daily Journal, 6, 7 November 1861 KFP.

sent them about their business".[37] At Baldon the number of slips appearing in their account books from the, "Adelaide Governesses and Servants' Institute, conducted by Mrs. Phillips" showed a very high turnover of employees in the house. Few lasted above two or three months.[38] Unfortunately, there are no records remaining of the servants' response to their dismissals by either of the pastoralists. However, these cases showed that the pastoralists expected the unswerving obedience of servants and the deference which was their due as landowners and self-appointed squires.

The pastoral families took pride in the fact that their genteel view of master-servant relationships built strong bonds that stood the test of time. They stood against the type of servant described by one of Angas' agents as "shockingly independent", and sought for a pliant workforce who acknowledged their eminent position.[39] Hence, Lachlan McBean wrote to a Shearer's Union representative that he had on staff men who had been, "assisting me for 16 years, 12 years, and down to 6 years. They are content and satisfied all with their positions, and I do not wish that their minds should be disturbed, poisoned or corrupted by any Union."[40] Whether or not the employees were really content is another matter.

The Melrose family also prided itself on gaining long years of service from dutiful employees. At George Melrose's funeral, John Moody a shepherd who served Melrose for nearly 50 years, was made to stand near the front of the entourage and his presence was advertised

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37. Ibid, 15 October 1868.

38. A. McBean, Account Books, 1882-1895 McBFP.

39. R. Hawkes to J. H. Angas, 18 June 1857 AFP.

40. W. G. Spence, History of the A.W.U. p. 31.

in the description of the funeral and subsequent writings on Melrose.[41] In a series of reminiscences written by Melrose's son Robert, it was noticed with pride that, "eight employees worked on Rosebank for from thirty to fifty years. Eleven men averaged thirty-three years service each, and over twenty others averaged about sixteen years continuous service each."[42] In the pastoralists' eyes it was as if a faithful yeomanry had performed their needful obligations.

There were some workmen on the estates who found it hard to fit the image expected by the pastoralists. Luther Scammell, a great friend of Keynes, wrote him about the labour problems of the day, "The difficulty seems to be with the men, who are always on strike or tired of the place, or some confounded thing and will not carry out & go right on with the work."[43] The pastoralists in addition to their newly acquired expectations of deference, maintained the typical Victorian beliefs that an honest day's work was a prerequisite of their employees and that idleness was a sin. When they demanded such labour from those who were unused to the ways of the squirearchy, many of these employees voted against the pastoralists with their feet.

Most conflicts of interest between pastoralist and worker were eventually settled in court. In January 1868 A. B. Murray, Angas' friend, took out writs against 13 shearers who, "having entered into the said service did neglect to fulfil the same contrary

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41. G. Melrose obituary in Register, 12 April 1894 and R. Cockburn, Pastoral pioneers of South Australia Vol. 1 p. 39.

42. Typescript MS on G. Melrose by his son R. T. Melrose, n.d., MFP.

43. L. Scammell to J. Keynes, 15 October 1878, KFP.

to the form of the act in such case".[44] This appeared an isolated case amongst the Barossa Range men at this time though in New South Wales by 1888-1889 Lachlan McBean was taking out numerous writs against employees absconding from hired service.[45] In 1890 when George Melrose took an extended vacation his reminder to his son Robert was to, "get on with the shearing with or without union labour".[46] It appeared that organised labour ran against the grain of their genteel pretensions as well as their views on work and self-improvement gained from their upbringing. John Angell James for example had written for Joseph Keynes that in God's sight all men were equal but that the lower classes, "should yet so far regard the distinctions of society, as to be respectful, courteous, and submissive towards those who are their superiors in rank and property".[47] When workers demanded their rights they would soon be shown who were the leaders and who the followers. As one of the young Melroses later wrote to his father, they were not to "be influenced by the howling mob".[48]

If the pastoralists Angas, Keynes, McBean and Melrose had been paraded for the people of South Australia to see, as the writer to the Register had requested, the spectacle would have been oddly assorted. At the same time as they were defending their genteel pretensions, they were still trying to act out roles set by their lower-middle class ideals. Their rights to privilege were, they

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44. SAA GRG 4/31/1, 2 January 1868.

45. C.P.S. Moulamein 7/8966.3, State Archives of N.S.W.

46. G. Melrose to R. T. Melrose, 3 September 1890, MFP.

47. J. A. James, The Christian professor, p. 285.

48. R. T. Melrose to G. Melrose, 24 August 1890, MFP.

claimed, won by their industry, faith and perseverance. As pioneers of South Australia they helped form its social structure, and as Keynes pointed out to George Miller many years earlier their hope was in rising to, "a far better rank of society than we could at home".[49] Having made a rank beyond their hopes, they acted out the roles of that class as their lower-middle class mentality perceived it. Yet, they opposed any pretensions of a lower class to achieve self-independence and they sought to define the behaviour of their employees and inculcate a sense of subordination in them.

With their well-planned estates, large, fine houses, the overseeing of a local village, and their tenants, they unashamedly played the gentry. Their reaction to criticism on their home ground was to argue that their positions were ordained by God. Troubles though, could still come the way of the wealthy in forms other than threats to their social position, and it remained to be seen how their old-world ideals and religious perceptions coped with life's traumas at the top.

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49. J. Keynes to G. Miller, 6 December 1841, AFP.

CHAPTER SEVEN

REACTIONS TO DEATH AND DISHONOUR

Within two decades of the settlement of South Australia Angas, Keynes, the McBeans and Melrose had reached the pinnacle of pastoral society. Success led them to conceive themselves as an Australian gentry. However, there was bound to be a private tension between the outward show and the inward men. The tension was particularly great at times of personal crisis. This chapter looks at the way members of the new pastoral elite coped with bereavement, divorce and dishonour. In most cases they can be seen publicly conforming to the latest approved practices of 'polite society' while privately they wrestled with the godly precepts of their humble ancestors. The struggles are sometimes poignant and sometimes comical but they are always moving. In each case an attempt will be made to measure the behaviour of the central characters against the yardsticks of 'correct' action laid down in books and magazines known to have been in their libraries. The journal London Society has been particularly helpful in this respect as have the novels of Dickens.

DEATH

In a recent study of Victorian attitudes to death, Morley observes that, "it was thought as necessary to maintain the standards of one's class in death as in life, and, if possible, even to use death as a means of further social advancement."[1] The procedure which followed the death of a loved-one was set out in the literature of the time. The funeral was the primary

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1. J. Morley, Death, Heaven and the Victorians p. 11. G. Griffin and D. Tobin, In the midst of life, show that what was true in England at this time, was true in Australia.

part of the post-death activity. It gave public recognition to the wealth and social standing of the bereaved family. Dickens clearly showed the public importance of the funeral in Martin Chuzzlewit. When Anthony Chuzzlewit died and his son Jonas sought social prestige the family's undertaker spoke of the "power of money" which enabled a gentleman to testify, "his love and veneration for the departed".[2] The undertaker went on to describe just what was considered to be a respectable funeral for a family of importance. The family's money would provide,

> four horses to each vehicle; it can give him velvet trappings; it can give him drivers in cloth cloaks and top-boots; it can give him the plumage of the ostrich, died black; it can give him any number of walking attendants, dressed in the first style of funeral fashion, and carrying batons tipped with brass; it can give him a handsome tomb ... Oh! do not say that gold is dross, when it can buy such things as these. 3

By 1875 middle class attempts to achieve public recognition through funerals had gone to such ridiculous lengths that The Times commented: "It is within the last half century that prodigious funerals, awful hearses drawn by preternatural quadrupeds, clouds of black plumes, solid and magnificent oak coffins instead of the sepulchral elm, coffin within coffin, lead, brick graves and capacious catacombs have spread downwards far beyond the select circle once privileged to illustrate the vanity of human greatness."[4]

Beyond the funeral there were certain other necessities in the public ceremony of death. At the cemetery the method of internment and the erection of a suitable headstone were of the utmost importance.

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2. C. Dickens, Martin Chuzzlewit, p. 310.

3. Ibid.

4. The Times, 2 February 1875 in J. Morley, op cit p. 11.

As a leading exponent on death and burial procedures in mid-Victorian England wrote, "There can be no impropriety ... in maintaining that distinction of style and expenditure to the grave which it has pleased Providence to appoint in life."[5] The style of entombment ranged from the family vault, the epitome of class distinction after death, through to the marble headstones adorned with classical or Christian symbolism.[6] A writer in London Society opined that when it came to the burial of family it was essential to, "Let me wring my purse-strings if I cannot wring my heart-strings ... leave me to pillow the head of my dead friend upon the softest of satin, and furnish his last house with becoming state."[7]

After the funeral and the erection of a suitable monument the respectable family observed the public formalities of mourning. London Society recommended as the first step, "Let us show in our hats, if we cannot in our hearts, that we are grieving for a friend. Let crape redeem our cold stint of tears."[8] The abundance of black crape was followed by the sending out of bereavement cards. The cards were usually white with bold black lettering and borders and gave friends and relatives a memento of the deceased. Often this card was accompanied by a photograph as a further reminder. If the deceased was of particularly high social standing or sought to be, a plaque could be erected in his local church or chapel as another sign of his family's mourning. Such plaques or their equivalents

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5. Mrs. Stone, God's Acre (1858) in J. Morley, op cit p. 13.
6. Ibid p. 35.
7. London society vol. V, 1864 p. 4.
8. Ibid.

like baptismal fonts, altars, lecterns and other church paraphenalia were suggested as the proper commemoration for departed gentry.[9]

The recommended private response of an individual to death was far removed from the heavy-handed and somewhat vain public ceremony, and had its roots in religious faith. Death was a leveller and a cause for future hope. Joseph Keynes' uncle John quoted a poet, when he wrote on "The dying Professor", whose words spoke of life beyond death for every believer,

> The holy triumphs of my soul,
> Shall death itself out-brave;
> Leave dull mortality behind,
> And fly beyond the grave. 10

Although much Victorian religion could be debased to mere sentimentality, bereavement was set apart as a time for inward reflection. "My brethren, time is short, and life uncertain", wrote Richard Keynes in a funeral sermon. "Soon, will each one, whom I address, be numbered with the dead; soon, will our eternal destiny, be irrevocably fixed; soon, shall we either be singing, the praises of God, and the Lamb, or, dreadful alternative, banished from God, and from the glory of his power, for ever. Oh! may God enable us, "SO TO NUMBER OUR DAYS, AS TO APPLY OUR HEARTS UNTO WISDOM."[11] Religious faith at the time of death was seen as a comfort for the righteous and a challenge to the back-slider to return to religious first principles.

The private responses to death of the rising South Australian gentry show that they clung to the faith of their fathers. The public ceremonies they observed evinced their earthly aspirations.

When Rosetta Angas, George Fife's wife, died on the 11 January

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9. J. Morley, op cit p. 61.

10. J. A. James, The Christian Professor p. 379.

11. R. Keynes, The aged pastor p. 30.

1867 her family inserted a notice in the Adelaide press calling attention to her passing after a long illness.[12]

In a printed text which bore the title, "A short account of the last days of Mrs. Angas", the family described the burial of Rosetta and their feelings about her passing. The coffin was interred in the Angas family vault which George Fife had built a short distance away from Lindsay House. The vault was richly embellished as befitted the family's position in society. The upper level was adorned with French tiling and surrounded by polished brass railings. The catacombs themselves were marbled and built to give the impression of cathedral vaulting.

The bereavement card satisfied the mourning procedure of the respectable classes and was suitably sombre in appearance. In large gothic letters the reader was reminded of Rosetta's age, place of burial and her religious hopes which echoed the scripture, "Unto you therefore which believe He is precious".[13] The printed text was more explicit on the family's views on death and was written for a public who it was felt, "will all be anxious to know such particulars". After a sombre passage on Rosetta's illness, medical diagnosis and eventual death the writer noted, "She passed away with a sweet smile on her face ... She seemed to have renewed her youth, and those who gazed on her beautifully placid face will never forget that picture, so suggestive of the perfect rest and peace she now enjoys."[14]

The religious concern was further expressed in the family's text on Mrs. Angas' last days. They maintained quite clearly that

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12. Register, 14 January 1867. Observer 19 January 1867.

13. Rosetta Angas, bereavement card AFP.

14. "A short account of the last days of Mrs. Angas" AFP.

Rosetta was to inherit the eternal hope of their forefathers. "There we laid her down to rest until the resurrection morning, when the trumpet of the archangel shall sound, and her body shall be raised again in glory and incorruption

> 'A tenement of radiant light,
> A shrine for the blest soul,
> To triumph in, rejoice, and serve,
> While the great ages roll.'" 15

George Fife Angas' own response to his wife's illness and death was in keeping with these religious thoughts of his youth. He wrote religious verse to express his innermost thoughts,

> Dark are the ways of Providence
> while they who love thee groan:
> Thy reasons lie conceal'd from sense,
> Mysterious and unknown ...
> Thy gracious presence, O my God,
> My every wish contains;
> With this, beneath affliction's load,
> My heart no more complains.
> This can my every care control,
> Gild each dark scene with light;
> This is the sunshine of my soul,
> Without it all is night. 16

Religion continued to play a very important role in Angas' private life, a sustained relic of his early teachings. At the same time as the family were parading the respectable public usages after death, the aging progenitor of South Australia was privately consulting the faith embedded in his British origins.

Twelve years after Angas buried his wife, George Melrose bore the same misfortune. Euphemia Melrose's death elicited a public response from the family which bore close resemblance to the Angases. Although they worshipped at the local Presbyterian church the funeral service was conducted at St. John's Church of England, Mount Pleasant.

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15. Ibid.

16. "For dear Mamma's comfort", in envelope with bereavement card and printed text AFP.

This shifting of religious allegiances may well indicate an attempt to conform with society's ideas of how a respectable squirearchy should act. The newspaper report covering the event, which the Melroses kept amongst their family manuscripts, described the size of the procession and the public importance held by the family. The reporter noted that, "The attendance at the funeral was, as might be expected, very large, representatives of almost all parts of the colony being present. The procession was one of the longest seen here".[17] Continuing in a melodramatic vein which conveyed the respect given to the Melroses the report stated, "The coffin was carried from the hearse to the grave by her five sons amid the profound silence of the vast concourse of people who assembled to do honour to the deceased. The floral offerings were numerous and very beautiful."[18]

The family continued their adherence to public formality by burying their deceased relative in the Anglican cemetery. Her remains were placed under a colossal marble monument topped with the classical symbol of a shrouded urn. Further, the family issued a memorial card which showed a photograph of Euphemia and brought some of their earlier religious views to the fore by proclaiming the scriptural challenge, "Be ye also ready".[19]

In April 1874 William, a son of Alexander and Margaret McBean was gored by a bull on his uncle Lachy's property in New South Wales. The Deniliquin newspaper called William the "young gentleman", an epitaph his family proudly accepted.[20] Although William was

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17. Obituary of Euphemia Melrose, in a collection of newspaper cuttings MFP.

18. Ibid.

19. Euphemia Melrose, bereavement card MFP.

20. Pastoral Times, 18 April 1874.

buried at Woorooma, the McBeans later erected a large urn monument for him over the family vault at the Truro cemetery.

After his death, as respectable practice insisted, they issued a memorial card for William and sent his photograph to his friends. The card's scriptural text was also a reminder of life's fragility and came from the burial service in the Book of Common Prayer, which the once staunchly Presbyterian family now numbered amongst their religious works. "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the Name of the Lord."[21] This removal to Anglican ways however subtle, paralleled the Melroses' attempt to elevate their position in society. The McBeans too had taken on the alliance of old religious notions, genteel ideas, and the new ways of proper conduct in their response to death. Although the members of the pastoral elite tended to fly towards scripture and age-old religious notions in time of grief, they also sought to publicly exhibit what was right and proper for a go-ahead gentry.

Joseph Keynes no longer appeared to need the assurances of his youth that there was a life after death, for he had attained a life beyond his dreams on earth. His reaction to death publicly helped to confirm that like his neighbours he too was trying to become correct and respectable in his conduct. This occurred most notably when Henry Evans, Keynes' neighbour and George Fife Angas' son-in-law, died in April 1868, and then again when another pastoralist 'Captain' Bagot died in July 1880 on Keynes' 70th birthday.

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21. William McBean, bereavement card McBFP. Book of Common Prayer p. 307.

Keynes spoke of Evans as a man of social significance and influence who was "universally beloved and respected".[22] To show off Evans' position in life his family set up an extravagant marble monument at the Keyneton cemetery. Keynes took the proceedings one step further and proposed to erect "a memorial or tablet in the Rhine chapel for Mr. H. Evans".[23] Keynes' actions were remarkably in touch with the newer trends in respectable responses to death.

In 1880 when 'Captain' Bagot died he was acclaimed by both South Australia and Keynes as a great and influential figure. Keynes' diary once again noted that this fellow pastoralist had been "universally respected". Keynes' private jottings revealed more. He rather ambiguously quoted scripture which on the one hand contained echoes of Keynes' religious origins and on the other set forward his own hope that he too would be perceived as part of this respectable society. "Captain Bagot died this morning ... Let me die the death of the righteous & let my last end be like his."[24]

The pastoralists attempted to conform to the demands of correct behaviour in their public response to death. Further, this public response appeared to show a subtle movement away from their individual religious origins to the more respectably perceived branches of religious practice. Privately however, they still turned for comfort to the beliefs of their forefathers. They did not seem to successfully resolve the contradiction between their public behaviour and their inner thoughts. As they tried to be seen as a

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22. J. Keynes, Daily Journal, 18 April 1868.

23. Ibid, 17 April 1868.

24. Ibid, 29, 31 July 1880.

part of the elite of respectable society their hopes for the redress of grievances in the world to come receded from their thoughts and were replaced by the ideas of correct public behaviour.

DISHONOUR

The idea of dishonour held by the pastoralists grew out of their understanding of how a gentry should act and the morality and teachings of their youth. Much of the literature from Britain which they held in their libraries added to this notion of honourable and gentlemanly conduct. One of the McBean's books which acted as a guide to conduct stressed that a "thorough gentleman" was made by manners, "not (by) money nor even title".[25] This type of attitude was further reflected in Thackeray's comment in 1861 on, "What is a gentleman?", "Is it to have lofty aims, to lead a pure life, to keep your honour virgin; to have the esteem of your fellow citizens and the love of your fireside; to suffer evil with constancy; and through evil or good to maintain truth always?"[26]

Honourable conduct and gentlemanly behaviour were further measured by the religious works of authors like Bunyan. In The Pilgrim's Progress he argued that "Discretion, Piety, Charity and Prudence", would adequately prepare man for a full and honourable life.[27] The work which spoke of the Highland sense of a honourable gentleman in Alexander McBean's library described him as having honesty, virtue, and adoration of God and King.[28] Yet another work which formed part of Keynes' thought was his uncle's book The

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25. Household truths for working men p. 30.

26. W. M. Thackeray, The pocket Thackeray p. 118.

27. J. Bunyan, Pilgrim's progress p. 88.

28. A. Macpherson, Glimpses of church and social life in the Highlands in olden times p. 287.

Christian Professor which preached that human honour arose out of, "faith, hope, love".[29] In terms of the pastoralist's religious sensibilities, man's gentility and honour grew from Christian graces and the adherence to a moral view of life. Conversely, dishonour grew out of irreligion and immorality.

The accent on honour and gentility gained from youthful teachings and the ideas of respectability in the literature they read, stressed honesty and sober Christian values. As Frankle states in her dissertation on The Genteel Family, Victorian men and women, "wanted to reconcile what they considered the best in the old code of the aristocracy - a code of refinement, paternal responsibility and dignity, - with the middle class virtues".[30] In essence the pastoralists saw honour as a concept which incorporated their old notions of a good, religious life, the obligations of a rural gentry, and the new ideas of gentility and proper conduct emerging from the upper-middle classes in Britain.

Dishonour occurred when one stepped outside these bounds of respectable behaviour. London Society tried to persuade its readers that anyone guilty of these actions was amongst "unprincipled adventurers for whom the hulks would be almost too good".[31] Charles Dickens treated dishonour as a picture of man fallen from his true nature and out of step with the world. Characters like Uriah Heep in David Copperfield and the grasping Carker in Dombey and Son characterise the living embodiment of dishonour. Both these

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29. J. A. James, op cit p. 11.

30. B. S. Frankle, The genteel family: High-Victorian conceptions of domesticity and good behaviour p. 35.

31. London Society Vol. V, 1864 p. 204.

characters used treachery and seduction to achieve their own ends. The results of their actions were seen to break up family circles, cause infidelity and downgrade the lives of other human beings.

During their steps to establish themselves as a pastoral gentry some of the members of the pastoral elite were accused of dishonouring their eminent position. Both John Angas and Lachlan McBean were mentioned in a government inquiry into the 'dummying' of Crown Lands.[32] However, the clearest examples of how these concepts of honour, dishonour and gentlemanly conduct worked in practice were seen in Joseph Keynes' divorce and Lachlan McBean's trial for perjury.

If Joseph Keynes had belonged to the British aristocracy his divorce from his first wife would probably never have reached the courts and the family name would have remained unblemished by law. If he had remained in the lower-middle class, even after the new matrimonial clauses Act of 1857 which solved some of the immense complexities of divorce, he would probably not have been able to afford a divorce trial.[33] However, Keynes was a member of a pre-eminent group in South Australian society whose ideas owed much to the upper-middle class concept of respectable conduct. Within their thought marriage was the most sacred of human institutions and as Gow noticed, "The family was the only unit around which the defensive moat of respectability could be dug and guarded."[34]

In the literature of the time infidelity is spoken of far more than divorce. In Dombey and Son when Edith Dombey apparently

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32. E. Williams, A way of life p. 105.

33. O. R. MacGregor, Divorce in England p. 68.

34. From E. Gow, The Victorian woman quoted in J. Armstrong, The Novel of Adultery p. 27.

succumbs to the attention of Carker and elopes with him to Sicily her name is infamy. Dickens' characters refer to the fallen female as, "your wife! that upstart woman!", "brazen" and "the fugitive".[35] However, Mr. Dombey's main concern as a member of the upper-middle class is not so much the actual elopement as, "The world. What the world thinks of him, how it looks at him, what it sees in him, and what it says - this is the haunting demon of his mind."[36] The keeping up of respectable appearances was all important in society and infidelity in marriage counted against both the wrong-doer and the wronged.

Fashionable magazines like London Society often spoke of infidelity in relationships. When man broke pledge with woman or vice versa the magazine's writers intricately traced the tortured romantic minds. A story called "The ordeal for wives" was particularly severe in its condemnation of the dishonour evident in infidelity. One fallen woman was accused of having as her single aim, "the admiration of men, and the world's acknowledgement of such admiration".[37] She was further described as, "unflinching, unresting, unscrupulous" and seeking to break down the bonds of family life.[38] Another book which sought to give youths sound moral advice noted that family life would collapse when infidelity crept into marriage and that after the event, "Many a promising family has become an easy prey to temptation, from the head of that family having felt that conscience would not allow him to exalt virtue with his tongue, whilst vice had dominion

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35. C. Dickens, Dombey and Son pp. 573, 577, 605.

36. Ibid p. 574.

37. London Society Vol. V, 1864 p. 539.

38. Ibid.

over his heart." The writer further exhorted the reader to teach the family "that whatever is morally injurious should be treated as a loathsome plague".[39]

Ellen Keynes' infidelity grew out of her position in society. The elite around Angaston often gathered for lantern lectures, balls and poetry recitals. Although Joseph Keynes begrudgingly accepted such outings, his wife revelled in them and mixed with many local notables like George French Angas the artist son of the town's progenitor. The local town doctor William Dickenson also moved in this set and he claimed in a letter to a lady residing near Angaston which was later published in The Register amongst the proceedings of the divorce case in 1862 that he had known her, "and loved her more and more for the last four years".[40]

For reasons apparently obscure to Joseph Keynes, in early 1861 his wife felt the need for constant medical attention. In his journal between visits to Adelaide for land sales and trips to his properties in the Murray Scrub he recorded many instances of his wife's unusual behaviour and the attendance of the doctor without prior notice. After one such period of sickness Keynes wrote in his journal with apparent curiosity that a sudden recuperation saw, "Mrs. Keynes drive to Mr. George Angases [sic] this afternoon...Dr. Dickenson at Mr. Angases [sic]".[41] However, Keynes journal showed no sense of recrimination against the couple, perhaps the Victorian husband did not act without proof, or perhaps it was not deemed respectable to admit that your wife was

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39. Household truths for working-men p. 15.

40. Register, 19 November 1862. Dr. Dickenson's letter was dated 27 June 1862.

41. J. Keynes, Daily Journal, 21 February 1861 KFP.

having an affair with the local doctor.

On the 7 February 1862 Ellen Keynes gave birth to a son, rather ambiguously named William who survived only 8 days. A chronology of her activities gained from Keynes' journals must put some doubt on the child's paternal origin. Furthermore it was claimed in the trial that after Dickenson's wife left him, presumably because of his favours to Ellen, that Ellen was often seen entering the doctor's house and, "on such occasions the door [was] shut and the blinds down".[42] However, the course of events came out into the open five months after the child's birth when Joseph recorded in his diary, "Mrs. Keynes returned home today my brother Eben brought [her] about 4 o'clock and brought very bad news with her. It is indeed a black Thursday for me. I have now to live only for the children."[43] Ellen had decided to take the doctor and not Joseph.

The final decision to leave her husband was made by Ellen Keynes during a time of supposed recuperation in Adelaide. It was then, the newspaper account claimed, "On the evening of the day after Mr. Keynes left town, Dr. Dickenson called upon Mrs. Keynes at the Gresham [Hotel]. He remained for tea; and the servant, hearing no noise in the room, and concluding that the lodger and her visitor had gone out, went to remove the tea equipage, but was surprised to see Mrs. Keynes and Dr. Dickenson come out from the lady's bedroom."[44] Two days later on the 22 June under the pretence of going to stay at a friend's house,

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42. Register, 19 November 1862.

43. J. Keynes, Daily Journal, 26 June 1862 KFP.

44. Register, 19 November 1862.

Ellen quit her lodgings and went to the Port Hotel, Port Adelaide, where it was claimed by a trial witness, "she shared a room and bed with Dr. Dickenson".[45] On the following morning Mr. Pulsford, an Adelaide businessman and friend of the Keynes family, learning that Mrs. Keynes had gone from the Gresham, made his way to the Port, "and, on board of the Lady Bird, steamer, under weigh for Melbourne, he found in the same cabin Mrs. Keynes and Dr. Dickenson".[46] After returning to Adelaide with Pulsford and supposedly repenting of her sin, Ellen again ran off to the Port and boarded the Lady Bird, "and under the name of Mrs. Evans went to Melbourne ... and she was in a bedroom there with Dr. Dickenson when the officer served the co-respondent with the citation in that cause."[47]

On the 18 November 1862 Joseph Keynes sat in the Supreme Court before Mr. Justice Boothby petitioning for a dissolution of marriage on the grounds of adultery. The trial was the outcome of what Keynes called "this unfortunate business with Mrs. Keynes" and his solicitor H. W. Parker termed "the whole of the conspiracy".[48] The weeks preceding the trial were full of charges and counter-charges, detective work and unpleasant circumstances and Parker wrote that Keynes was, "continually in this state of excitement".[49] The subterfuge and clandestine meetings behind the scenes were incredible. "Mrs. K. has left the Alma [hotel] at Norwood & has gone to Green's at Edwardstown. I think she has changed her name" wrote Parker, and

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45. Ibid.

46. Ibid.

47. Ibid.

48. J. Keynes, Daily Journal, 27 June 1862 KFP, H. W. Parker to J. Keynes, 9 July 1862 KFP.

49. H. W. Parker to E. Keynes, 8 October 1862 KFP.

on another occasion he claimed to be "unremitting in the pursuit of Dr. D.".[50]

The tensions of the pre-trial situation and the public role which Keynes was to play was revealed in the advice of H. W. Parker and others. Keynes was warned not to be snared by "shallow chicanery" or to bend to "rascally demands".[51] He was advised to remain firm and be the image of respectability, a veritable Paul Dombey. Parker maintained that it was imperative for Keynes not to "deviate from the strict path of duty to yourself and friends as a man of spotless integrity".[52] Samuel Stocks an old friend of Keynes further told him that the divorce case would test both his faith and his notion of respectability,

> From your youth you have been taught to look to God, who does not suffer a sparrow to fall to the ground without his notice, much less will he see such a departure from all that is respectable and becoming in civil society and not regard it. It may be, that such an extraordinary event has occurred not only to show the waywardness of the parties concerned, which will write infamy on their characters forever, but your heavenly father will have his eyes upon you, as to your behaviour in this distressing and extraordinary circumstance ... no man can give you such advice as you need better than the dictates of your own heart, as it is taught by the word of God. 53

His contemporaries urged him to follow the path of honourable conduct which was clearest to their minds. This conduct consisted of an obedience to religious truths and the necessity of right and proper conduct in accord with his position in society. As far as his own diary and letters and the reported account of the trial show us Keynes kept to this advice in public.

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50. H. W. Parker to J. Keynes, 18 July 1862 and 11 July 1862 KFP.

51. Ibid, 8 October 1862.

52. Ibid.

53. S. Stocks to J. Keynes, 6 July 1862 KFP.

However, privately Keynes exhibited the tensions between his expected public facade and the trauma of his own situation. A sense of honour done did not comfort him. In his reversals he was no Latin Stoic or Greek philosopher, but he fell back on religious doggerel to express his emotion. Someone who only knew Keynes through his diaries and letters might doubt its authenticity, but the crossing out of words and lines and the substitution of others showed it to be a genuine production of his distraught mind. The 17 stanza poem, "The Crucifixion", pursued the themes of turmoil, destruction and repayment of sin and spoke of the future promise for all who hoped in God. The 3 final stanzas describing Christ's final hour may well have been Keynes' identification with the hurt he experienced,

> Still from his lips no curse has come
> His lofty eye has looked no doom
> No earthquake bursts no Angel band
> Crushes the black blasphemous land
> What say those lips to anguish given
> God be my murderers forgiven.
>
> He dies on whose high victory
> The slayer death himself shall die
> He dies whose all conquering head
> Shall yet be crushed the serpent's head
> From his high throne be darkness hurled
> the God and tempter of this world.
>
> He dies Creation's awful Lord
> Jehovah Christ Eternal Word
> To come in darkness from the skies
> To bid a buried world arise
> The earth his footstool heaven his throne
> Redeemer may thy will be done. 54

Keynes' other method of dealing with the unwelcome attention the divorce brought on his family was to remove himself and his children to England. The children were to receive their schooling

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54. "The Crucifixion" in J. Keynes, Daily Journal 1858-1862 p. 299 ff.

in Britain and be brought up "in the fear and admonition of the Lord".[55] Keynes wished to return to his native land to regain his own stability and seek the protection of, "the God of my Fathers".[56] The private and public methods of dealing with his wife's estrangement and subsequent divorce never seem to have been resolved in his mind. He never found it easy to be a country gentleman.

When men acted dishonourably the common understanding of Victorian times was that they should receive a just retribution. In the literature of Dickens, as described by London Society, "The villain is always so palpable - his crimesare in such bold relief as to be wholesomely detestable, while the Nemesis is always complete, and appears in correct time and place."[57] Justice was even more sought after when a man in high position in society used that privilege to the detriment of others and transgressed the law. In Barnaby Rudge, Dickens portrays one of the most loathsome characters Sir John Chester as an abuser of his station. When his day of reckoning comes Chester is described as a, "cold-blooded, hollow, false, unworthy villain".[58] The criminal was ever exhorted to repent of his actions and make amends.

Crime was abhorred by the upper-middle classes whose respectable doctrines of morality demanded a blameless, sinless, life from its constituents. In one of his school books a young McBean was taught to repeat the phrase, "Death before Dishonour" as an all-important maxim.[59] The task of the privileged in society was to provide a

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55. J. Keynes, Daily Journal 27 December 1862 KFP.

56. Ibid.

57. London Society Vol. 3, 1863 pp. 4-5.

58. C. Dickens, Barnaby Rudge p. 624.

59. L. McBean, the younger; in school text and exercise book collection McBFP.

respectable model of behaviour for others to follow. As Thackeray once noted, "ought not the Biography of a First Gentleman in Europe to be of such a nature, that it might be read in Young Ladies' Schools with advantage, and studied with profit in the Seminaries of Young Gentlemen?"[60]

In 1863 Lachlan McBean's respectable position in society was threatened. Not only was McBean accused of dishonesty, but he was also brought before the Supreme Court on a charge of perjury. The situation developed from his partnership with Peter McGregor which, according to his account books and a report in the Melbourne Age, took place in 1858. McBean sold half of Woorooma to McGregor for £12800, and as was his custom recouped the entire purchase money he paid in 1855 and found a partner to run the place.[61] The report in The Age claimed that in November 1859 McBean and McGregor dissolved partnership. Subsequent to the dissolution McBean offered Alexander Cameron, the licensee of the Merri Jig Hotel in Melbourne, the managership of Woorooma. The paper claimed that Cameron wanted a salary of £350 a year and that after haggling it was reduced to £300. After Cameron finished his stint with McBean, the wily pastoralist refused to pay him the amount claimed. Cameron took him to trial for the remaining wages and under oath McBean swore that he only ever offered £150 a year. The contradictory evidence of four other witnesses was enough for the judge to commit McBean to a further trial for perjury.[62]

When the case came before Justice Barry in the Supreme Court the newspapers took it up with relish. The outcome was that McBean

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60. W. M. Thackeray, op cit p. 118.

61. Age 24 February 1863, L. McBean, Account Book, 1 August 1858 McBFP.

62. Age 24 February 1863.

was found guilty and remanded for sentence. On the day following the trial The Age reported that three notable Melbourne businessmen, H. Parker of R. Goldsborough & Co., G. Kirk and J. G. Grassie, "severally deposed to the defendant's honourable action in trade transactions".[63] This conduct was probably prompted more by the fact that these businessmen owed McBean favours (it was well known that McBean was the largest private supporter of Goldsboroughs) than by their attempt to adhere to the relevant correct behaviour.[64] However, their appeals achieved little and in the following Saturday morning edition of The South Australian Register there appeared, "McBean, the squatter, is sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment for perjury."[65]

McBean had publicly spurned the correct behaviour expected from his class. The family reacted by destroying and suppressing all records of this ignominy which ran against the grain of both their public position and precepts which claimed that for the respectable man, "Honour's his Wealth, his Rule, his Aime".[66]

Privately, if McBean had appeared a hard man before the trial ever conscious of the penny saved, after it he became infamous for his miserliness. His station store sold goods to his workmen at many times their real value, and stories abounded about his mean behaviour.[67] He haggled, and in fact his overseer fought, with Shearers' Union representatives over the right to pay men what he wanted to.[68] In his mid 70s he still held the butcher's permit for

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63. Ibid 25 February 1863.

64. L. McBean obituary, Pastoral Times 20 January 1894.

65. Register 28 February 1863.

66. A. Macpherson, op cit p. 287.

67. Oral interview with Mr. W. J. Kilpatrick, Bimbella, Deniliquin, October 1979. W. G. Spence, History of the A.W.U. pp. 15-16.

68. W. G. Spence, op cit p. 41.

his town of Moulamein, while owning most of the town and a sizeable parcel of land on the corners of Flinders and Market Streets in Melbourne.[69] McBean remained the antithesis of the other pastoralists holding property in the Barossa Ranges. Here was a man who owned enormous property in every colony in Australia, whose wealth was such that a nephew could write that when he lost some thousands of pounds in a bank collapse in the 90s it was "a flea-bite", yet who refused to take on the trappings of gentility or the veneer of respectability.[70]

A photograph of McBean invariably showed him as a solitary figure with a rough beard dressed in waistcoat and hacking jacket of plain cloth; his feet covered with a pair of dirty boots. There was no pretence about this man. His interest in life was making money and keeping it. The surroundings of fancy houses, luxurious clothing and stylish coaches and proper conduct were best left to others. Such was the force of this man's character and such his wealth that ambitious newphews who revelled in self-importance in letters to other men, paid obeisance to Uncle Lachy whenever they communicated with him. Lachlan McBean Grant, his sister's son, finished letters with, "If I have presumed too much I ask your forgiveness" while his brother Alexander's boy Lachlan was always "Your affectionate nephew".[71] McBean's eulogist did him no injustice when he wrote that he "was frequently close and exacting in small matters".[72]

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69. Pastoral Times 15 October 1871. CPS Moulamein 1885 "Register of animals slaughtered" State Archives of N.S.W.

70. R. Cockburn, Pastoral Pioneers of South Australia Vol. 2 pp. 82-83. L. McB. Grant to D. MacBean, 1 September 1893, Whitehead papers, Latrobe Library, Melbourne.

71. L. McB. Grant to L. McBean, 28 July 1893, Whitehead papers, LaTrobe Library, Melbourne. L. McBean (younger) to L. McBean, 14 October 1893 McBFP.

72. L. McBean obituary, op cit.

McBean's sense of honour and respectability had once been shaped by the doctrines of his stern religion. His relations at Baldon and their neighbours all equated honour and good conduct with the righteous path of duty and a variety of middle class Victorian morals. Yet, dishonour acted to harden McBean's tightfistedness and there was nothing about his subsequent behaviour which showed any of the expected penitence. What appeared so remarkable was that his business colleagues should stand up for him and that his family should continue to hold him in esteem. Perhaps when it came down to essentials money was the centre of this society's ideas about respectability and honour.

This discussion has surveyed some of the crises of life - parting, dying, marrying - which mark the milestones of existence. So far we have followed the lives and thought of Angas, Keynes, the McBeans and Melrose from their pious lower-middle class origins in Great Britain to their arrival in Australia. Thence, we have discussed their reactions to hardships in their early settlement and their eventual attainment of fabulous success. Their success showed that they had certain ideas about being landed gentry and what that involved and they tried to implement this concept in South Australia. Although South Australia was not the idealised "Paradise of Dissent" of its progenitors, they were not able to achieve the station or bring into being the concept of the hereditary landed gentry of England. The reasons for this failure were firstly, that their personal precepts gained in their youth were not appropriate to those of a gentry. Secondly, their own neighbours and fellow settlers in South Australia would not allow it to happen. There was no classless concept of mateship here. The aspiring pastoralists were considered to be of the same stock as the rest of

the population, and they had to appeal to the basically liberal and middle class notions of self-help and the pioneer, capitalist spirit in an attempt to have their dream accepted. Thirdly, as Hirst has shown the political economy of South Australia was from first to last a centralised one.[73] They might play the squire with their tenants and townspeople, but if they did not gain acceptance for the idea amongst the interests in the city their cause was lost.

One last but most important factor militated against their becoming an hereditary landed gentry. Their children could not easily be removed to citadels of educational privilege where the ideas of the English gentry had been nurtured for generations. There was no Eton or Harrow. The education provided by the successful fathers was therefore bound to give their children confused messages. It appeared slightly bizarre that although these young men and women were born as rich as aristocrats they would not be given an aristocratic education. These men of wealth tried to put their children through the same school of hard knocks which helped form their own precepts: wealth and success come to those who apply themselves diligently to the task at hand. The children were bound to be bewildered.

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73. J. Hirst, Adelaide and the Country. This is a central point in Hirst's thesis.

CHAPTER EIGHT

EDUCATING THE NEXT GENERATION

Of thirty children born to John Howard Angas, Joseph Keynes, Alexander McBean and George Melrose between 1852 and 1872 twenty two survived long enough to receive an education.[1] All were exempt, by virtue of their inheritance, from the necessity to go to work in their teenage years as their fathers had done before them. Although they were raised up as members of an Australian gentry, comparable in personal wealth to the British gentry, their mid-Victorian educations were significantly different from the educations given to their counterparts in Britain.

The differences were particularly marked among the boys. During the mid-Victorian period most British public schools were made over in accordance with the ideals of Thomas Arnold the influential master of Rugby School. Arnold emphasised that landed property alone was an insufficient qualification for leadership. Property must be accompanied by education. "The possession of property implies education", Arnold wrote in his Introductory Lectures on modern history. He further remarked that property was of vast moral importance for, "it calls forth and exercises so many valuable qualities, forethought, love of order, justice, beneficence, and wisdom in the use of power, that he who possesses it cannot live in the extreme of ignorance or brutality; he has learnt unavoidably some of the higher questions of humanity."

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1. The survivors were Charles Angas (1861), Lilian Angas (1862), Elizabeth Keynes (1852), Harriet Keynes (1855), Richard Robinson Keynes (1857), Ellen Keynes (1859), William McBean (1853), Duncan McBean (1856), Alexander McBean (1859), Isabella McBean (1861), Christina McBean (1863), Lachlan McBean (1866), Daniel McBean (1867), Mary Anne McBean (1870), Samuel McBean (1872), Elizabeth Melrose (1853), George Thorburn Melrose (1855), James Melrose (1857), John Melrose (1860), Robert Melrose (1862), Alexander Melrose (1865), and Lily Melrose (1870).

A person who lacked property, Arnold continued, suffered, "obstacles to moral and intellectual education ... such as no book teaching can in ordinary circumstances overcome."[2]

The education recommended for young men of property was classical, moral and athletic. H. B. Gray, a mid-Victorian public school-boy wrote of the public schools that, "from one and all streamed the thin and unobstructed rays of classical light."[3] Howard Taunton, a spokesman on education at the time said that these schools were, "theatres of athletic manners, and the training places of a galant, generous spirit for the English gentleman."[4] This education was resolutely impractical. It passed over as unnecessary exhortations to upward social mobility through self-help. The essence of this gentlemanly schooling received at public schools was, "meant to produce a ruling class".[5] As H. B. Gray noted, "We were trained in the straitest sect of educational Pharisaism, and some of us thanked God we were not as other men were."[6] Even the Clarendon report of 1864, which sought to iron out the injustices of the public school system and was severely critical on some issues, proclaimed that, "These schools have been the chief nurseries of our statesmen ... they have had perhaps the largest share in moulding the character of an English gentleman."[7]

The new pastoral elite of South Australia did not choose to

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2. Thomas Arnold, Introductory lectures in modern history (1874) p. 19. In school text and exercise book collection (hereafter STE), McBFP.

3. H. B. Gray, The public schools and the Empire (1913) pp. 111-112.

4. H. Staunton, "The great schools of England" (1865), in A. Digby and P. Searby, Children, school and society in nineteenth century England, p. 131.

5. P. Mason, The English gentleman: the rise and fall of an ideal p. 170.

6. H. B. Gray, op cit p. 113.

7. The Clarendon report on nine principal public schools (1864) in M. Hyndman, Schools and schooling in England and Wales p. 146.

send their children to England for public school educations. Only two of the children went abroad; Charles Angas and Richard Keynes. At home in South Australia the rest received educations which introduced them to the evangelical religion of the middle classes, the practical morality of Samuel Smiles and the academic thought in England appropriate to the children of the middle and lower orders of society. At the same time they were encouraged to acquire the social and sporting graces of the aristocracy. A good deal of the education was given outside the classroom. It will therefore be useful in this chapter to consider informal as well as formal education. Because there is a particular wealth of information about young Richard Keynes and Lachlan McBean, their education will be described in some detail.

The majority of the pastoralists' children had a similar education in their preparatory schooling. The McBean and Keynes children were sent to a private tutor in Angaston, or received instruction from a governess at home. Family histories of the Angases and Melroses say little about the first years of their formal education. Charles Angas, according to the family historian, "was sent to England to be educated", while his sister Lilian was said to have, "passed her childhood and girlhood at Collingrove - going to England later".[8]

Two years before their mother's elopement with the Angaston Doctor, Bessie Keynes was sent to Mr. H. P. Nesbit's grammar school in Angaston. Her younger sister Harriet and brother Richard followed soon after. In March 1867 Alexander McBean's account

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8. The sons of Angas, a history of the Angases, AFP.

books show that he registered his sons, Duncan and William, at Nesbit's school. His other sons followed, while his daughters stayed at home to gain their preliminary education from governesses.[9]

From what can be gleaned from the McBean childrens' records, Nesbit's school appeared to have closely followed the prevailing system of lower class English schooling, using the Irish National School-books. Goldstrum's excellent study of the social content of this schoolbook series has shown that the readers sought to provide the pupils with lessons on religion, social structure, vocational and domestic training, the outside world, and good and bad conduct.[10]

The childrens' secondary education was also similar. Richard Keynes and Charles Angas were the exceptions for the boys, their schooling being completed in England. The McBean boys were sent to John Whinham's North Adelaide Grammar School, a school said by some to be styled on Arnold's Rugby in England. The Melrose boys were sent to Prince Alfred College in Adelaide. Whinham College, Prince Alfred College and another collegiate school, St. Peters College in Adelaide were established by the South Australian elite to provide their children with an education suitable to their social standing. As Bolton argued in his article on "The idea of a colonial gentry", "attendance at the right school and assimilation to its code could do much to compensate for unfortunate or recent social origin."[11]

After Joseph Keynes' divorce his elder daughters, Elizabeth and

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9. Alexander McBean, Account Books, McBFP.

10. J. M. Goldstrum, The social content of education 1808-1870, pp. 124-127.

11. G. C. Bolton, "The idea of a colonial gentry", Historical Studies vol. 13, 1967-69 p. 326.

Harriet were sent to England to complete their studies under the tutorship of their uncle John at a yearly fee of £75 per year each. However, Keynes' youngest daughter Ellen and the McBean girls received an education which matched the schooling of the girls of the British elite. These girls were sent to Mrs. Woodcock's boarding school at Palm Place, Hackney. If the cost of education was an indicator of prestige, then Mrs. Woodcock's must have been at the top. When Ellen Keynes first went there in 1876 her board and education cost her father £150 per annum at a time when a good workman on his property was being payed a maximum of £2 per week.[12] The pupils studied scripture catechism, religious history, French, German, drawing, embroidery, geography, history and English literature. What was done in England for the daughters of the elite was done in Adelaide. As if to further emphasise the privileged nature of their schooling, Mrs. Woodcock's was situated almost next door to St. Peters College, the epitome of educational privilege.

The schooling of the pastoralists' boys is epitomised by the education of Richard Keynes and Lachlan McBean. Both of them started their formal schooling at Nesbit's school in Angaston. As mentioned earlier the basis of this school's curriculum was the Irish National Schoolbooks' series. This series was aimed at a working class audience rather than that of children from the homes of a self-appointed gentry. However, much that was included in these books echoed the English education of the pastoralists'

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12. J. Keynes, Account Book No. 4, p. 222 KFP.

youth. They stressed the rightness of the established order, the values of religious other-worldliness and the advantages of a rural life in comparison with an urban existence. These books further preached the ideas of self-help; frugality, diligence and temperance, and focused the student's ideas on the rightness of society's structure.[13]

Lachlan McBean's copy of The Fourth Book of Lessons supported the established distribution of income while holding out a modest prospect for improvement by the frugal and industrious poor.

> Young people who make good use of their time, are quick at learning, and grow up industrious and steady, may perhaps be able to earn more than enough for their support, and so have the satisfaction of leaving some property to their children; and if they, again, should, instead of spending this property, increase it by honest diligence, prudence and frugality, they may in time, raise themselves to wealth ... It is of course, not to be expected that many poor men should become rich, nor ought any man to set his heart on being so; but it is an allowable and cheering thought, that no one is shut out from the hope of bettering his condition and providing for his children. 14

The Fifth Book of Lessons took up similar themes stressing lower-middle class values and encouraging the readers to see education as a means of raising their position in society. As Campbell wrote in "The moral change anticipated by hope", and these young gentry were made to learn by heart,

> Come bright improvement on the car of Time,
> And rule the spacious world from clime to clime,
> Thy handmaide arts shall every wind explore,
> Trace every wave and culture every shore. 15

However, unlike their fathers in their youth these young men had little to improve towards unless it was expanding propertied interests

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13. Goldstrum, op cit pp. 22, 124, 125.

14. The fourth book of lessons p. 212 STE, McBFP.

15. The fifth book of lessons p. 400 STE, McBFP.

or deciding how to spend the family's wealth in bigger, brighter and better ways.

The Lesson Books also sought to impart strong religious values. When students of the lower classes were faced with their depressing existence their Lesson Books could inform them that Providence held sway over the lives of men and ordered life as it was. Moreover, the children were reminded by Thomson in his piece on "The Christian Salvation", "We are delivered from the ills and calamities of life; and in Heaven all tears shall be wiped from the eye ... All things are theirs [the saints] ... theirs is the blessedness and the glories of eternity."[16] Such thoughts appear strangely inappropriate to a privileged group like the young pastoralists.

The text-books emphasised the advantages of rural living as well as the importance of religion and maintaining the status quo. The third book contained lessons on 'The Mask of Nature', the wonder of animal life and sections on 'Small Farms in Belgium' all of which spoke of the joys of rural life.[17] The fifth book contained a poem on the subject, Neele's 'The Silent Glen',

> This silent glen, this silent glen,
> Oh how I love its solitude!
> Far from the busy haunts of men
> Far from the heartless multitude;
> No eye save nature's sovereign beam;
> No breath, but heaven's, to break the dream;
> No voice, but yonder babbling stream,
> Dares on the ear intrude. 18

As Goldstrum in his study of these readers concludes,"they were passing on ... cultural values from one generation to the next

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16. The fourth book of lessons pp. 194-195 STE, McBFP.

17. The third book of lessons p. 30ff, p. 281ff, p. 198ff. STE, McBFP.

18. The fourth book of lessons p. 406 STE, McBFP.

to train individuals to fit into the existing framework of society".[19]

After their primary schooling Richard Keynes' and Lachlan McBean's educations diverged. McBean stayed in Adelaide while Keynes was sent to Parkstone school in Dorset, England. This small dissenting school was run by Joseph Keynes' brother-in-law, Walter Gill. When Joseph wrote about sending his son, his sister, who handled much of her husband's educational correspondence to the pastoralist, replied about the course that young Richard's education would follow. This letter of instructions, she said, would, "prevent any future misapprehensions on your part or ours as to the terms on wh. we ought to receive him".[20] This note plainly set out the academic curriculum which Richard would follow. The teacher stressed the classics as an integral part of the education and told Keynes, "To that branch of education I know you are indifferent - but it still maintains pre-eminence in our public schools as essential to the education of a gentleman".[21] Keynes was further told that, at his request, his son would be taught French and German. Furthermore, he would also take courses in book-keeping, drawing and music.[22] Lastly, Keynes was told that this school at Parkstone practised enlightened methods and, unlike the public schools, the students were disciplined "without corporal punishment - indeed with very little punishment of any kind - but by moral influence".[23] The schooling of Richard at Parkstone was to be a

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19. Goldstrum, op cit p. 177.

20. E. Gill to J. Keynes, 16 September 1864 KFP.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid.

mixture of the education of the gentry, and a utilitarian schooling.

Although in 1872 Richard received a school prize, "in cordial recognition of his thorough and steady and successful endeavours", he held a low opinion of his education. He said to his father that although he had become, "accustomed to English habits and usages", his scholastic achievements were not high.[24] In one letter which must have caused his father quite a headache he noted,

> My music master at Parkstone did not do his duty by any of his pupils he was not strict enough. Altho' I liked it at the time [I] see that it was not for my advantage. Besides that I really had not the time for practice & by dabbling in so many things I am sorry to say that I cannot show much for my time in any one thing. 25

If Richard's academic career had not flourished as his father might have wished, there was one side of his education which was never neglected. His uncle and aunt, lower-middle class dissenters, as his father had once been, maintained that their purpose overall was, "to secure his moral and spiritual well being - as well as his mental and social culture".[26] The religious emphasis was constant in the education of the young Australian whose family hoped that he might occupy "a favourable moral standpoint" and "give evidence of seeds of latent spiritual worth".[27] His uncle wrote to his father that man's life only made sense in service to God, and that this was an integral part of Richard's education, "The great end of our present life is to 'serve God in our generation' - and to serve our generation according to his will.'"[28]

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24. R. R. Keynes to J. Keynes, 10 May 1870 KFP.
25. Ibid, 24 November 1875.
26. W. Gill to J. Keynes, 14 March 1878 KFP.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid, 20 August 1878 KFP.

Richard received books like Farrar's The life of Christ as prizes at Parkstone, and was exhorted to read hymns and works such as The Book and its story: A narrative for the young. The British and Foreign Bible Society who distributed some of Richard Keynes' religious readings said that it was their purpose to raise up "a multitude of 'fellow-helpers' to the truth".[29] The purpose of much of this religious material was, as it had been in Joseph Keynes' youth, to placate a man's ambitious nature, maintain the status quo and to keep him looking to the world to come. Just as Richard's preparatory readers had sought to maintain the status quo by religious and moral inferences so too he could read similar thoughts in his secondary education works whose contents could, as Thomas Arnold argued, "inculcate truths and form habits".[30] These 'truths' and 'habits', continued Arnold, would have "an undoubted moral effect on the people", and create an ordered, stable society.[31]

Outside the hours of his formal schooling Richard was encouraged to develop tastes which his uncle boasted to his father would make the boy, "pure & principled & temperate".[32] Indeed, it was the hope of one of his uncles that he would be, "nourished in the teachings of the word of unerring truth".[33] The close study of religion did not, however, preclude instruction in manly sports for gentlemen. In one of his first letters home as a teenager he told his stepmother that he accompanied his school-chums to the local common after class for a

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29. The Book and its story p. viii.

30. Arnold, op cit p. 17.

31. Ibid.

32. W. Gill to J. Keynes, 20 August 1878 KFP.

33. J. G. Upward to J. Keynes, 22 December 1876 KFP.

hit of cricket.[34] Richard was not altogether the perfect athlete. When his father wanted him to take up the art of fencing and to lift dumb-bells to help develop his genteel character, Richard replied that he went, "weak in the knees over such sport".[35] Yet, this unskilled athlete loved rural things and it is not surprising that he later developed a taste for equestrian sports like polo and the hunt.

After Richard finished his formal schooling Joseph made the object of an English education quite plain by getting his son signed on to a London wool-broking firm. He was to be taught the finer points of his father's business by seeing a mass of wool samples in the busiest wool market-place in the world. Joseph appeared to want his son to go through the 'school of hard-knocks' as well as his genteel training; "Let him begin at the lowest step in the ladder & work his way upward", he wrote to the manager of the wool firm.[36]

However, Richard found work at the wool firm arduous and the London life strange and perplexing after his time in Dorset.[37] He wrote to his father on the constant theme of his return to Australia and life on the Keyneton estate, "There is not a day passes but that I think of my Australian home & long for the time when I shall look upon it."[38] After four and a half years of the office and London, Joseph gave into Richard's pleas and sent him to work on a farm in Dorset in preparation for his return home to Australia. Richard was thrilled at the change in attitude and felt, "I may be of great

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34. R. R. Keynes to Mrs. J. Keynes, 10 May 1870 KFP.

35. R. R. Keynes to J. Keynes, 2 December 1875 KFP.

36. J. Keynes to T. H. Atkins, 17 April 1874 KFP.

37. R. R. Keynes to J. Keynes, 25 October 1876 KFP.

38. Ibid, 24 November 1875 KFP.

use to you and save you from working as hard as you have done hitherto when I get familiar with it, but of course it is very different from office work & there will be a great deal to learn."[39]

When young Lachlan McBean attended John Whinham's North Adelaide Grammar School his subjects of study were multifarious. His school text and exercise books show that during a single year of his education, 1881, he was expected to fulfil the requirements of single entry book-keeping, conduct basic chemical experiments, practise punctuation, mensuration and dictation, write accounts of the histories of England, Austria, France and Germany, and Ancient Greece and Rome, write potted geographies of Australian colonies, exemplify copper-plate handwriting and repeat English and Latin maxims.[40]

These maxims were not the conventional classical passages for English public school boys. Without exception they are the sayings of self-help; denigrating immoral, irreligious habits and encouraging a sober, moral life. In essence they speak of the hope of future wealth or high societal position, and are obviously aimed at a lower-middle class British audience. On one occasion the young scholar penned, "The hand of the diligent maketh rich". On another, "Tis better to be lowly born and range with humble livers in content than to be perked up in glittering grief and wear a golden sorrow". On yet another his lettering pointed to his educators' beliefs on the value of schooling, "God be thanked for books. They are the true levellers, they make us acquainted with the thoughts and deeds

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39. Ibid, 17 January 1877 KFP.

40. STE, McBFP.

of great men that are now dead. Though I am poor and unlucky I can by the influence of books gain a great deal of good instructions."[41]

The religious side of his education at Whinham College also emphasised sober, middle-class values. In books such as The Works of Josephus, Anecdotes of the New Testament, The Life of Jesus Christ and the Apostles, and The Bible History, students were reminded that their worldly position in society was linked to their prospects beyond the grave. "The first and greatest object that should most materially engage the attention of mankind is, the pursuit of that knowledge which tends to promote their welfare while on this transitory stage of life, and their eternal happiness in that which is to come".[42] According to Lachlan's brother Alexander who had been at Whinham's a few years before not only were religious instruction and church attendance an integral part of the curriculum, but students were also expected to go to tea meetings and lectures on moral subjects.[43] Moreover in their printing practice and drawing students were made to embellish scripture texts like, "Oh that thou would bless me indeed". It appeared that their religious education sought to make them look to other-worldly joy and satisfaction rather than dwelling on the state of their earthly life.

Lachlan received a religious and moral education outside of school hours as well. The sheet music which surrounded the piano at Baldon included the Congregational Hymnal, Sacred Songs & Solos

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41. Ibid.

42. Life of Jesus Christ and the Apostles p. 3. STE, McBFP.

43. A. McBean to F. Renner, 30 October 1875 STE, McBFP.

by the American evangelists Ira Sankey and P. P. Bliss and the tunes to Hymns Ancient and Modern. These works, particularly Sankey's evangelical songs, urged their singers on to religious perfection. They spoke of religion overcoming the problems of life and giving men the ability to cope. Further, they exhorted men to forsake evil and seek the good and warned of the consequences if one chose the wrong road,

> A drunkard reached his cheerless home,
> The storm was dark and wild,
> He forced his weeping wife to roam,
> A wand'rer friendless with her child;
> As thro' the falling snow she pressed,
> The babe was sleeping on her breast,
> The babe was sleeping on her breast ...
> Shall this sad warning plead in vain?
> Poor thoughtless one, it speaks to you;
> Now break the tempter's cruel chain,
> No more your dreadful way pursue:
> Renounce the cup, to Jesus fly -
> Immortal soul, why will you die?
> Immortal soul, why will you die? 44

Further moral guidelines were given in literature like, Lecture to Men. Given to Lachlan by a friend of the family it was inscribed with the comment, "I consider this a book that every young man should read, & study thoroughly. I wish to impress this upon you most earnestly."[45] This work which was stated to be "Invaluable information for young men and all those who are to be married" pleaded with the young reader not to fall into licentious conduct. Creating a sense of moral guilt was central to this work and others like it. Its readers were told, "What a snare the wonderful organism of the eye may become when used to read corrupt books or to look upon licentious scenes at the theatre, or when used to meet the fascinating gaze of

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44. I. D. Sankey and P. P. Bliss, Sacred songs and solos No. 110.

45. Inscription inside the cover of H. Varley, Lecture to Men (1877).

the harlot."[46] Husbands and wives were urged to practise restraint, youths were told of the "destructive sin of masturbation or self-abuse", and in a passage which the young Lachlan underlined were warned against wanton women and the dangers of illicit sexual intercourse, "It is wellknown that, unless a young girl has been mentally debauched by licentious novels or lewd companionships, or in some way roused to unholy passion, she naturally possesses great modesty and power of self-restraint ... the overtures to this sin come almost exclusively from the male side."[47]

The McBean children were also given religious education through works they read at home like those of the prolific author 'A.L.O.E.', who wrote titles like, The triumph over Midian and Exiles in Babylon. Within the framework of a thin story the writer attempted to influence youthful minds with the introduction of a series of religious themes. The story of Midian was an exposition of the Old Testament story about the Israelite hero Gideon. The author proclaimed that his task was, "endeavouring to show that the same faith by which heroes of old out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of aliens, is still, as the gift of God's grace, bestowed on the lowliest Christian."[48] Unashamedly evangelical these works attempted to convert the young minds of their readers to the straight and narrow path of Victorian middle class Christianity. In Exiles in Babylon, 'A.L.O.E.' followed a similar route declaring that the "high integrity, piety, and courage of the prophet (Daniel)

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46. H. Varley, Lecture to men p. 5.

47. Ibid pp. 7 & 21.

48. 'A.L.O.E.', The triumph over Midian p.v.

... is also an example we should copy."[49]

The messages of this literature were plain. Wealth, social status and power were meaningless without the strength of a pious mind. In one lecture 'A.L.O.E.' declared, "Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." He follows up this pointed statement against the wealthy and privileged with, "In ourselves we are dust and ashes; life, honour, riches, immortality, all we may have in Him (Christ); all we can have in Him alone!"[50]

There were also lighter sides to Lachlan McBean's education. He was taught art and imitated the romantic artists. His charcoal and pencil drawings are not pathetic attempts but well-formed thoughts on Arcadian subjects. Perhaps inspired by some of the books he read at home like, Spanish Pictures or The World at Home, his sketches are wholly European in subject. Broken castle walls, stone grottos complete with gothic skeletons, village market-place scenes, and fat, well-grazed cattle were all conjured up by the thoughts of a young man who stood to inherit a hundred thousand acres of barren, dusty land covered with mallee and a few river gums in the dry creek beds.

Another part of the young pastoralist's informal education helped equip him with the manners appropriate to genteel society. He read The principles of elocution, and suffered the hardships of learning the latest dances. So adept was young McBean at his dancing practice that some wag pencilled in his image next to a Shakespearean text,

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49. 'A.L.O.E.', Exiles in Babylon p.v.

50. Ibid pp. 183-184.

When you do dance, I wish you
A wave o' the sea
That you might ever do
Nothing but that. 51

In a letter which Lachlan's brother Alexander wrote at the start of a school term, he told of the type of entertainment the children had at home, "On Thursday night some friends came ... we had a very pleasant night for there was music, singing and dancing till twelve o'clock".[52]

The young McBeans were also encouraged to pursue the genteel sporting pastimes of the hunt at their Baldon estate. Photographs of a shooting party at Baldon show the young huntsmen posing with their weapons and a formidable bag. Surmounted by pith helmets, surrounded by greyhounds and whippets, and their retainers looking on with deferential admiration, the McBeans looked the picture of rural gentry in the field. Other accounts of Baldon social life describe the homestead as, "the scene of much hospitality" and entertainment for the South Australian elite: "Kangaroo hunts and the abundance of game generally made an invitation to Baldon one to be envied. Lord and Lady Kintore, during their vice-regal term at Adelaide Government House, spent a happy week at the station, and Commissioner Peterswald and Mr. F. J. Sanderson, Collector of Customs and President of the Marine Board, were frequent guests".[53]

After the years of his formal education Lachlan was also given a vocational education by his family. Immediately after his schooling he spent two years at Baldon with his father. Then, as his brothers

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51. STE, McBFP.

52. A. McBean to E. G. Fry, 8 October 1875 STE, McBFP.

53. Founders of Australia, R. Cockburn, Pastoral pioneers of South Australia vol. 2. p. 83.

The young pastoralists: the McBeans with a hunting bag at Baldon

The McBean hunting party with a governor on a kangaroo hunt at Baldon

had done, he went to work for Goldsborough Mort & Co. in their woolstores where, "he acquired an extensive business knowledge of the pastoral industry", as a biographer put it.[54] His brother Alexander who suffered a similar apprenticeship noted that it was uncle Lachlan at Woorooma who decided this side of his nephews' education. In a letter to his sister Isabella, Alexander described how 'Uncle' had marked out his course starting at Woorooma, thence to Goldsborough Mort's in Melbourne, and thence again to one of Lachy's stations, Rawbelle, in Queensland. Alexander wondered, "I do not know whether I am going back to R. Goldsborough & Co.'s or to Woorooma but I think Woorooma will be my destiny". His whole conduct in business or pleasure he told Isabella, depended upon "if uncle would consent".[55]

The new pastoral elite lavished considerable money and care on their children's educations. They evidently did not believe that what had been good enough for their fathers was good enough for the sons. The idea of education as a complement to wealth was as much a part of the mental baggage they carried to South Australia as the idea of the country estate.

However, the education they chose differed in some important respects from the education given to the landed gentry of England. It was heavily influenced by the educational theory and practice devised for the edification and elevation of the lower-middle and upper working classes of Britain. It was less classical, more practical. This education was finished not by a university degree

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54. Founders of Australia.

55. A. McBean to I. McBean 4 November 1877 McBFP.

but by a practical apprenticeship in business.

'Character' and mental achievement were less emphasised than hard work and piety. Our pastoralists' children were taught the religion of the English lower-middle classes along with the manners and recreations of the upper class.

CHAPTER NINE

THE RISE AND TRANSFIGURATION OF THE PASTORAL GENTRY

George Fife Angas died on the 16 May 1879. He was hailed in death as a founding father of the colony of South Australia and a symbol for others to follow. One eulogist in the Adelaide press wrote, "Let us embalm his virtues by imitating them".[1] Others in the press felt that his death was an indicator of the changing nature of South Australian society, it was,

> Like the snapping asunder of another strand in the cord, every year becoming more slender, which connects the present position of South Australia with the energetic efforts of the small band of Englishmen who conceived the project of starting a new British colony on these shores. 2

In fact, his death heralded the passing of the first generation of the pastoral elite. In the next quarter of a century Joseph Keynes, Alexander and Lachlan McBean and George Melrose died. They left large estates to their children and a life-style far above anything they experienced in their own British youth. This chapter will discuss the finishing mentalities of the pastoralists and contrast them to their own starting mentalities in Britain, the mentality of the 'genuine' English squirearchy, and the mentalities of their sons.

There was nothing more certain than that in material terms the Australian pastoral life of Angas, Keynes, the McBeans and Melrose had been hugely successful. Angas was said to be a man of "great riches", and his will proved it. His estate was valued at £443,000.[3] Keynes' estate was valued at a little over £80,000, Alexander McBean's at £12,500 in 1903 after he had distributed most of his wealth to his

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1. Register, 21 May 1879.
2. Register, 17 May 1879.
3. Ibid. See also E. Williams, A way of life p. 136.

children and George Melrose's at £216,914.[4] Lachlan McBean's enormous estate is hard to tally because much of his business was conducted by word of mouth and records not kept. His recorded estate amounted to £200,000.[5] However, his New South Wale's property alone included his main station of Woorooma, the next door properties Windouran and Windouran Block C and the whole town of Moulamein, bar the odd block or two. He payed for two of his nephews' properties in cash and these transactions are not recorded in the estate. In 1889 he payed £108,000 for Alexander McBean's property Kirndeen, near Culcairn in Victoria, and in 1891 he again payed over £100,000 for Lachlan McBean Grant to purchase Butherwah and Colombo Creek stations near Urana in New South Wales.[6] The press may not have exaggerated when they wrote that, "He was immensely wealthy, and is said to have owned land worth over £2,000,000."[7]

The pastoralists' wealth had lifted them to a plane far above their starting point in Britain. How had their mentalities changed over time? This will be discussed by looking at their attitudes towards wealth and class, religion, and politics during their final years, and then contrasting them to their attitudes in the days of their youth.

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4. The total of Keynes' estate comes from Jos. Keynes Estate papers in KFP. George Melrose's and Alexander McBean's estates come from the South Australian Registry of Probates, South Australian Supreme Court.

5. Lachlan McBean's estates that were issued publicly appeared in the Probate Office of the Supreme Court of Victoria. Mention was also made of his estate in the Narrandera Argus, 23 January 1894.

6. Totals payed out for L. McBean's nephews' properties appear on plans of the estates in McBFP and on a contract in the possession of Mr. R. Whitehead, Butherwah, Urana, N.S.W.

7. Reports about McBean's estate being worth £2,000,000 were cited in the Narrandera Argus, 23 January 1894 and in the Register, 24 January 1894. The report in the Register was compiled by F. J. Sanderson, McBean's close friend and South Australian collector of customs and would appear to have some authority.

George Fife Angas' views on wealth and class had always been dominated by his religious sensibilities. His biographer recorded that in the last years of his life he came to the conclusion that wealth was a means of doing good to others and that a Christian should avoid, "display of any kind, and 'let his moderation be known unto all men'".[8] Henry Hussey, who acted as Angas' private secretary in his old age, maintained that Angas was South Australia's greatest Christian philanthropist. Hussey said that Angas was constantly inundated with begging letters. He quoted from one of Angas' replies to show how he reponded to the death of a young minister's child, "I wish you to inform Mr. Harkness [the minister] that I will re-imburse him for the expenses of the doctor's bill, and for the funeral of his poor dear child ... No doubt the child is taken away from the evil to come."[9] A later historian of South Australian pioneers claimed that Angas was giving away £10,000 per year to various charities at this time of his life.[10]

However openhanded Angas' philanthropic motivation his ideas about class and society were strictly conservative. His secretary said that Angas believed in a man knowing his station in society and that he should be prepared to accept whatever God ordained for him. Furthermore,

> He deplored the spread of democracy and the increase of socialism; and even expressed regret that the Colony he had assisted to establish upon what he considered sound Liberal principles threatened to become the hotbed of institutions subversive to law and order. 11

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8. E. Hodder, George Fife Angas pp. 418-419.

9. H. Hussey, Colonial life and christian experience p. 317.

10. A. Grenfell-Price, Founders and pioneers of South Australia p. 90.

11. Hussey, op cit p. 403.

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George Fife Angas

Angas sought to retain the status quo in a South Australia where he stood at the pinnacle of society. Again, his secretary claimed that Angas' views about class, and also wealth, did not stem from any sense of his own gain, but from a belief that it was part of God's ordained creational process in the world. On the old man's eighty-sixth birthday the secretary wrote some lines of doggerel to express these thoughts,

> To free mankind from error's chain,
> That they eternal life might gain,
> Your time and means have been engaged,
> And, though the enemy has raged,
> The contest you have nobly waged. 12

The best description of Angas' attitudes towards money and men came from his eulogists shortly after his death. Another large-scale pastoralist George Hawker was keenly aware of Angas' paternalist attitudes towards lower classes and said that there was no-one else in South Australia "who had made better use of his wealth or done more to advance the welfare ... of his fellow men".[13] Another eulogist in the same paper said that Angas was an astute and subtle manager of his worldly goods, "He did not squander it away in idle follies or frivolous amusements". The writer went on to say that Angas had become identified with the established landed wealth of the nation and had been "a shrewd penetrating man ... he scorned to act the part of a wealth parvenu in any of the fashionable absurdities of the day."[14]

As Angas' secretary stated, the South Australian progenitor's

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12. Ibid p. 372.

13. Register, 17 May 1879.

14. Ibid.

ideas about property stemmed from his religious views. Indeed, religion motivated Angas' life. A strict, if not narrow-minded, protestant he sought to give the world religious truths akin to his own convictions. When he felt that the Roman Catholic church was making dangerous inroads on the South Australian populace he had between fifteen and twenty thousand tracts and papers published and organised a religious journal solely for the purpose of spreading the ideals of the protestant reformation.[15] Further, he payed out large sums of his money to enable men to become full-time missionaries and evangelists of the protestant cause.[16]

His private religious life also reflected this zealous application to duty. When a friend's brother fell ill he reminded the colleague that even in the midst of affliction religion was a source of comfort,

> Let us be thankful that our sufferings are so slight compared with your brother's but still more, may a contemplation of the sufferings of our blessed Lord, which demanded the strength of the heavenly host to enable Him to endure them enlarge our love to Christ, when we recollect that not for His sins, but for our's, He suffered! Oh, may this love of Jesus constrain us to serve Him better, and love Him more than we have ever yet done. 17.

As the editor of the Register put it, "With him the sense of duty and of personal responsibility to a higher than any merely earthly power was as paramount as with the old Puritans, and unless we are mistaken this was the key to those aspects of his character which to many might appear uninviting and even repellant."[18]

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15. Hussey, op cit p. 324.

16. Ibid p. 310.

17. Ibid p. 313.

18. Register, 17 May 1879.

Even in his political views Angas looked to religion to guide his thoughts. As one of his eulogists wrote, "I am sure he sought to act up to the principles of Divine Law in every vote he gave in our Legislative Council".[19] However, his political views had become more and more conservative during his latter years.[20] As his secretary Hussey noted, his "sound Liberal Principles" were out of place in the progressive politics of the colony. His political views though appeared far more Tory to his opponents whom he considered to be endangering the God-ordained order of society.[21] Again Hussey invoked his unsubtle poetry to try and describe Angas' approach to public politics,

> And when the country gave the call,
> T' attend the Legislative Hall,
> Your counsels, though sometimes despised,
> Would oft have proved a prudent guide,
> E'en at the cost of humbled pride. 22

Angas stood for the privileged in South Australian society. He seemed to act in most areas of his life in an arrogantly individual way with little thought about what the majority felt. Even his eulogists admitted that he was not a popular man.[23]

According to the Register's reporter, at the celebration of Angas' ninetieth birthday, the old pastoralist summed up his life thus, "he was grateful to Divine Providence that he had been spared to see the fruits of his labours in the sound and rapid development of the colony ... He trusted that by Divine help he had kept the faith, and by that same power he would be sustained to the last."[24]

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19. Ibid.
20. Grenfell-Price, op cit p. 90.
21. Hussey, op cit p. 403; Register, 17 May 1879.
22. Hussey, op cit, p. 372.
23. Register, 17 May 1879.
24. Ibid.

Despite the increase in his wealth and social position Angas held to his lower-middle class religious beliefs until his death. They were his life's motivation.

Joseph Keynes too had ascended the ladder of colonial success even though his initial ventures had sometimes faltered. At his death the valuer of his estate made an inventory of his personal property which clearly showed how the pastoralist cherished life's material blessings. His house was filled with the trappings of luxury. In breakfast room, dining room, bedrooms, office and drawing rooms, cedar and walnut furniture and fine trinkets abounded. The conservative estimate of the furniture's worth amounted to the sum one of Keynes' employees received in a year. When the implements around the property and the stock were added the value of Keynes' property, excluding land, at the time of his death amounted to nearly £5,500.[25]

Keynes had also distributed his wealth outside rural domains. His estate's account books showed that he invested increasing amounts of capital in the share-market during his last years. His files are full of scrip from firms like the Port Adelaide Dock Co., the Mitcham Tramway Co., the Adelaide and Suburban Tramway Co., the Westport Coal-mining Co., the Adelaide Meat Preserving Co., the Adelaide Woollen Mills, and the De Lissa Pioneer Sugar Co. to name but a few.[26] In November 1883 the Adelaide and Suburban Tramway Co. payed out £60 dividend on nearly £4,400 invested. The other investments returned similar amounts and indicated that by the time of his

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25. 'Inventory of Joseph Keynes' personal effects', Jos. Keynes Estate KFP.

26. The link between South Australian rural and urban capital is explored in depth in J. B. Hirst, Adelaide and the country, 1870-1917.

The older pastoralists in the twilight of their years

Joseph Keynes

death Keynes had sunk most of his rural profits into urban based companies.[27]

Yet, for all this invested wealth Keynes was also a careful businessman on the rural estate. His accounts were meticulously made out every week. However, he hated being queried about money matters and when one stock agent forced him to a lower price for his sheep at the market place his opinions soured. He called the stock agent "the meanest man I have dealt with in many a year".[28] In money matters Keynes was undoubtedly frugal. He was unwilling to bicker about prices and his investments were all in stocks of established companies assured of a return. Moreover, these investments aligned him with the conservative Adelaide money establishment.

Like Angas, Keynes did not approve the trend to social freedom developing in South Australia. To the last he kept up his self-assumed dignity as a paternal squire going into Angaston to sit as one of its local magistrates. He refused to grant a licence for the opening of a wine-shop in Keyneton, considering it detrimental to the community. Further, he disliked what he termed the "Larrikins" of the Angaston lower-classes and took evident pleasure in fining some of them 40s. each. His lofty verdict expressed his hope that "they went home wiser if not sadder men".[29]

Another confirmation of Keynes' high position in society was the marriage of his daughters to families of appropriate social standing. His youngest daughter Ellen, for example, married a Bagot whose family were wealthy stock and station agents at the top of

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27. Jos. Keynes Estate, cashbook p. 3 KFP.

28. J. Keynes, Daily Journal, 28 September 1880 KFP.

29. Ibid, 15 October 1878, 3 April 1879.

Adelaide society. His social life too, seldom extended beyond dining with other families on the same level. He frequently met the Melroses and the McBeans on social occasions.[30] These were not rare occurrences but part of a never-ending round of social visits among the elite.

On the 29 July 1880 Joseph Keynes reached his seventieth birthday. His first recorded thoughts in his journal looked to God, to whom he was, "very thankful for the mercies of my past life". His prayer on that day was an echo of one of the Old Testament patriarchs that he might, "die the death of the righteous".[31] Privately, Keynes attempted to keep the Sabbatarian rules of his fathers. When his son Richard visited a friend for lunch on a Sunday, the old man inwardly fumed at the youthful audacity, "Richard, Ellen & Miss Minna Oldham left for Murray Vale, they went in the express wagon. I do not like my people travelling on a Sunday. I hope it will not happen again."[32]

Just as he felt it his right to comment on his son's wayward actions, so it was his right to guide the religious lives of the workers on his estate and the local community. He took his public religious role seriously and deemed it his responsibility to comment when the church collections were too low, or when the morals of his workers needed guidance. Thus, the North Rhine chapel congregation were told that, "they put rather a low value on the souls of their children" when the Sunday School offering was thin.[33] When the

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30. Ibid, 12 July 1879, 2 September 1879, 3 November 1881 e.g.

31. Ibid, 29 July 1880.

32. Ibid, 27 June 1880.

33. Ibid, 17 November 1878.

chapel minister did not come up to the mark Keynes commented, "... a very indifferent sermon. I pay him £9 a Quarter 13 weeks, 12s. a week & 4s. over. I do not get value received, hope he will improve."[34] His workers on the estate were given half-holidays when the chapel held tea-meetings and they were told to attend.[35]

Publicly the nonchalant landed gentleman, privately Keynes stuck to the austere gospel of his youth. Nothing shows this as well as the epitaphs he wished for his tombstone and the local chapel. The chapel wall reminded the congregation that their local gentleman was, "Absent from the body present with the Lord". The headstone above his grave told the reader that in all facets of his life his religious faith was central,

> Should all the forms that men devise,
> assault my faith with treacherous art,
> I'd call them vanity and lies,
> and clasp the gospel to my heart. 36

Politically, Keynes aligned himself with the rest of the South Australian pastoralists to protect the interests of property. When two noted pastoralists were standing for the local electorate, Keynes recorded, "Messrs. Baker & Angas met the North Rhine and Hundred of Bagot electors at the Temperance Hall North Rhine. They gave a clear & Lucid statement of their views, were listened to with attention, received a vote of thanks for their past services & all hands held up in their favour none held up against them."[37] Keynes' conservative

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34. Ibid, 8 August 1880.

35. Ibid, 24 November 1879.

36. The wall plaque hangs in the Keyneton Congregational chapel, and J. Keynes' grave lies in the Keyneton cemetery.

37. J. Keynes, Daily Journal 10 February 1875 KFP.

political stance was expressed in his dislike for the 'democratic' movements of some of the urban based governments in South Australia. During an election talk at Burra he took aside Captain Hart one of the candidates and, "Told him the only sensible thing Parliament had done for the last two years was to build a Lunatic Asylum & they would have to build plenty more if things were not managed better than they had been lately."[38]

By the late 1880s Lachlan McBean was over 70 years old and renowned for his tightfistedness. One local newspaper writer near his New South Wales' property said he was "fond enough of the almighty dollars", a fact only too well known to those itinerant employees who worked for McBean. Their cry was,

> If you think that you're fat
> and you want to be lean,
> Just go and work
> for old Lachy McBean. 39

This rhyme became so well known that the family handed it down through generations, and shearers in the north of New South Wales repeat it to this day.[40] The local pro-pastoralist newspaper in McBean's territory painted his acquisitive nature in more favourable terms,

> An unique man ... thoroughly independent financially and otherwise. He is liberally endowed with firmness and tact - so necessary in the management of men ... Among the miscellaneous possessions of Mr. McBean, is the township of Moulamein. With the exception of a few unimportant blocks he owns the lot, and is looked upon by the inhabitants as - what he really is - the Lord of the Manor. 41

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38. Ibid, 15 December 1871.

39. Pastoral Times, 15 October 1887; H. H. Peck, Memoirs of a stockman p. 129.

40. Oral interview, Mr. C. L. McBean, October 1978; Oral interview with Mr. W. J. Kilpatrick, Bimbella, Deniliquin, October 1979. Brian Cooper, a part-time shearer of Putchera, S.A. remembered hearing the rhyme from the head of his shearing team at Cobar, N.S.W. in 1979.

41. Pastoral Times, 15 October 1887.

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Lachlan McBean

However, the squire's cloak was not one which McBean wore comfortably on his rustic shoulders.

McBean was the living embodiment of Scrooge. His attitude to and love of wealth ran all parts of his life. Even his own family was not exempt from his harsh frugality. When his nephew Alexander McBean could not keep up the interest repayments on his Kirndeen property, uncle Lachlan put pressure on him. Because of some type of legal loophole in the property settlement Alexander took his uncle to court. The affair was eventually settled outside the courts but Lachlan's anger was undiminished. When Lachlan's will was read the papers reported that a nephew had been struck out.[42]

Lachlan's attitude towards the labouring classes was formed by what work and obedience he could get out of them. Those same shearers who coined the rhyme about McBean's tightfistedness probably heard the stories about his eccentric notion of demanding unquestioned loyalty from would-be workers. Legend has it that men were made to plant cabbage seedlings upside down, or shift dirt from one post-hole to another along a fence line until all that was left was an empty hole and a pile of dirt 400 metres from the starting point.[43] W. G. Spence the volatile trade union leader of the late nineteenth century attacked not the eccentricity but the undoubted victimisation of these workers,

> Another widespread takedown by the squatters was the high prices charged for rations. Most of them refused to allow those engaged to work for them to purchase anything elsewhere than at the station store, many not even allowing a hawker on the ground. Pre-union prices are indicated by those charged by Locky McBean at Moulamein ... the town was less than a mile away, and things were not cheap there. Flour in town was

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42. The property wrangle between A. McBean and L. McBean is recorded in letters in the Whitehead papers in the LaTrobe Library, Victoria. Particularly, L. McBean Grant to L. McBean, 2 August 1893. A. McBean's being struck out of the will is in Narrandera Argus, 27 February 1894.

43. W. J. Kilpatrick interview, op cit.

> 17s6d per bag; at the station it was £3-2s6d; tobacco - town 6s, station 12s6d, matches, 6d in town, and one shilling on the station. All other requirements were charged at proportionate rates. 44

McBean was ever concerned to subjugate his workmen's will to his own. In 1888 during a union disturbance at Woorooma, shearers were arrested and committed for trial when the overseer was injured in the fray; one man got 9 months imprisonment.[45] During the same year McBean brought actions against 3 workers absconding from hired service, after signing an agreement to split 600 post and rails.[46] Actions of this nature were repeatedly before the Moulamein bench, as well as McBean's oft seen presence at the small debts court. He was noted as gaining cases involving 3/-, £1-2-11, and the four briefs involving a total claim of 19/4.[47] A penny saved was a penny earned.

Few records are available to assess McBean's religious sentiments at this time, but perhaps this lack of material speaks for itself. Not even his tombstone, a large brown granite obelisk at the Deniliquin cemetery, has a religious message on it. None of the letters between he and his nephews Lachlan McBean Grant and Lachlan McBean ever mentioned religion. The sole concern of these communications was uncle Lachlan's property. Again with politics. It can only be seen that McBean detested organised labour and the governments that allowed working men to combine. Spence, the unionist, quoted a letter from McBean that stated this clearly:

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44. W. G. Spence, History of the A.W.U. pp. 15-16.

45. Ibid, p. 41.

46. CPS Moulamein 7/8966.3, State Archives of N.S.W.

47. Ibid, 7/8966.3, 7/89711.

"It is now time to press Parliament to bring in a bill like the crimes bill in Ireland to punish first the leaders and agitators and then those that are led on and take part in evils that disturb the peace of the nation and the prosperity of the country."[48]

McBean's eulogists combine in strengthening the view that he was avaricious and self-interested; although they expressed it euphemistically. The Narrandera Argus said he was "a most frugal man". The writer then described the frugality in practice and said that McBean used to drive into Deniliquin and stay on the north side of the river to avoid paying toll, and camped under the bridge to avoid paying a hotel.[49] The Pastoral Times was a little kinder and merely noted that, "He was frequently close or exacting in small matters, but in important transactions he had a bold and liberal policy, and was very quick in dealing no matter how large the purchase or sale may be."[50] The Register in Adelaide felt that many would be shocked by the sudden departure of "a most industrious and frugal man".[51] The world's praises were perhaps kinder in death than life; a mean and narrow mind being deemed a valuable adjunct to the work ethic.

George Melrose died on 8 April 1894. A writer in the Register said he "held high rank among those who have assisted in the making of South Australia". This same writer said that Melrose was always conscious in his South Australian life that success would be measured

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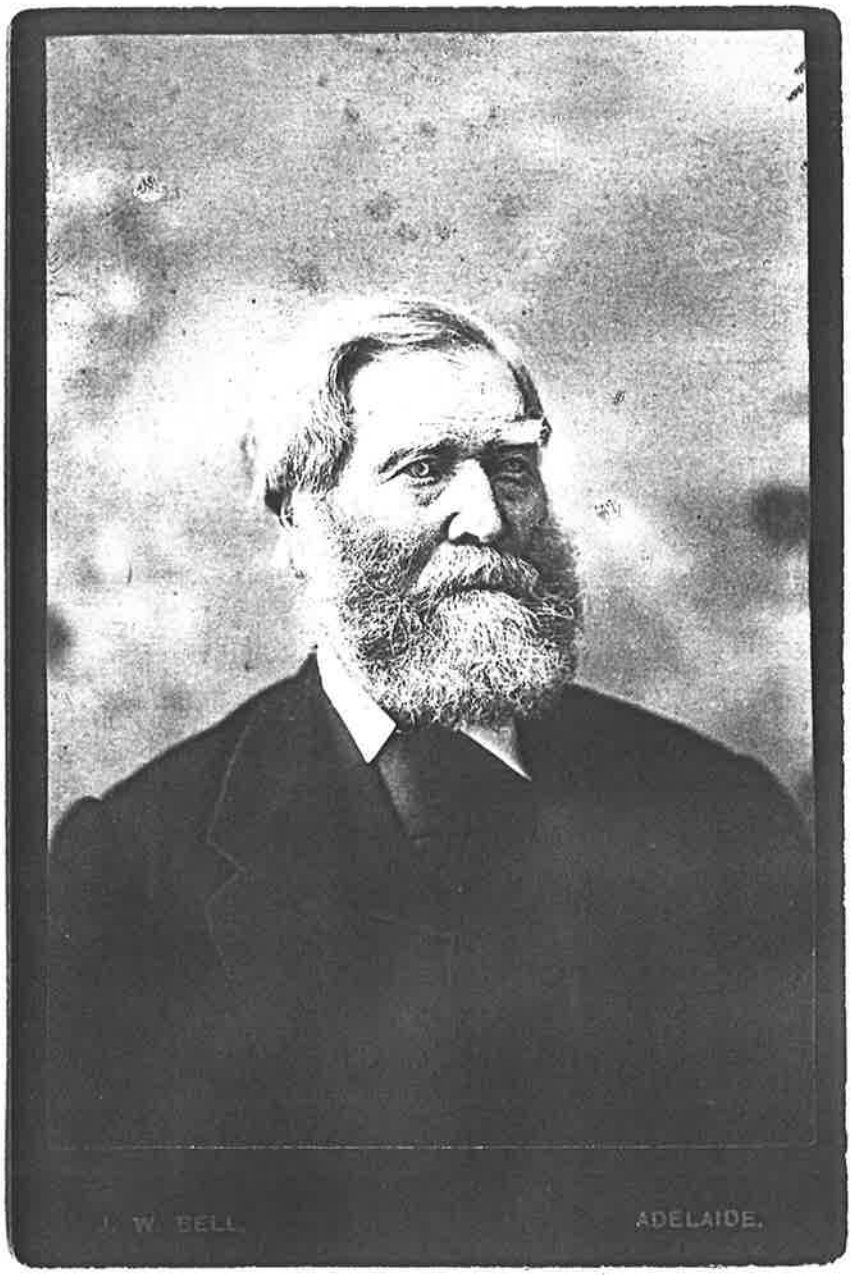
48. Spence, op cit p. 32.

49. Narrandera Argus, 29 January 1894.

50. Pastoral Times, 20 January 1894.

51. Register, 24 January 1894.



The older pastoralists in the twilight of their years

George Melrose

in material achievements and he "lost no time in turning to the best account the opportunities afforded him for acquiring an independence."[52] If Melrose was such an opportunist, then he was an extremely successful one. The South Australian press published a full account of Melrose's will after probate was granted in the Supreme Court. Although there was no comment next to the will the large headlines indicated the estate's extent "THE LATE MR. GEORGE MELROSE. ESTATE VALUED AT £216,914".[53] The Mount Pleasant sheepfarmer had gathered a wealth of property throughout South Australia. His eulogist claimed that Melrose was not affected by the wealth that surrounded him, "A stern independence, indomitable courage and perseverance, and an eminently practical nature were his prominent characteristics. He was a man of strong individuality but great simplicity of character, and ever a vigorous enemy to any show of pride or vanity."[54]

However, no matter what the eulogist penned, Melrose had become keenly aware that he now differed from other men and that he was at the top of society's tree. To the fifty tenants, many of them Germans who rented Melrose's land, the pastoralist must often have seemed like a Scots baron during the highland clearances. When Gottlieb Schultz fell on hard times and his property fell into disarray, Melrose threatened, "You have thrown youself completely in my power, through trespass, not fencing and overdue rent. I shall if I hear any more complaints ... take possession of your

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52. G. Melrose obituary in newspaper cuttings, MFP.

53. Estate of the late Mr. George Melrose, in newspaper cuttings, MFP.

54. G. Melrose obituary, op cit.

holding."[55] Authority emanated from Rosebank and cast a blanket of ownership over the surrounding settlements and people: Mount Pleasant's main thoroughfare became known as Melrose Street.

The recognition of his changed place in society affected other aspects of Melrose's life. Once a supporter of the Church of Scotland, his funeral service was now conducted by the local Church of England incumbent at Mount Pleasant and his remains interred in the Anglican cemetry.[56] If Melrose's religious affiliations changed as his societal status rose then his family was keen to remind the lower classes of Mount Pleasant where he stood in their community when he lived. The interior of the Church of Scotland, so unused to embellishment of any sort was overwhelmed by the depictions in stained glass of George Melrose and his wife Euphemia. Euphemia achieved apotheosis as a madonna blessing the little children, while above George's image of a halo-crowned warrior armed with the two-edged sword of God's word and a sacred scroll - gentle, yet fiercely righteous - stood the epitaph, "Prove all things - Hold fast that which is good".

It is not certain whether Melrose attached himself to any political parties. However, it is certain that he said he would support any candidates who favoured the interests of larger land-holders.[57]

After decades of hard work, sharp dealing, and great success, the pastoralists went to their final reward. The material distance

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55. G. Melrose to G. Schulz, 3 December 1881 MFP.

56. G. Melrose obituary op cit.

57. G. Melrose to J. B. Spence, 15 April 1881 MFP.

they had traversed since leaving Britain was greater than the mental distance. The religiously expressed maxims of their youth had proved to be of surprisingly durable utility in the course of their social ascent. This may seem paradoxical because viewed from the perspective of their beginnings, their upbringing stressed contentment with one's lot and acceptance of a lowly position in society. The resolution of the paradox is to be found in another part of their early education which approved advancement for the godly and hardworking husbandman.

Each of the pastoralists-to-be carried with him to South Australia a well defined notion of the rightness of social ascendancy for the possessors of rural wealth, even if they had not been educated to play the role of squire with the assurance of those to the manor born. They responded to the promise of Wakefield's scheme of colonization, not because it promised democracy or paradise for dissenters, but because it promised the possibility of upward mobility within a society ordered as nearly as possible on English hierarchical lines. Therefore, the religion which consoled them for their lower rank in Britain was equally satisfactory as justification for their grand position in Adelaide.

George Fife Angas dreamed in his younger English days of a land where the middle classes would reign. Although he felt that God ordained the order of society, he also believed that if men were pious and diligent in business and did all things in moderation, then it would be, "the blessing of God that causes our prosperity".[58]

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58. G. F. Angas to F. Lester, 22 July 1837 SAA PRG 174/10/16.

Godliness and success in business were inseparable.

His youthful political feelings were also dictated by his religious fervour. He was known as a Liberal vitally interested in social reform, and religious and educational equality. A later writer in the Register described his early political motivations thus,

> Having been identified in early life with many movements which at their initiation had to struggle against unpopularity and misunderstanding, it was not to be expected that in his political career ... he would be carried headlessly along with the tide of popular feeling. A Liberal in the truest sense of the word, at a time when to be a Liberal meant much more than the ready acceptance of a few platitudes, he preserved that true independence which is the natural outcome of careful thought and conscientious conviction. 59

He sought a society, like that he believed to have been envisioned by William Penn in America, where the whole order from the smallest to the greatest would be protected and blessed by Providence. Men would aim to serve God and do good to others, and at the same time enjoy private success, without endangering the established order.

Joseph Keynes was also taught that it was imperative to keep the balance of the social order. His uncle John James and his own father continuously reminded him that man should accept his place within society and strive for a heavenly reward if an earthly one did not appear. Yet, he was also reminded that it was in God's plan for some men to succeed in life, "No man is forbidden to improve his condition in this world nor required to stop short in his ascending path, into which he has been led by Providence, much less turn out of it."[60]

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59. Register, 17 May 1879.

60. J. A. James, The Christian professor p. 259.

Keynes was taught that religion and everyday business went hand in hand, "Be not slothful ... in dependence on God ... aim at self-improvement."[61] Religion, Keynes was informed, was the centre of all things. One's life motivation, daily experience, success, failure, and future hope all grew from that God-controlled source. Therefore, Keynes' political indoctrination was in keeping with this view. He, like Angas, was taught to believe that politics should be concerned in doing good to all men under God's grace. Without changing his religious opinions, he moved to a position more politically conservative than that of the family he left behind. His English relations often expressed quite radical opinions. His father wrote him that large, landed proprietors should be prepared to lessen their hold over large tracts of land, and that the aristocracy should stop leeching the resources of Britain's poorer population.[62] His sister Elizabeth schooled by the same master wrote him not long after his emigration,

> Universal, continuous and increasing is the murmur against the oppressive taxation pervading every grade of the middling and lower classes ... the simultaneous movement of every country in Europe which followed the French Revolution found all observers in a state of wondering amazement to which has succeeded close enquiry and fixed attention - Yet these changes, apparently so sudden have been the work of many years during which popular principles have been gradually undermining the strongholds of despotism and aristocratic influence. 63

Privileged positions of influence and power were not popular with the Keynes family, and yet Joseph later seemed to gladly accept the privilege.

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61. R. Keynes, The Aged pastor, p. 6.

62. R. Keynes to J. Keynes, 2 June 1841 KFP.

63. E. Keynes to J. Keynes, 28 March 1848 KFP.

Lachlan McBean was also schooled in an environment which stressed God's sovereignty over mankind's affairs. The books he read like Blair's Sermons declared that it was man's business to order his life's fortune and to strive incessantly for material success. At the same time Blair acknowledged that it was part of man's role in society to obey, "the duty of subordination to lawful superiors".[64] McBean's religious teachings also stressed the inter-relation of piety and success. In fact, it was "Divine Legislation" which ordered the affairs of men and blessed the righteous.[65]

McBean admitted in his later years that even as early as 1833 his political convictions were motivated by the rights of property. He told Spence, the Australian union leader, that the forces which sought to break down society based on property were the "villanies of loafers, agitators sucking the wages of working men out of their pockets".[66] Property, religion and righteous rewards formed the base of McBean's early thought.

George Melrose's early ideas on wealth, class, religion and society, contained the same trends which formed the ideas of the other pastoralists. He equated wealth and success with an ability to recognise one's position in society and an application to moral and religious virtues. His own home district had a reputation for producing folk who were, "sober, industrious and economical" and who had the ability to rise in society "by their economy".[67]

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64. H. Blair, Sermons vol. 2, p. 419.

65. Ibid, p. 421.

66. L. McBean to W. G. Spence, 25 February 1888 in Spence, op cit p. 32.

67. Statistical Account of Scotland (1794) vol. 5, No. xx p. 327.

Behind this link of piety and success lay a most conservative Calvinist religious upbringing which saw the hand of God in the events of men and proposed a stable political environment.

When the pastoralists' finishing mentalities are measured against those of their youth it is evident that although on a public level there are some obvious changes, their private views show the tenacity of their early convictions. Angas and Keynes for example chose to exhibit the public front of a landed gentry with their mansions and estates, but did not desert to the Church of England. Melrose, although he did change affiliations, might have justified the change on the ground that he was fulfilling the laws of self-improvement laid out in his youth. McBean, lost the piety instilled by the teachings of his youth, but held tightly to the maxims about ordering one's worldly fortune and looking for its increase unceasingly. One most notable change though was their attitude towards the lower classes themselves. Now that they were at the top they were most concerned with an ordered, stable society which discouraged unsettling notions of the rights of men.

With the exception of Lachlan McBean the pastoralists had sought to have themselves publicly acknowledged as an Australian landed gentry. But a comparison of their views on a whole range of matters and those of the established landed gentry in Britain reveals vital differences.

The Victorian British gentry was notoriously certain of its role in society and its attitudes to wealth, class, religion and politics. As F. M. L. Thompson argued about wealth for example, the life of the landed gentry was one "of leisure with freedom to pursue occupations that were not dictated by the compulsion of

economic necessity".[68] In many respects the large British landowners left the running of their estates and general finances to others more capable. They took on, what Thompson called, "the look of a remittance man, recipient of the neat surplus".[69] Concern about money-making was something to be scorned by a country gentleman. Rather his task as W. C. Guttsman pointed out in a source book on the English ruling class, was to lead the district in work and play:

> A country gentleman, for example, hunts and shoots, goes to magistrates' meetings, and to the quarter sessions, and finds an immense variety of occupations in the management of his estate and affairs. He is almost sure to be something of a lawyer, something of a farmer, and, in these days, very probably he is something of a soldier as well. At all events, as the head of the family, he has, like the Centurion, servants under him, and he says 'to one man come, and he cometh, and to another go, and he goeth.' 70

The landed gentry assumed a god-given right to their place at the pinnacle of what Thompson termed "the deference society".[71] It was expected that the lower orders would accept the gentry's leadership in government and indeed, in the overall ordering of life. As one mid-Victorian writer expressed their view, "the intellectual superiority which the higher ranks of society must always enjoy over the lower, will involve a corresponding superiority in reference to moral and artistic matters."[72]

However, the landed gentry were not famed for piety. There were very few who imitated the public confessional faith of the seventh

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68. F. M. L. Thompson, English landed society in the nineteenth century p. 151.

69. Ibid, p. 152.

70. 'Gentlemen', Cornhill Magazine, 1862 pp. 330-335 in W. L. Guttsman (ed.) The English Ruling Class, p. 63.

71. Thompson, op cit p. 184.

72. Guttsman, op cit p. 63.

Earl of Shaftesbury.[73] The gentry were commonly thought to be more concerned about the religiosity of their tenants than themselves. The Duke of Wellington, for example, seldom attended church while in London, but as soon as he reached his country estate his opinions changed, "I consider that attendance at divine service in publick is a duty upon every individual in high station, who has a large house and many servants, and whose example might influence the conduct of others."[74] Thackeray caricatured the same attitude in his Major Arthur Pendennis. "No man, for instance, went more regularly to church when in the country than the old bachelor, 'It don't matter so much in town, Pen,' he said, 'for there the women go and the men are not missed. But when a gentleman is sur ses terres, he must give an example to the country people: and if I could turn a tune, I even think I should sing.'"[75]

The overwhelming aim of the gentry in politics was to maintain their own pre-eminence in County and national affairs, that is, to preserve the establishment. As the Duke of Wellington once wrote, "The object of the great aristocracy, and of that of the parti conservateur of this country, is to secure the crown from the mischief with which it is threatened".[76] Perhaps Bagehot's description of the Conservative stance though, is the most worthwhile, "They would alter nothing and they would let nothing be altered."[77]

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73. W. L. Arnstein, "The survival of the Victorian Aristocracy" in F. Jaher (ed.) The rich, the well-born and the powerful p. 245.

74. Ibid p. 244.

75. W. M. Thackeray, The History of Pendennis (1848) p. 97.

76. Quoted in G. Watson, The English Ideology p. 101.

77. Ibid, p. 103.

The most marked differences between the mentality of the British landed gentry and the Australian pastoralists are to be found in their attitudes to wealth and religion. To the new pastoralists, wealth was something obtained and augmented by practical means. They emphasised that their success was the result of their own work. They did not, like the British gentry, leave much of their economic affairs to subordinates, nor did they consider trade and business to be dirty words. They wore their religion on their sleeves. Angas and Keynes repeatedly stated their belief that religion was the central issue of life. Even to the end of their days they believed that a private religious faith was as important as the public demonstration of it.

In other ways, however, the pastoralists most certainly adopted the ideas of the gentry. They too sat as magistrates, enjoyed the shoot and hunt and elaborate rituals of entertainment. They laid out their estates with a conscious eye to English examples. They sent their children to boarding schools. Politically, they were very much concerned with preserving their own position in society and in seeing that 'order' was maintained.

Angas, Keynes, the McBeans and Melrose had attempted to fit their sons to take over the roles they created within society and on their home estates. How did these children conceive their place when they took over from their fathers? A few examples taken from the less extensive records left by this second generation of South Australian pastoralists may suggest an answer.

The younger generation of pastoralists seemed to find it easy to use the wealth they inherited, and act out the part of a gentry; relatively unconcerned about money. Their behaviour was ever like

that of the young rich gentry of Dickens and Thackeray, sowing their oats before they settled down. When Richard Keynes embarked on his grand tour in 1881 he found much of the boat trip over dull and recorded that he was always at the "same old game".[78] When he reached London with its faster life and the presence of other South Australian pastoral companions he pepped up considerably. Amidst the tours among the countryside were interspersed phrases like "much liquor" and "champagne and whisky" with a London friend, and the pleasure of evening meals at "The Grand".[79] When Charles Angas headed off to England soon after his father died, he told his secretary to wire a few thousand a month, and that he would cable if he needed more. Much of that money probably went on wine, women, and song : all of which he was known to relish.[80]

Lachlan McBean, Alexander's son from Baldon, was also a renowned rake. It was no secret amongst the population of his local district that Lachlan kept a madam at the Eden Valley hotel, or that his wife reacted to his philanderings by building a small addition to their home at Glen Devon, Mount Pleasant, to which she banished him. Local memories also recalled that on another occasion Lachlan exhibited an eccentric streak which few but the wealthy could have considered. In the early days of motorised transport, he like his companions, took to the roads in elegant machines. On one particular day Lachlan became totally dissatisfied with his car's performance and wishing other people to know what he thought of the car's manufacturer he

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78. R. R. Keynes, Tour Diary, 28 July 1881 KFP.

79. Ibid, 14, 19, 21 November 1881.

80. The comment on Charles Angas in Britain was told by his former secretary Mr. P. Evans who passed it on to Mr. M. D. Wright, Eden Valley, S.A. and was stated in an interview in July 1979. Henry Angas of Meningie, S.A., voiced the family's suspicions about where Charles spent his money, interview June 1980.

strung the vehicle up on a large tree in Mount Pleasant's main street.

At home the young pastoralists eagerly took to expensive field sports. Richard Keynes, Charles Angas, the Melroses and other privileged friends were ardent polo players. Keynes' daily journal is full of references to his polo escapades. Robert Melrose took obvious pride in being photographed in full team uniform astride his favourite polo pony. At Collingrove, one of the most magnificent photographs held in their collection depicts the young elite in action at the Mount Crawford polo ground. The admirers who surround them include richly costumed young women and pretty children in sailor suits and grammar school uniforms.

It was probably Robert Melrose who most seriously carried on a Victorian pose as a country squire. When his tenants suffered under the effects of a severe drought in the mid 1890s he sent note to the neighbouring district councils that a ton of flour would be sent to each of their depots for distribution to the needy.[81] Local legend has it that at a later date when he had journeyed to an Adelaide theatre and thought the performance respectable and worthy of praise he brought all the inhabitants of Mount Pleasant down to Adelaide on a hired train to see the same show and glean some of its wisdom. Such paternalistic ways compacted with a love of external show. Rosebank, rather a polite mansion in his father's day, became ringed with vegetation rivalling a botanic garden display. Its grounds at one stage boasted a deer-park, a nine hole golf course, a Shetland

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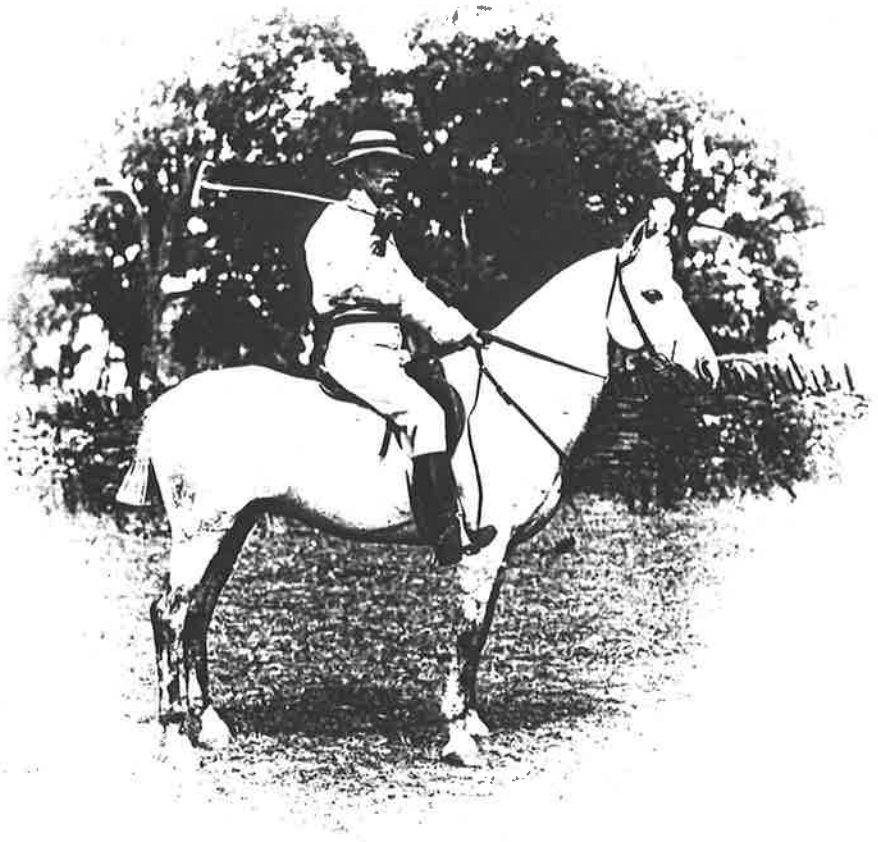
81. R. T. Melrose to D. C. Angas, 9 May 1896 MFP.

The young pastoralists

Charles Angas, Robert Melrose and friends at Mount Crawford polo ground



The young pastoralists

Robert Melrose on his polo pony

pony stud and flamingoes wandering the front drive. Robert Melrose was a gentleman of renown.

The rising generation certainly possessed an assurance of "effortless superiority" but it was not entirely tranquil. Precisely because their notion of gentility was grounded on British examples, they inevitably felt provincial in the presence of "real gentry".

Richard Keynes, who had been schooled in England, at one time rather self-consciously described he and his polo-playing cohorts as "a mob of us country bumpkins". He also went as far as to enquire from the Heralds College in London about a family crest in order to validate their gentry standing.[82] When Robert Melrose arrived in London on a grand tour and had the chance to compare his own position with the English he wrote to his sisters, "What a variety of people one sees here - from the real aristocrats, those who wish to pose as such, the great swell, the middling swell, down to the Australians who unsuccessfully try to be swells."[83]

At home their right to superior status was contested by workers and merchants. They had not developed, had not even tried to develop a cultivated, university-educated crop of children who could defend their claims to pre-eminence in the cultural or intellectual spheres. That role was filled in S.A. by townsmen such as the Stirlings and their commercial allies. Religion did not work for them as it had for their fathers, consoling them in their early lowliness with the doctrine that the social order was God's will, and comforting them

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82. R. R. Keynes, Daily Journal, 23 January 1884; Heralds College to R. R. Keynes, 20 January 1894 KFP.

83. R. T. Melrose to his sisters, 4 September 1893 MFP.

in their later success with that same doctrine. It did not work either, by inculcating obedience among the Australian labourers.

The children never needed religious assurances of the hope of righting present wrongs in a future life because they enjoyed blessed reality on this earth. When G. T. Melrose was confronted with the inequalities in European society he noted, "I have seen enough churches and their rites and ceremonies to last one life time, and enough wretchedness outside of them to endure for the same period."[84] The young pastoralists' diaries and letters never mention the blessings of Divine Providence, or talk of the value of a disciplined life. Their writings are more concerned with the events of the now - management of finances, sale of stock, payment of rent by their leasees - than of the world to come.

It is in the realm of politics that the younger generation's mental inheritance showed most distinctively. Their position could not be defended on the grounds advanced by British Tories that it would be dangerous to tear down a ruling class made mellow and responsible by the efforts of centuries. Everyone knew the class from which their own fathers had come. In "the paradise of dissent" they lacked mitred bishops to hallow their social position. The only ideological weapon they possessed in struggles against the democratic demands of Labor was the doctrine that those who had achieved success deserved to enjoy the fruits of their hard work. It would have been futile for them to play at being Whig grandees or Tory back-woodsmen in Australian politics. The ideology which

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84. G. T. Melrose to R. T. Melrose, 20 January 1892 MFP.

seemed best suited to justify their privileged position was Liberalism, which was also the rising creed of town based wealth.

Thus, Robert Melrose was intimately connected with the affairs of the National Defence League, a predecessor of the modern Liberal coalition. In a letter to the League's secretary in which he declined to go on the central committee because of the pressures of business, he promised to drum up party support in his area. He also noted that the town of which he was the accepted head was not in agreement with his political views, "Mount Pleasant and the surrounding villages are such hotbeds of socialism - However I will in a quiet way do all that time and circumstance permit - and persuade as many as possible whose interests are identical to join the association."[85] A few years later when he was seeking to gain a new conservative candidate for his local electorate he noted that, "the local socialistic crew ... are a fickle lot".[86] It appeared that any person or party who differed from his views about the rights of property to dictate public politics were likely to upset the order of society.

It was not true that, as their political enemies continue to jibe to this day, they considered themselves "born to rule". Neither is it true that the founding fathers had merely "aped" the British gentry on the basis of information gleaned from books or other second hand sources. They had brought with them from England quite definite notions about how the possessors of great landed wealth should behave. They had not, however, brought the characteristic mentality of the self-confident

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85. R. T. Melrose to ? Wakefield, September 1891 MFP.

86. R. T. Melrose to W. Copley, 16 December 1895 MFP.

British squirearchy. And if they had brought it, they would have found it unserviceable in Australian conditions. The heirs of the first pastoralists kept the big estates but affected, when it suited them, to be "mere country bumpkins". They hunted kangaroos in a bizarre variation of the British blood sport, but educated their children in the city, where they found their own most reliable political allies. They discarded almost all the characteristic religious tenets which their fathers had thought so central to their social existence.

CONCLUSION

South Australia's historians have tended to take the early pastoral ascendancy for granted. Very little has been published which illuminates their formative influence in the colony. Michael Williams for example, in his comprehensive study of the South Australian landscape seldom touches on the pastoralists, although he remarks that the parklike facade of the environment awoke genteel thoughts in the British mind.[1] His concern is more with the farmers and urban dwellers who eventually came to dominate the social and political as well as the urban landscape. The pastoralists in his account appear mostly as obstacles to the progress of urban and agricultural forces: money-making stumbling blocks to the fuller social utilisation of the land.

Douglas Pike's, Paradise of Dissent, explicitly denies that any South Australian pastoralists came near to achieving recognition as a landed gentry on the English model. "These feudal dreams", he concludes, "were shortlived, except on large sheep stations."[2] Not only did Pike omit evidence to support this conclusion, but elsewhere he denied the presence of an aspirant gentry and stated that any social stratification which occurred "emerged slowly".[3] Pike's concern was to describe the conflict between farmers and pastoralists as the emergence of a spirit of early colonial democracy. Equally as important though, was the idea of the colonial gentry propagated by men like Angas, Keynes, McBean and Melrose. The conflict between these pastoralists

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1. M. Williams, The making of the South Australian landscape, a study in the historical geography of Australia (London 1974) pp. 15-16.
2. D. Pike, Paradise of Dissent p. 503.
3. Ibid p. 499.

and the farmers was not just an exercise in name-calling, but a re-enactment of a British conflict on Australian shores.

J. B. Hirst's valuable study, Adelaide and the Country: 1870-1917 finds the rural-based pastoralists much less important than the Adelaide elite who achieved a kind of dream of squirearchy in the suburbs of the new metropolis.[4] Without denying that this phenomenon occurred, it is important to point out that Hirst's argument does not encompass the experience of men like Angas, Keynes, McBean and Melrose, who although they came to Adelaide attempted to make the country the centre of their action. These pastoralists set up their estates and organised their retainers and local villages on a scale which could never have been achieved in Adelaide.

It has been generally assumed by Pike and others that the only people who cherished the ambition of creating a privileged gentry in South Australia were those who belonged to the gentry in Britain. Pike argued that a large percentage of emigrants to South Australia left Britain because of a mental revolt against the social order. This may be true of some but as a generality it is fallacious. The examples of the four men at the centre of this study show that people from all levels of British society were more inclined to accept than overthrow the hierarchically ordered society they had left. Wakefield's scheme appealed to them, not just because it was radical or revolutionary, but because it was so conservative. A social order like the old was to be recreated with room at the top - at least the space would be vacant for a time. The idea of the rightness of a landed gentry was an idea carried to South Australia by many more than those who belonged to that class.

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4. J. B. Hirst. Adelaide and the Country 1870-1917, see especially "A gentry in Adelaide" p. 37ff.

Angas, Keynes, McBean and Melrose all wished to be part of a pastoral gentry. But, there were great, eventually insuperable obstacles which stood in the way. Firstly, there were simply not enough pastoralists to outweigh the multitudes of farmers, tradesmen, businessmen and professionals in the decision making centres of the colony. Further, the development of new dry-land farming techniques and the rising world market for wheat at a time when wool trade was depressed prevented the pastoralists from keeping their world intact. The strength of these external forces and the growing number of other important groups in South Australia stunted the growth of the class. Other groups were able to borrow from Britain a ready-made critique of landed privilege.

Even at the time that the South Australian pastoralists tried to make themselves a landed gentry the political power of the hereditary landed aristocracy in Britain was being subjected to unprecedented attacks and erosion. It was scarcely possible to erect a solid edifice of landed gentry in South Australia when it was crumbling at home.

There were some obstacles to the fulfilment of the pastoralists' dream which were not physical or even political, but products of the mentalities of the early pastoralists themselves. They knew what a gentry was and roughly how it lived, but their education had not fitted them to behave and think, to read or write, to speak or socialise or worship like a gentry. Each of the pioneers retained in the midst of their undreamed of wealth and their large estates something of the outlook of the obscure rural families from which they originated in Great Britain. They tried to give their children some of the learning and social graces they knew they lacked. However, while

their children grew up to be an elite, they were assimilated into the broader elite of South Australian society into which they were gradually absorbed.

A bare handful of contemporary families like the Hawkers, Duttons and Angases, do stand subtly apart from South Australia's upper and middle classes. These families still retain something of the mentality of the early pastoral elite, but the full-blown ideal of a British gentry envisaged by their fore-fathers was never achieved.

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