

CHAPTER FOUR

Recovery and Conferences

The course of the Great Depression could be traced in the titles of popular songs which were churned out in great numbers by what was known as "Tin Pan Alley" - the group of songwriters in the U.S.A. The songs of the 1930s were tuneful and memorable, and their world-wide acceptance was the result of the popularity of the 10 inch gramophone record combined with the advent of radio broadcasting.

The darkest depths of the Depression were reflected in songs such as "Brother, can you spare a dime" and "A Bench in the Park". The words, although trite, combined with the slow tempo of the blues, conveyed the atmosphere of hopelessness, as in -

"Me and my shadow, strolling down the avenue
Me and my shadow, not a soul to tell our troubles to
And when its twelve o'clock, we climb the stair
We never knock, for nobody's there
Just me and my shadow - all alone and feeling blue."

As the Depression began to lift the songs became more optimistic. In the movie "Gold Diggers of 1933" the song "Remember my Forgotten Man", a blues in a minor key, was followed by the brisk foxtrot "We're in the Money", ending -

"We never see a headline about a breadline today
And when we see the landlord we can look that guy
right in the eye
We're in the money, come on my honey
Let's lend it, spend it, send it rolling along."

Walt Disney added sound to his animated black and white cartoon of Mickey Mouse, "Steamboat Willie" in 1928. Then he introduced colour in his Silly Symphony, "Flowers and Trees", with music of the classical composers. But in 1933 he had a sensational success with "The Three Little Pigs" - a coloured animation of the popular children's story with a theme song that became the war-cry of those fighting the Depression, "Who's afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?" This cartoon delighted the downtrodden people of the western world and the song was heard everywhere.

The 1930s were the years of film stars such as Eddie Cantor, Laurel and Hardy, Maurice Chevalier, Norma Shearer and that delightful English pair Jack Hulbert and Cecily Courtneige. Phyll and I saw many of their films and enjoyed some wonderful stage productions at the charming old Theatre Royal in Hindley Street. There we saw Sybil Thorndyke in Bernard Shaws's "Saint Joan" and that marvellous dancing pair Madge Elliott and Cyril Richard in "Blue Roses", with Frank Leighton, Leo Franklyn and the loveable Cecil Kellaway.

The Old Firm of J.C. Williamson Ltd. presented their Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Company from 1931 to 1936, with almost a full repertoire of these operas and a cast of names that became legendary - Ivan Menzies, Leo Darnton, Gregory Stroud, John Ralston, Bernard Manning,

102

Maisie Ramsay, Marie Bremner, Dorothy Gill, Evelyn
Gardiner and Richard Watson.

I never cease to enjoy these operas - the combination of the lilting melodies of Sullivan and the playful satire of Gilbert poking fun at the traditions of the English Establishment, and particularly The Law. Much of this was relevant to my generation because we had inherited so much from the Mother Country. The structure of the G & S operas was itself a parody of music comedy, with bands of chorus girls and boys appearing quite inconsequentially from time to time in different costumes as a background to the nonsensical stories. To be sure, Sullivan may have borrowed many of his musical themes, but the way in which he fitted them to the librettos of Gilbert showed an uncanny marriage of two radically different but brilliant personalities.

The J.C.W. productions were in the true Savoy tradition. We saw as many as we could. I have never seen a better Jack Point than that portrayed by Ivan Menzies in "The Yeoman of the Guard" and I am sure that W.S. Gilbert would have been more than satisfied with Menzies delivery in "Ruddigore" of -

"This particularly rapid, unintelligible patter
Isn't generally heard, and if it is it doesn't
matter

If it is it doesn't matter, matter, matter, matter,
matter!"

In a production of Katinka in 1931 we saw that wonderful comedian Don Nicol, who achieved enormous popularity and a youthful Robert Helpman, featured as a solo dancer partnered by Leah Miller. That was before he left for England to become world famous with a second 'n' added to his name. In 1932 we saw the legendary Gladys Moncrieff in one of her "farewell" appearances - "The Chocolate Soldier", based on G.B. Shaw's "Arms and the Man", music by Oscar Strauss. Her record of "My Hero" from this is still heard today. All these visits to the cinema and theatre had to be fitted in between evening lectures and work, ceasing in October and November each year when lectures gave way to the "swot vac" preceding the examinations.

So long as I was earning a salary I desired to see more of the world and opportunities for travel to interstate conferences were offered to university students at concession rates. The Student Christian Movement was holding a conference at the Sydney suburb of Pymble during the 1932/33 summer vacation. Don Burnard, George McKinnon, Rolfe Boehm, Doone Mengerson and Berenice Bailey were going, and I agreed to join them. There were many other delegates from Adelaide, but we kept together as a group.

Don, Doone, George and I decided to travel by interstate passenger ships, which were popular in those days. These offered good meals and accommodation, with

shipboard recreation in bracing sea breezes. Leaving Port Adelaide on Boxing Day in the T.S.S. Katoomba we reached Melbourne two days later, with deck tennis and quoits in daytime and dancing at night. We had time to visit the Melbourne Zoo before proceeding to Sydney. The weather was rougher as we sailed up the east coast and dancing was difficult as the ship rolled considerably. It was necessary to advance cautiously along the deck, and when the ship rolled sideways to get on the downhill side of your partner and push hard to avoid both falling over. Then, when it rolled the other way, you had to get round to the other side of her. Very tiring, if you had a partner who was at all portly, but ideal conditions for dancing the tango because there were involuntary runs along the deck in all directions - followed by sudden stops with leaning over as the ship's roll changed direction. Fortunately I was a good sailor.

We passed through the Heads into Sydney Harbour about 6am. As we approached the Harbour Bridge, completed the year before, it seemed certain that the ship's mast would foul the bridge decking - the absence of anything in between destroyed any perception of distance - but the bridge clearance was 170 feet above high-water level and we glided through.

We had five days to see Sydney before the Conference, and took lodgings in North Sydney. First we saw St Mary's Roman Catholic Cathedral, the Museum, and

rode on the underground railway. Next, electric and steam trains took us to the Hawkesbury River, then by ferry to Patonga, Palm Beach and Newport through beautiful river scenery. Pittwater, at Newport, was a glittering expanse of water edged by sheltering heights, green right down to the water's edge. From there we took a bus to Narrabeen, tram to Manly and ferry back to Circular Quay. To Adelaide dwellers this range of transport was incredible.

It was warm. Don and I wore our white pith helmets, which were popular then in hot, dry Adelaide. They caused a sensation in Sydney. A musician in the band on the Manly Ferry said to the pianist, "Couple of big-game hunters over there!" Apparently we were the only people Sydney had ever seen in pith helmets. We did not wear them again on that holiday - they attracted too much attention.

After an evening at St James cinema, where an orchestra of 16 played during the interval, we walked back to our lodgings over that wonderful Harbour Bridge. By night it looked like a fairy arch beneath the stars, strung with strings of glow worms from end to end. In 1933 there was no background of skyscrapers and no Opera House to rival the magnificence of this engineering masterpiece. The ferries in the Harbour were blowing their whistles at midnight to welcome the New Year. We were happy to be part of it.

In the first week of 1933 we explored the Sydney Domain and Botanical Gardens overlooking the Harbour, St Andrews Anglican Cathedral, 2BL and 2FC radio studios, City South Telephone Exchange, the National Art Gallery, Sydney University and more cinemas. In a boat trip round the Harbour we were enchanted by the tree-lined coves which make this one of the largest and most beautiful waterways in the world.

On the last day before the Conference George and I went by tourist bus to Katoomba in the Blue Mountains, 55 miles from Sydney. It was simply breathtaking, standing on the eminence known as Echo Point and gazing down into the canyon-like Jamieson Valley, carpeted with green tree-tops swimming in a haze of blue mist. The rugged group of rocks called the "Three Sisters" heaved their shoulders up against the misty backdrop which became an even deeper blue as it merged with the distant side of the valley. There was an age-old silence here that could almost be felt.

We saw the Katoomba Falls - two mighty leaps over heights of cruel rock into the bower of green 1000 feet below. I climbed down the stepped track to take a photo looking up through the canopy of green at the fragments of blue sky, with the ceaseless murmur of the falls and the turbulent stream bubbling over the rocks. Drinking in this beauty I was rudely alerted by the horn of the

107

bus. Scrambling up the track I arrived, panting, to blurt out my apologies to the unsympathetic driver.

The Conference was held at Pymble, about 11 miles by train from Sydney, in the Presbyterian Ladies College during the school holidays. Berenice and Rolfe came from Adelaide by train. The school grounds were spacious with playing fields and tennis courts set in beautiful undulating country. There were 230 delegates, drawn from all States. The men were quartered in classrooms and the girls in Goodlet House, one of three boarding houses. Delegates were divided into mixed study circles of about 10, which met each morning under a senior leader. Sports were held in the afternoons, with community singing and concerts in the evenings. All took their turn in serving at table and other chores, and "lights out" was strictly at 11 pm. With the others I swam, played tennis and took part in impromptu comedy performances. Professors and clergy joined in with the students. One afternoon we visited the Koala Park Reserve at Pennant Hills.

The Conference lasted 8 days. On the sixth day Doone Mengerson was laid low with tonsillitis and sent to hospital. George and I visited Tooronga Park Zoo and historic Vaucluse House, home of the Wentworth family from 1808 and full of four-poster beds and long-ago luxurious living, before boarding M.V. Manunda on January 14th. Don remained in Sydney to see that Doone was properly cared for.

In the two day stop in Melbourne George and I visited the Dandenong Ranges, the Central Telegraph Office and the Technological Museum. We reached Port Adelaide on January 19th after a wonderful holiday and conference. We had crammed a great deal into 24 days and I decided that passenger ships were the best way to travel. Back to work next day!

Don and Doone, recovered and fit, returned on the Westralia two weeks later.

Frank O'Grady gave me more responsible work, equalising programme transmission lines, measuring trunk-line attenuation and cross-talk on transposition sections and constructing portable test equipment and amplifiers. I had charge of the SCL technical exhibit at the Royal Agricultural Show. This was a big thrill because it included a cathode ray oscilloscope - then a very new and awe-inspiring piece of equipment and a taste of what the future would hold in television tubes.

Adelaide was visited by the training ship "Iwate" from Japan in 1932 and by the Cruiser Koln from Germany in 1933. The Japanese Engineer-Midshipmen invited engineering students to lunch on the "Iwate" and we reciprocated by having them home to dinner in pairs. Relationships were most cordial. Marjorie cooked rice and coloured it pink to make it "more interesting". They

wanted to know if we grew it that colour! Marjorie, Phyll, Mollie Roberts and I inspected the Koln, which was crowded with sightseers. Little did we know we would be at war with both countries in a few years time.

1933 was a year of sickness for our family. Mother was laid up for 5 weeks with a poisoned leg and had to be attended by a nurse, while Marjorie cooked the meals. Later, Marjorie herself required a nurse when she was laid up with the measles. I managed to keep reasonably fit and passed all my university subjects, leaving only three more to complete my Electrical Engineering Degree. I enrolled for these in 1934.

In the following January and February mother was in hospital for an operation, and Adelaide had another heat wave with temperatures over 100oF for six days, rising to 108.6oF - then two more days above 100oF after a brief cool change. The hospital provided a welcome retreat from the heat, and when mother recovered dad took her down to Del Monte at Henley Beach to convalesce.

I had been working a good deal at night at SDL transmitter with Frank O'Grady and Laurie Billin. One late afternoon when climbing up part of the aerial mast I barked my right arm on the rusty steelwork. I thought nothing of it, but the arm began to swell and I got Marjorie to put a poultice on it that night. Next day my

doctor said the arm was septic and four days later an abscess discharged and the infection began to subside.

The Institution of Engineers held a Conference in a different State each year. I had joined as a Student Member and was entitled to concession rates of travel to these conferences, which provided an opportunity to gather additional knowledge and see something of the rest of Australia. The 1934 Conference was to be at Hobart. Gordon Colebatch was going and I decided to take my annual leave and join him. The Conference was to begin on February 19th.

My doctor said my arm was recovered sufficiently to travel. He gave me some medicine and ointment. I said goodbye to mother at Del Monte and embarked on the Westralia for Melbourne. The weather was glorious - I played deck tennis, walked a mile round the deck, inspected the ship's engines and danced at night. I felt very fit.

On reaching Melbourne I looked up Alan McLeary, the Melbourne Transmission Engineer and Eric Wright in the PMG Research Laboratories. Eric arranged for me to visit the Efftee Film Studios at St Kilda where F.T. Thring (father of actor Frank Thring) was making a film called "The Streets of London". The set was a typical Music Hall stage.

Jim Mitchell, son of dad's principal, took me to see "Gay Divorce" at the Kings Theatre - a very bright show with Billy Milton, a star from England, the inimitable Gus Bluettt and Leo Franklyn. The music and lyrics were by Cole Porter and the most memorable song was "Night and Day". This was the first time I had sat in the front row of the stalls at a theatre. It was quite an experience.

Next day I visited the beautiful Melbourne Botanical Gardens and returned to the city by ferry on the River Yarra. In the evening I went to the Capitol Theatre, with its unique "broken ice" ceiling (designed by Walter Burley Griffin, the architect responsible for the layout of Canberra), illuminated by a myriad of hidden lights in changing colours. The programme included films with Roland Young and Ronald Coleman, but the highlight was the Walt Disney coloured cartoon "The Three Little Pigs", making its Australian debut.

During those two Melbourne days my right arm began to swell again. I consulted a doctor who gave me an anti-tetanus injection before I sailed for Launceston on the "Nairana", meeting Gordon Colebatch on board. We continued by train to Hobart and booked in at the guest house in Campbell Street.

However, my arm continued to swell and an ominous blue line appeared above the infected spot. I consulted a doctor who said it required bathing and Boracic foment

3 to 4 times a day. For this I went to Stowell Hospital at Battery Point about 10 minutes walk from our lodgings. I was told to keep my arm constantly in a sling.

This restricted my participation in the Conference somewhat. I was able to attend lectures and go on day trips to some places - the Carbide works at Electra and the Electrolytic Zinc works at Risdon but I always had to go back to Hobart in time to attend the hospital. I surprised myself by learning to dress with my left hand, including tying my tie, which I pulled tight by clamping one end between my knee and the bedpost. I began to run out of money and had to write home for funds. I borrowed the guest house typewriter and laboriously composed a letter with one finger of my left-hand, without capitals! Dad replied promptly with a welcome cheque..

The most impressive trips from Hobart were to Mt Wellington (4166ft), four miles to the west as the crow flies, and Mt Nelson (1116ft), three miles to the south. Their heavily timbered slopes differed markedly from those I was familiar with on Mt Lofty in Adelaide, because here the eucalypts had straight white trunks, free of branches almost to the top, and sometimes even 300 ft high. This gave the mountains a very different appearance to the relatively feathery green aspect of the Adelaide Hills.

Both mountains provided magnificent views, of Hobart nestling on the banks of the Derwent estuary, but the view from Mt Nelson was the more spectacular. The sudden drop to the harbour - little more than a mile away - was screened by surrounding bushes, and it seemed that you could just step over these onto the surface of the blue-grey water. But that was so far below, that the waves appeared as wrinkles - with tiny yachts and launches dotted around the small islands in the harbour, and busy ferries leaving long spear-like wakes behind them. The shore on the far side wound in and out and rose up to a line of low hills. The Gods on Mount Olympus could have had no more beautiful a prospect. I thought of Tennyson's Eagle -

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls
He watches from his mountain walls
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

I liked Hobart. Not unlike Adelaide in many ways, but smaller. There were double decker trams that gave an excellent view of the city from the top deck, but they rocked along the rails and made standing impossible without support. Most of them were manned by the driver only, who collected fares on entry. Their buses were much more comfortable. Buildings seemed limited to five storeys.

At the beginning of my second week in Hobart the doctor said I could use my right hand to write a letter,

so I wrote to mother and Phyll and gave the reasons for my long silence and lack of communication.

I had to forego the organised Conference trips to Queenstown, Mt Lyell and Lake Margaret. I said goodbye to Gordon when he boarded a bus to head north to these places, and reconciled myself to a lonely stay in Hobart recuperating. The saving grace was a trip to Port Arthur on the Tasman Peninsula on my last day. Established as a convict prison settlement in 1830, 64 miles by road from Hobart, the Tasman Peninsula is connected to Forestiers Peninsula on the mainland by Eaglehawk Neck - a narrow isthmus only 78 yards wide. Legend has it that savage chained dogs were posted on this Neck to forestall any attempt by convicts to escape.

There were some remarkable rock formations near Eaglehawk Neck. On the mainland side at the foot of a tall cliff was a plateau of rock, almost at sea level, scored by two naturally perpendicular series of deep parallel grooves - as though some giant had cut a layer of pastry to make gigantic biscuits. These were called the "Tesselated Pavements". On the Tasman Peninsula site was an inlet between 200 ft high vertical faces of shelved rock called the "Devil's Kitchen". Also a gigantic natural archway of rock, 169ft above sea level, called "Tasman's Arch" spanning another inlet from the sea. Nearby was the "Blowhole" - an open hollow bowl in the rocks behind a high coastal cliff - connected to the

waters of the Tasman Sea by a 100 ft natural tunnel through the rocky cliff. Water from collapsed waves rushed through this tunnel to hit the back of the bowl with a thunderous roar and a violent upward spray!

At Port Arthur I saw the ruins of the Penitentiary, the Model prison, the Hospital, the Powder Magazine and the Church - all built by convict labour. The stone walled church was roofless as the result of a fire; the church had never been consecrated because a convict fell to his death from the tower - but it had been used, nevertheless. Old Alf, the Municipal guide, was christened in this church, where his parents had been married. He proudly indicated the 'Havenue of Henglish Hoaks'. The solitary confinement cells in the Model Prison were no bigger than toilet cubicles - a hideous relic of man's inhumanity to man.

After two weeks in Hobart I was well enough to return home. I stayed two days with the Mitchell family at St Kilda Street, Middle Brighton and Jim Mitchell took me to a performance of "The Girl Friend" at the King's Theatre, with the cast we had seen in "Gay Divorce". I explored Melbourne University and the Richmond Terminal Station of the State Electricity Commission; and the Harper family, whom I had met at the IEA Conference, took me to see Sherbrooke Forest in the Dandenong Ranges. I returned to Adelaide on the Katoomba and my doctor pronounced me fit to resume lectures.

Electrical Engineering II involved 4 hours of lectures and 14 of practical each week under "Teddy" Clark, who rode a very antiquated bicycle to the university and conducted his lectures sitting round a table, as there were few completing the course. Hence I worked in the Transmission Section on two days only, except during vacations. Machine Design II I did in the evenings and weekends; my project was to design a single cylinder solid-injection 40 BHP stationary oil engine. A full set of working drawings was required together with a thesis. The 6 hours per week "lectures" took the form of consultations with Mr J.P. Wood at mutually convenient times - usually in the late afternoon after Electrical II practical. Stan Chapman and I worked together on this but we had to submit individually completed drawings and theses. There were only three other undergraduates doing this subject in 1934. "Woody" was a delightful character - small, with grey hair and black eyebrows. He had served as an engineer in the Navy, and loved his subject. His eyebrows would leap up and down in animated discussion. Of all the subjects I studied I enjoyed Machine Design II best. It involved systems engineering and design drawing - my favourite pursuits.

My only other subject in 1934 was First Aid, which comprised a course of lectures and practical work conducted in the evenings by the St John Ambulance Society at the Railway Station offices. Eric Cottrell

and I worked together on this. We had great fun putting bandages and splints on each other. It lasted only one term, on Friday evenings.

My colleagues and I began to take an active part in Faculty undergraduate societies. Murray Howell, Miggs Chapman, Gavin Walkley and Don Burnard took office in the Engineering Society (AUES) and Gordon Allen and I were on the Committee. Don was also Vice-President of the University Union and Colin Moodie was Secretary of the Law Students Society. Such executive positions provided valuable experience in administration and coordination of activities.

In June I moved from the Transmission Section to the Telegraph Section in the Department, where I explored the complex mechanisms of the several types of automatic transmitting and receiving telegraph equipment used in the Central Telegraph Office. This equipment fascinated me and I marvelled at the ingenuity of the designers.

The year 1934 seemed to mark a transition in the production of musical plays in the theatre. In 1933 we had seen "Waltzes from Vienna" at the Theatre Royal - based loosely on the lives of Johann Strauss senior and junior with music from their famous waltz compositions. This was the beginning of the new trend. Musical plays began to place more emphasis on the story-line into which the musical numbers had to blend naturally - rather than

being just a series of songs strung together by a story-line of no importance, with a chorus making frequent and illogical appearances in different sets of costumes.

"Gay Divorce" was such a markedly different type of musical, with a sophisticated plot and sophisticated lyrics by Cole Porter, "Night and Day" was a very different type of song to those of the earlier musical comedies. The same was true to a lesser extent in "The Girl Friend" with music by Gus Kahn.

The most noteworthy films of that time were the English production of the Ben Travers farces which first appeared on the stage of the Aldwych Theatre in London in the 1920s - "A Cuckoo in the Nest", "Rookery Nook" "Thark" and "Mischief". These had a superb team of actors with impeccable timing, Tom Walls, Ralph Lynn, Robertson Hare, Alfred Drayton, Winifred Shotter and Mary Brough. And Disney continued to produce his delightful series of coloured Silly Symphonies with a wonderful marriage of music and animated cartoons.

The Lyons Government was re-elected in September and in October 1934. Melbourne celebrated its centenary and the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester came to Australia for the festivities. They visited Adelaide, and the city was gaily decorated, with buildings floodlit at night. The Duke was to visit the University and give an address in the Elder Hall. An expectant crowd awaited his arrival.

A car drew up, a uniformed figure emerged and mounted the steps to be greeted by the Chancellor at the entrance. The crowd cheered loudly, but confusion arose when it was realised that this was only an undergraduate masquerading as His Royal Highness. The later arrival of the Duke was rather an anti-climax.

October 20th marked the start from England of the Melbourne Centenary Air Race. There were 20 competitors for the ten thousand pound prize donated by MacRobertson of chocolate fame. The winners were Scott and Campbell-Black, who reached Melbourne in just under three days, flying a two-engine De Havilland Comet. This caused great excitement.

I passed my last three subjects, with top credit in Machine Design II, which pleased me enormously. I received the Degree of Bachelor of Engineering at the University Commemoration in the Elder Hall on December 12th, 1934. Stan Chapman, Bob Simpson and Gavin Walkley also received their B.E., Colin Moodie his L.L.B. and Aileen Cherry her B.A. I borrowed the necessary academic gown and brown-lined hood from Mr Stobie of the Adelaide Electric Supply Co. The University had accepted the working experience of Stan and myself in the PMG's Department as satisfying the 12 months requirement for the B.E. Eric Cottrell had completed his degree course but still required 12 months working experience, for which he joined the Zinc Corporation Ltd in Broken Hill.

My spell in the Telegraph Section during 1934 had shown me the importance of electro-mechanical equipment to the Department. I had always been interested in mechanical equipment and resolved to complete the degree course in Mechanical Engineering at the University. The Electrical and Mechanical courses overlapped considerably and the only additional subjects I required to complete the Mechanical course were Fitting and Turning III and IV (which could be done at night), Civil Engineering I, and Mechanical Engineering IV. I applied for time-off to attend the 10 hours of lectures and practical work of the two Engineering subjects in the daytime, on the grounds that the knowledge gained would be of use to the Department. Time-off was granted, and I enrolled for the four subjects in 1935. It was going to be another heavy year, but it was worth it.

On January 3rd 1935, I was transferred back from Clerk to Cadet Engineer, but it had little effect on the work I was actually doing.

The 1935 IEA Conference was to be in Melbourne during March. The Institution always organised an entertaining programme of functions and outings for ladies accompanying delegates, who would enjoy the same concession fares - so I decided to ask Phyll and my sister Marjorie to accompany me. They thought it a great idea - neither had visited Melbourne - and after a good

deal of persuasive argument, Phyll's parents decided that Marjorie would be an appropriate chaperone. They agreed.

We left Port Adelaide by coastal motor vessel in time to enjoy a few days in Melbourne before the Conference, and we made good use of that time. We visited the beautiful Alexandra and Botanical Gardens, the Zoo, St Paul's Cathedral and walked down the St Kilda Road boulevard to the imposing Shrine of Remembrance. The Shrine is capped with a pyramid of stone, near the base of which a small aperture admits a pencil of sunlight to the interior. At the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month - the anniversary of the signing of the Armistice at the end of World War I - the pencil of light strikes the centre of a stone sunken in the floor of the interior, with the inscription -

GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN

A magnificent concept for a memorial to all those men and women who gave their lives in that titanic struggle. At that moment of time, each year from 1918, the voice of radio ceased, work stopped and a reign of silence fell on the Nation for two minutes - a token that seems to have lost significance with the passage of years. Standing on the parapet below that pyramid capping we gazed at the vista down the tree-lined St Kilda Road to Swanston Street - with the spires of St Paul's on the right of the entrance to the city, standing boldly above the skyline in the late afternoon haze.

Those spires no longer dominate the city. They are lost in a forest of skyscrapers.

Then we took a bus to Stony Point in Westernport Bay, and a ferry across to Phillip Island with its wonderful wild life - masses of seals sunning themselves on the off-shore rocks known as "The Nobbies", lonely koalas perched high in the forks of their favourite eucalypts; and at dusk the fabulous parade of fairy penguins, beached by the incoming waves, marching in determined formation up the beach to their burrows in the tufted sandhills. A peaceful retreat before the advent of motor cycle racing.

The Conference included inspections of the power-generating resources of the State Electricity Commission - the open-cut brown coal mine at Yallourn (with the associated briquette factory and power generating station) and the hydro-electric power stations at Rubicon and Sugarloaf, visiting Alexandra and the Eildon Weir in the beautiful Dandenongs. At the Point Cook RAAF Training School I met "Mate" Sharp, youngest of the Sharpe family at Saints, doing his training course among Moths, Wapitis, Bulldog fighters and a Southampton Flying Boat. Little did we know how close they were to seeing active service.

With the engineers busy with these activities, the ladies had various social engagements. Marjorie and

123

Phyll explored the Melbourne shops and visited some friends. The Conference ended with a ball at the St Kilda Palais de Danse and we returned to Adelaide by Coastal Motor Vessel.

At the annual meeting of the AUES in March, Miggs Chapman was elected President, Don Burnard Vice-President and I was elected Secretary. This gave me the pleasure of organising the Annual Dinner in July and making my first formal dinner speech - the toast of "Kindred Societies". We held the first annual AUES Dance in August, with the Refectory decorated with surveying instruments, mining tools, hydraulic machinery, electrical meters and motors and part of the old AUES glider which had been damaged in a demonstration. It was all somewhat unusual, and provided many talking points. During the evening we staged a race of eight miniature clockwork cars up and down the ballroom. The evening was a great success and many graduates attended from country centres.

We saw two more stage shows starring Madge Elliott and Cyril Richard in 1935, before they left for London. Produced by Cyril, these were "High Jinks" and "Roberta". Their speciality dancing was a feature of both shows, which also starred Frank Leighton, Leo Franklyn, Ethel Morrison and the explosive Marie Le Varre. Marie was a kind of Australian musical Mae West. Who could forget her rendition of "Heat Wave" in "High Jinks"?

"We're having a heat wave
A tropical heat wave
The temperature's rising, it isn't surprising
She certainly can
Can-Can!"

(with a brisk jerk of her ample hindquarters). The music was by Rudolph Friml. Jerome Kern wrote the music for "Roberta" which was more romantic, with the delightful "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes" and "The Touch of your Hand". Marie was also in "Yes Madam", but there was a return to the old type of musical comedy in "White Horse Inn" with Don Nicol, Romola Hansen and Herbert Browne. The wonderful music of Robert Stolz in this will live for ever - "Goodbye", "You Too" and "My Song of Love", set in the Tyrolean Alps.

That year I joined the committee of the Adelaide University Dance Club (AUDC) and was given the job of organising the decorations for the annual Cabaret in December. Each year a different theme was chosen, and this year it was to be Egyptian. As soon as the November exams finished I began some frantic research into Egyptian matters and rounded up some engineering students to help me. For the cabaret a wooden dance floor was always constructed over the Refectory lawn. As there were cloisters on two sides only then, the concrete walk on the other two sides was always enclosed by a 6ft high green canvas barrier to provide privacy and exclude gate-crashers. Adelaide in December could usually be relied upon to produce a balmy night, so that dancing could take

place both within the Refectory and outside on this special dance floor, lit by festoons of coloured lights.

We decided to hang a pictorial frieze around the green canvas barrier. The frieze was to be two feet deep - the lower third being of yellow poster paper, representing sand, and the upper two thirds being orange in colour, representing a sunset sky. On the dividing line, above the yellow sand there were to be black silhouettes of Egyptian motifs - pyramids, palm trees, arabs, sphinx, mosques and a camel. I prepared stencils of those, each about 6 inches high. With the rolls of paper spread out on the drafting boards of the engineering drawing office my willing helpers applied stencils with black ink-pads at intervals of about two feet. The completed frieze, about 200 ft long with the several stencils recurring in rotation, looked very effective mounted at eye level on the green canvas barrier facing the dance floor.

Meanwhile I assembled other decorations for the Refectory. The City Council was pruning a large number of palm trees near the River and I persuaded them to deliver the 6ft long leaves to the Refectory, where we tied them in bunches round some of the columns of the cloisters. Egyptian posters were borrowed from a Travel Agency and hung, with tapestries and carpets, within the Refectory. I constructed a large model pyramid from pinewood, faced with corrugated cardboard which gave a

fair impression of the stepped sides of the Great Pyramid of Cheops. Assembled in the back verandah of our Glenunga home, it proved too big to pass through the door and had to be partly dismantled. This was placed inside the Refectory entrance, surrounded by yellow sand with a model camel train in the foreground.

Marjorie was a great help. We searched the Public Library for illustrations. I cut out two full size outlines of mummy cases in cardboard which Marjorie painted very attractively to look like the real thing, and she made sheaths for some of the pillars with rows of Egyptian hieroglyphics and gods and goddesses.

It was proposed that anyone who wished to do so should attend the Cabaret in Egyptian costume and masked. I decided to go in a white Arabian burnous hooded and masked. Phyll chose an Egyptian slave-girl outfit, which looked very fetching. Marjorie was not going to the Cabaret but I wanted her to see the decorations in their final form - so they both accompanied me in dad's car on the Cabaret night.

Marjorie waited in the car while I took Phyll in to join our party. Then I returned to the car to take Marjorie to the side of the Refectory where she could look in through the large windows remote from the River side. As she was only in street clothes she didn't wish to be seen.

Outside the windows there were wide garden beds, edged with overlapping semi-circular steel rods. Wearing my domino mask I did not see these, and stepping into the garden I tripped and fell flat on my face. I must have hit my nose on a sharp stone, because on standing I found blood gushing from under the mask. Marjorie was very concerned. Holding a handkerchief to my nose we returned to the car and drove the short distance to the Royal Adelaide Hospital on North Terrace. In the out-patients department the cut was cleansed and three stitches inserted in the bridge of my nose. With a small dressing applied over this and the mask resumed there was no visible sign of any mishap.

Returning to the Refectory, Marjorie had a good look at the decorations and set off homewards. I rejoined our party inside and found Phyll very annoyed at my prolonged absence. With the lack of visible evidence it required considerable explanation about what lay behind that mask. The scar is still there. It was a bridge crossing to be remembered.

About 500 people attended that Cabaret. It was a great success and memorable as my last function at the Refectory. Late that evening we found that someone had embellished the frieze around the dance floor with black blobs on the "sand" just below the hindquarters of each camel.

I passed all the subjects required and received the Diploma of Applied Science (Mechanical Engineering) at the University Commemoration on December 11th. Don Burnard, Rolfe Boehm, Miggs Chapman, Murray Howell and my cousin Evan Hardy also received their Engineering Degrees - the last two in absentia, as they were working in other States.

As the effect of the Great Depression began to wear off, the Department evidently began to realise that the 1931 decision to cease technical training and appoint no more Cadet Engineers was going to result in an acute shortage of qualified men to cope with the demands of developing Australian communications in an era of rapidly advancing technology. If the Department could not generate enough qualified men itself, it must recruit some from outside the Service.

So the Department advertised for engineering or science graduates to join the Service. However, in the ranks of Cadet Engineers in Adelaide there were now three with Engineering Degrees - Stan Chapman (who had the B.Sc also), Don Burnard and myself. We promptly applied for those positions. We considered we should be just as eligible as graduates from outside the Service - in fact more so because we had departmental experience as well as a degree. We had to wait patiently for the result.

In January 1936 I was sent to Bordertown, near the S.A./Victorian border, for four weeks experience in the operation and maintenance of trunk line carrier repeater equipment. This was my first job away from home. Don Burnard was sent to Port Augusta for similar experience.

Bordertown in 1936 was a typical "one-horse" country town. Hot and dusty and largely desolate. I stayed at Toys' Bordertown Hotel, less than 5 minutes from the Repeater Station. There were two mechanics who worked overlapping shifts from 7am to 11pm. The town had two hotels, four churches, a Post Office, an Institute-cum-Library and two municipal tennis courts. Films were shown at the Institute on Saturday nights. I spent most of my leisure time reading, writing letters to Phyll and waiting for her replies. Occasionally I played tennis with the mechanics and their friends and swam in nearby waterholes. I attended church on Sundays but sometimes there was only one other person in the congregation. Mrs Toy, wife of the hotel proprietor, sometimes played the piano - which I could hear from my room - Mendelssohn, Beethoven and selections from Gilbert and Sullivan Operas. She played quite well, and this was a welcome diversion. The hotel was clean and the food good, but the other guests provided little in the way of companionship. I climbed to the top of the town's concrete water tower and took photos of the flat, uninteresting surrounding country. I was very glad to return home at the end of the month.

King George V died on January 21st, to be succeeded by the Prince of Wales as Edward VIII.

In March 1936 the IEA held its annual conference in Perth. I had purchased that wonderful book "Cobbers" by Thomas Wood - the story of his experiences as an English Doctor of Music, travelling round Australia on examination business - one of the most readable books written on our country. His account of the timber country in the south-west of Western Australia was particularly mouth-watering. The IEA conference programme included a visit to those parts. I decided to take my annual leave and go.

Perth is about 1600 miles from Adelaide by rail - a four day journey with an overnight stop at Kalgoorlie. I travelled second class to save money. The train journey was interrupted by three changes of rail gauge - relics of early misunderstanding and lack of co-ordination between the Australian States, and now mercifully removed by the standard 4 feet eight and a half inches gauge of the "Indian-Pacific" route between Perth and Sydney.

The South Australian railway system was chiefly broad gauge, 5' 3". Leaving Adelaide on a Friday morning in March we travelled north on this to Terowie, where we changed to 3' 6" narrow gauge to Port Augusta at the top end of Spencer Gulf. North of Orroroo we entered some

lowlying hills which looked very lovely in the now slanting rays of the sun, changing to misty blue and brown in the distance. There were few trees and the train's shadow stretched further and further out on the plain to the east, where sheep were dotted about like tufts of brown wool. The many creeks we crossed were dry and the telephone lines, with their catenary droop between poles in the endless row beside the track, rose and fell with monotonous regularity across the frame of the carriage window.

A fellow in my compartment was returning to Perth from a Melbourne holiday. He had changed compartments because his had been full of Salvation Army people singing hymns. Another engineer was travelling to the Perth Conference from 100 miles the other side of Brisbane - a rail journey of 8 days!

We stopped at Eureka for dinner in the Railway Refreshment Room. The sun was setting as we moved on. On the west the horizon was an undulating black line of low hills, with here and there a skeleton tree outlined against a golden sky which rose to a deeper blue. To the east were dim pine trees in the darkness, with an occasional light twinkling. As the darkness grew, a bright new moon hung in the deep blue sky to the east, with a wreath of black smoke from our engine drifting backwards into obscurity. A really lovely sunset.

Reaching Port Augusta at 9.30pm, we changed to the "Trans Australia Express" on the standard 4 feet eight and a half inch gauge.

With an hour to spend, I transferred my luggage and went to the Carrier Repeater Station to chat with the mechanics. This was the first of six Repeater Stations between Adelaide and Perth, the others being at Tarcoola, Cook, Rawlinna, Kalgoorlie and Merriden - at intervals of 200 to 300 miles. I knew all the staffs to talk to, from my work on the Adelaide Trunk Test Desk.

The second class carriages on the "Trans" had sleeping berths but no wardrobes or wash basins in the compartments. There was a communal bathroom at the end of the carriage, but with a little persuasion the conductor allowed me to have a morning shower in a first class carriage. Meals on the "Trans" were excellent, the same fare for both first and second class.

Breakfast was at Tarcoola, where I met Fred Ellis at the Repeater. He had passed the Departmental Engineers exam in November, and I knew him from his earlier work at the Trunk Test Desk. I also met Mr J.M. Crawford, the PMG Chief Engineer, bound for the Perth Conference but showing little interest in it.

About 100 miles further on the country changed from "scrub" to reddish sandhills with low mulga trees and

saltbush. We were now heading due west and stopped briefly at Doldea, about 170 miles from the Western Australia border, where the celebrated missionary Daisy Bates had lived for so long with the Aboriginal people. Some Aborigines gathered round the train, willing to be photographed with their spears, boomerangs and warpaint, at sixpence a time.

Beyond Doldea we entered the Nullarbor Plain - Nullarbor meaning "no trees", and how right that was! Perfectly flat grey-brown earth dotted with 4" clumps of saltbush, but not a tree in sight and no other vegetation within a level horizon stretching round the full 360°. That began about 4pm and four and a half hours later it was exactly the same.

Dinner was served as we entered Cook, where three new golf clubs were delivered to one of the Repeater mechanics. They showed me their nine hole golf course with pride. No grass - but the "greens" were patches of quarry sand scraped smooth, with a hole in the middle and a fence of wire round the periphery to keep the local cows away. "Hazards" were railway lines, one or two sheds and an ash-heap. Every hole had a name. The cows must have been hand-fed.

Cook left an indelible impression on my mind. I felt like a midget standing at the centre of a vast gramophone record - with nothing beyond the periphery but

the unfathomable blue of the sky. The single railway track stretched in a straight diametrical line from one side of the record to the other. It certainly needed a strong physical and mental constitution to work at a place like Cook. With Cowper, I thought -

"O Solitude! Where are the charms
That sages have seen in thy face
Better dwell in the midst of alarms
Than reign in this horrible place."

But the sunset was magnificent. The sun, looking like a gleaming disc of molten brass, sank below the flat horizon - the last glimpse of it forming a thin bar of red fire before it vanished. Above the horizon, the sky rose from faint gold to fiery pink, then to deepening blue without a single cloud. To the east, the sky was deep blue just above the horizon, with a sharply defined band of reflected pink. Just before the sun sank the shadows of one's legs stretched eastwards for hundreds of yards. Then the pink gradually changed to a faint purple.

We boarded the train to head west into still more of this barren wilderness. Neither Cook nor Tarcoola had any telephone subscribers.

Crossing the border overnight we saw nothing of Rawlinna and reached Kalgoorlie (about 550 miles from Cook) on Sunday afternoon. Mother's cousin Florrie Roberts, one of the large Hardy family and sister of Evelyn Connell (with whom I stayed at Cootamundra in

1931) met me with her husband Bill at the station. I had written to them and told them of my trip. Florrie was plump and jolly - Bill was a giant of a man, often mistaken for a policeman. They insisted that I stay the night with them at their home opposite the Kalgoorlie Botanic Gardens, and made up a bed for me in their front verandah. They had no family. Bill, who was a mining inspector in charge of one of the smaller mines, showed me over a new BHP mine, and Florrie showed me the town. I was amazed at the size of Kalgoorlie - it was far bigger than any South Australian country town, with a population of about 30,000, wide main streets and large public buildings; and this was right out in a wilderness of desert, 350 miles from Perth and about 1250 miles from Adelaide.

It was very hot, Kalgoorlie has virtually no rainfall. Prior to 1903, water had to be carted to workers on the Kalgoorlie goldfields, or condensed from underground saltwater pumped from bores and wells - but from 1903 water was pumped from the Mundaring dam near Perth. The 350 mile pipeline, with 8 pumping stations along its route and a bore of 30", was designed and built by C.Y. O'Connor and completed in 1903 in the face of relentless political persecution. Right up to the day when water flowed from it at Kalgoorlie, 4 weeks after leaving Perth, his opponents claimed that the project was unworkable. In the end, O'Connor committed suicide - a broken man. The lush green foliage and the many flowers

in the Kalgoorlie gardens are a tribute to his dogged determination.

I had a welcome shower and slept soundly that night. Next morning, with other engineering delegates, I visited the surface workings of the "Perseverance" mine, saw gold ingots being poured, and attended a Civic reception in the Town Hall. After lunch we donned overalls and "tin hats" and descended to the 3390 ft level below ground at the "Chaffers" mine - then the deepest lode in Kalgoorlie - a memorable experience.

At 5.30pm we boarded the narrow (3'6") gauge train to Perth - what a contrast to the "Trans". No sheets, only blankets, in the second class sleepers, and the train swayed abominably. We were glad to reach Perth at 10.30am next morning.

The Perth Division of the IEA had made a wonderful job of organising the Conference. I was booked in at Forrest House on the beautiful St Georges Terrace, sharing a room with a young engineer from the Melbourne Board of Works - "Torchy" Thomas, so known because of his thinning crop of ginger hair. We became firm friends and he borrowed and thoroughly enjoyed my copy of "Cobbers".

The Conference opened at the Perth University. I thought the buildings were charming. Five years earlier the University had been housed in temporary

accommodation. Partly as the result of finance from the newspaper magnate Sir Winthrop Hackett the new buildings were all built together in a common architectural style - something which unfortunately did not happen in Adelaide, Melbourne or Sydney. It had stonework with an Italian influence - long cloistered walks with Roman arches and red-tiled roofs. A magnificent Great Hall, The Winthrop Hall, with a huge rose window above the formal platform, a clock-tower beside the entrance, and cloisters reflected in a placid pool of water lilies. I was told that the pool was constructed by engineering students when the building fund had been exhausted.

We visited the limestone caves at Yanchep, the GWF radio transmitter, the Canning Dam (under construction), the Mundaring Dam (which supplied water to Kalgoorlie), and viewed Perth from the eminence of King's Park overlooking the Swan River. Then there was an all-day trip on a river launch to Fremantle to see the harbour works. There, in front of the Tourist Bureau, was a statue of C.Y. O'Connor who designed the harbour facilities as well as the Kalgoorlie pipeline - then the only statue in Australia to an engineer, appreciated only after his passing.

But the highlight of the Conference was a two-day visit to the timber country south-west of Perth. A magnificent new tourist train, with two elaborate dining cars, four lounges, six showers and all first class two-

berth sleeping compartments, took us overnight to Pemberton - a 250 mile journey on narrow gauge. There, after breakfast we boarded a ramshackle old open-truck train converted into a string of crude carriages with garden seats and tarpaulin roofing. This climbed laboriously up a steep hillside on a zig-zag track, reversing back and forth at each zig or zag with a switch of rail points. After 45 minutes we were glad to alight in an area where tree-felling was in progress.

This was Karri country. Karri (*Eucalyptus Diversicolor*) is a magnificent tree, growing to 250ft high with straight, smooth trunks clear of branches up to about 90ft, and found nowhere else in the world. They grow twice as high as the more familiar Jarrah (*Eucalyptus Marginata*) and their bark is more attractive - peeling here and there to reveal colours from white through yellow to a blue-grey. Some of these trees were saplings in the days of Jesus Christ - a sobering thought.

We watched one giant come down. Two axemen on a rough temporary platform attacked the bole antiphonally from left and right to make a vee cut. Then they wielded a long two-handled cross-cut saw to cut through the remainder. As the trunk weakened there were loud "cracks", like rifle shots. Then, as the top slowly keeled over, the men jumped clear and with rapidly increasing speed down it came - smashing limbs of other

trees as it fell - to hit the ground with a mighty roar for all the world like a clap of thunder. You could feel the earth shudder under the blow. The severed trunk was blood-red where cut, a full 6ft across, with white sap oozing from the pores and a smell like fermenting wine. It measured 220 ft long on the ground. A photo was taken of all the conference delegates standing in line on the fallen trunk.

Karri timber is used for bridgework, railway sleepers and jetty construction. Its life is indefinite - but what a sacrifice to win it!

The fallen trunk was sawn into 50ft lengths and bullocks towed a wire hawser to these, which were then pulled to the railway tracks by a stationary steam haulier, using snatch blocks attached to standing trunks to negotiate bends in the track through the forest. Never have I seen a more awe-inspiring sight than one of these giants falling through the surrounding trees.

We visited two State saw mills at Pemberton where the trunks were sawn into planks and sleepers - the outer bark waste being deposited by a conveyor belt onto an ever-smouldering heap. "Torchy" and I had a swim in a secluded pool among the trees behind the station.

This was the country so vividly described by Thomas Wood in "Cobbers". I met some of the characters in his

book and took some of my best-ever photos in this country. Even in monochrome it offered scene after scene of great beauty, with the sunlight filtering through the trees and the multi-coloured bark of the trunks.

After dinner on our luxurious tourist train I went for a walk round the district with Mr Pope, an engineer from Adelaide. Crossing a railway bridge, we smelled smoke and found a red-hot smouldering log lying right beside the wooden bridge - evidently the result of a camp fire improperly extinguished. We climbed down, found some old cement bags, soaked these in the creek and beat the log till it was black-out. A fresh wind could have caused the fire to spread and endanger the bridge.

Next morning our train moved to Kirup, and we climbed the 108ft forestry lookout tower, perched on a rise in the ground and used to detect fires. This is a land of ups and downs - Kirup, Boyanup, Balingup, Manjimup, and so on.

After inspecting the Harvey River Diversion scheme, which reduces a 45 mile course to 14 miles, and the associated weir and irrigation reservoir, we returned to Perth in time to have a brief look at the last two races of the "Trots", or harness-racing as it is called nowadays - a most popular sport in Perth with a magnificent illuminated track.

I was very impressed with Perth and its surroundings. Smaller than Adelaide, it still seemed bigger - maybe because its shops were spread more widely. The streets were lined with fine buldings and, situated as it is on the banks of the graceful Swan River, it is a charming city with one of the best climates in the world. "Torchy" Thomas and I shared a railway compartment back to Adelaide. We resolved to keep in touch with one another.

I had missed Phyll very much during my absences at Bordertown and Perth. We were very much in love, but I had resolved not to enter into any marriage commitment until university studies were over and I had the prospect of a steady job. These hurdles were now cleared. My provisional appointment as Engineer had been announced, during my Perth visit, in the PMG Central Office, Melbourne. I proposed to Phyll on the day I returned to Adelaide from Perth. She accepted, with some hesitation. The prospect of having to leave her family and live in Melbourne worried her. We decided that, if my appointment was confirmed, I would spend six months looking for a suitable house and furnishings in Melbourne before returning to Adelaide for our wedding.

We bought the ring on April 16th and on the same day the appointments of Don Burnard, Stan Chapman and myself, as Engineers in the Department in Victoria, were confirmed in the Commonwealth Gazette. It meant that we

would not have to sit for the Departmental Engineers Exam.

The prospect of working in "the big city" was exciting, although it meant leaving my family who had been so good to me. Marjorie and I had been given a wonderful education, and were shielded from the rigors of the Great Depression, through the self sacrifice and devotion of our parents. We were not a demonstrative family but we had strong family ties.

We were informed that I should take up duty in Melbourne Central office on June 8th and Don Burnard on June 15th. Don married Doone Mengerson in Adelaide in April. Stan, with his young wife, Dora, was to go to Melbourne earlier to work in the Victorian Branch.

My childhood hernia had been causing me some concern, so I decided to have it cleared by an operation which required a short stay in hospital. I shared a ward in Narma Hospital on South Terrace with a young missionary-elect, who had the same operation. We both suffered from inability to pass water for a day or two afterwards, and I remember a nurse walking beside our beds, pouring water from a jug into a container - in the hope that this would stimulate our plumbing facilities.

I was sorry to be losing Frank O'Grady as a boss. He had been wonderfully considerate and encouraging to

me, making it possible for me to continue to gain engineering experience through the depression years when many of my fellow students found engineering work unobtainable on completion of their university course. This meant that they had to wait years for their degree, which required 12 months work experience appropriate to their course.

Frank said he thought he could arrange for me to take up my appointment in Melbourne at the Research Laboratories of Central Office. This made my move to Melbourne doubly exciting. For many years I had been subscribing to the monthly "Meccano Magazine". This contained well written accounts of major engineering works all over the world, and about this time it began to publish a series of articles about the experimental television equipment being developed in England by John Logie Baird. The concept of transmitting images by mechanical and electrical equipment fired my imagination. I resolved to follow these developments and find out all I could from published literature about the processes involved. Baird was employing a mechanical scanning system and his reproduced pictures were very small, with poor detail and confined to small objects - but he was persistent in his endeavours. I hoped that in Melbourne I might become involved in the eventual introduction of television in Australia.

On June 5th the Officers of the Engineering Branch in Adelaide presented me with a farewell gift - a chiming mantel clock. They knew of my marriage plans. I said it was a very timely gift.

I had packed my books, records, drawing board, bookshelves and study table ready for transport to Melbourne. On June 6th I caught the Melbourne Express, farewelled at the station by Phyll, my family, several friends and relatives. The die was cast. My professional career was about to begin in earnest.