

Chapter 4

THE CLAMPETT ERA: 1893–1914 INTO THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

WITHIN a few years of the arrival in 1893 of Albert Wyndham Clampett (Fig. 4-1) came a new century, a federation of the six colonies to form the Commonwealth of Australia and a new monarch. Unlike his predecessors, who had stayed for an average of just five years, Clampett's stay in Mitcham was to be for forty-six years – longer than the previous eight incumbencies put together! There was even a change of title: the Parish now had a 'rector' instead of an 'incumbent'.

With the advent of 'electric power' the early years of the twentieth century were ones of incredible technological advances that dramatically affected the lives of ordinary people. It was also a period of rapid change in social attitudes and in fashions. As an example one could look at the effects these changes had on the life of the Rector's own daughter, Mollie Clampett.

'Miss Mollie', better known to present-day parishioners as Mrs Bowen, was born in the Rectory on the 8th December 1896. Even in the middle of summer her widowed grandmother, Mrs Patten, who lived with them, always wore heavy black 'widow's weeds' and a white lace bonnet, and Mrs Alice Clampett wore floor-length skirts and buttoned-to-the-throat blouses (Fig. 4-2). Children were to be seen but not heard, and young ladies did not venture out into society without a chaperone at their side. The homes of the well-to-do were illuminated by gaslights, but most families still used kerosene lamps and candles.

In spite of his modest stipend the Reverend Albert Clampett employed a number of servants over the years, many of them coming from the farms up in the Brownhill Creek Valley. There were two maids, a nursemaid to take care of the children and a cook. Ellen Orchard, who was their cook for twenty-one years, arrived at the Rectory at 7 a.m., went home after lunch, then returned to get the evening meal (see Fig. 4-7). There was also a washerwoman to do the laundry on Mondays, and a 'lad' who came each morning to chop wood, clean the boots and knives, do the gardening, milk the cow and look after the horse. Although the Clampetts had a 'horse and trap' it was not for everyday use and they, like most of the parishioners, walked or rode bicycles around the Village or caught the horsetram into the city. The management of this large household was largely in the hands of 'Granny' Patten, thus enabling Alice to be a "splendid Rector's wife" and involve herself in numerous Parish affairs.

By the time Mollie married Tom Bowen in 1920 lifestyles had undergone rapid changes following the end of the First World War and the arrival of electricity. In an effort to forget the horrors of the War, young people

abandoned the prim moral values of their parents and threw themselves into the heady new society of the 'Flapper Era'. Young ladies wore slinky, below-the-knee dresses and short 'bobbed' hairstyles. They kicked up their heels and danced the 'Charleston', smoked cigarettes from long carved-ivory holders, and drove from party to party in Ford Model 'T' motor cars – without a chaperone!

Great swathes of farm land were subdivided into quarter-acre blocks upon which were built a sea of bungalows and Tudor homes to house the 'Returned Soldiers'. Even Mitcham Village, once surrounded by cow-paddocks and wheat fields, was becoming a part of the great suburban sprawl. These new homes were lit by electricity and many had a telephone and an ice chest to keep food cool. Apart from a woman to do the weekly washing, servants were a thing of the past. Streetscapes, once marred only by a few gaslights, became a jungle of tall poles from which were draped a myriad of wires for telephones, electricity and electric trams.

This building boom and care-free lifestyle came to an abrupt end with the onset of the Great Depression in the late 1920s. By the time it was over a decade later the storm clouds of war were starting to build again over Europe. By then Mollie and Tom Bowen had three children and lived at Glen Osmond. Two months before the Second World War was declared, Albert Wyndham Clampett resigned the Cure of Mitcham after forty-six years.

Much of the information in this chapter and the next is based on the personal recollections of Mrs Mollie Bowen which were taped during interviews conducted in the early 1980s. As the Rector's daughter she was in a unique position to observe life in Mitcham Village. There was extreme wealth and extreme poverty. She accompanied her father on many of his parochial rounds, visiting the grand mansions of the gentry and the tiniest hovels of the quarry labourers. As she has said, she had "a privileged upbringing and was so lucky to have known them all so well as a young girl". There was a strong bond between father and daughter: both had an infectious laugh and a sense of fun, and they enjoyed each other's company. Many of the illustrations used in these two chapters were taken on Mollie's 'Box Brownie' camera.

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During Clampett's long stay at Mitcham there were many changes in the Anglican form of worship in South Australia. With so few churches and clergy during the early years of the Colony, people had become accustomed to celebrating Holy Communion monthly or even quarterly. As the number of ordained priests in the Colony increased, and as a result of the Catholic

Revival in the Church of England, there was a gradual move away from the ‘evangelical’ towards the ‘Anglo-Catholic’ rites. Until the late 1880s a weekly celebration of the Holy Communion was regarded as ‘High Church’; as were candles on the altar, seasonal altar frontals and coloured stoles (the wearing of Eucharistic vestments was patently ‘Popish’!). Even surpliced choirs and the use of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* were regarded with suspicion in some parishes.¹ However, by the turn of the century it was quite common to have a Communion service at 8 a.m. each Sunday followed by Morning Prayer and sermon at 11 a.m., then Evening Prayer before sunset. St Michael’s became (and remains to this day) a ‘middle-of-the-road’ congregation.

With this new emphasis on the Eucharist, which was centred around the altar rather than on preaching from the pulpit, moves were made to embellish and beautify the sanctuary (which was considerably smaller than the one we know today). Within a few years of Clampett’s arrival – mainly as a result of gifts and memorials – the altar had been elevated and surrounded on three sides by elegant brass rails, the area carpeted and new kneelers installed. The rather plain Communion table itself, flanked by tall dossal curtains and wallpaper, was covered in fine linen, and on it stood a brass sanctuary cross, vases and alms dishes. In 1901 the vista was crowned by the glorious Morris stained-glass window above the altar which is still the focal point of the interior of St Michael’s. By the time of the Diamond Jubilee in 1912, most of the major items we now associate with the sanctuary were in place: the beautiful carved altar of English oak, the darker reredos behind it, handsome brass lectern and the pulpit. The carved screens on either side of the altar were “A Thank Offering for Peace after the Great War” and were dedicated on Anzac Day 1920.

Although many beautiful fittings and furnishings were presented to St Michael’s, the only major addition to the fabric of the Church itself during Clampett’s long tenure was the building of the choir vestry (now the narthex) in 1899. His greatest legacies, however, lay outside the Church Acre. By 1896 the debt on St Michael’s Day School Hall had been paid off and a new classroom added. Two years later the foundation stone of a daughter church, St Columba’s at Hawthorn, was laid, and in 1934 St Wilfrid’s Church at Torrens Park was opened. With the opening of St Columba’s came the need for an assistant, and in January 1901 the Reverend J.T. Huston was appointed as the first curate of the Parish of Mitcham.

As well as serving as the Rector of Mitcham, Clampett was also Priest-in-Charge of the Hills’ Mission District which included the areas of Coromandel Valley, Belair, Clarendon, Happy Valley and Kangaroo Island. He served as Rural Dean of the Eastern Suburbs (1908–1911), Honorary Chaplain to the Bishop of Adelaide (1910–1911), Archdeacon of Mount Gambier (1911–1915), Honorary Canon of Adelaide (1912–1916), an Australian Military Forces Chaplain (1916–1919), Hale Canon of Adelaide (1916–1939) and Archdeacon of Strathalbyn (1915–1939). Upon his retirement in 1939 he was granted a General Licence in the Diocese of Adelaide and made Archdeacon Emeritus.²

END OF THE COLONIAL ERA (1893–1901)

As the end of the nineteenth century drew near the subject on everyone’s lips was the likelihood of the six Australian colonies combining to form the Commonwealth of Australia. However this, and many other topical items – such as the introduction of electricity, formation of the Mothers’ Union, votes for women, the great Brownhill Creek flood and the move to Standard Time – did not warrant a mention in the formal minutes of Vestry meetings. Again, we must rely on our ‘Colonial Cousin’ to fill in some of the pertinent details as they affected the everyday lives of the people who lived in Mitcham Village.

Mitcham Village

25th June 1893

My dearest Cousin Elizabeth,

As promised I am now in a position to tell you of our new incumbent and his family. He is the Reverend Albert Wyndham Clampett, and his wife’s name is Alice. They have two little boys: George is three and baby Harold only five months old. Living with them at the Rectory is Mrs Clampett’s widowed mother, Mrs Elizabeth Patten, who followed them out to the Colony in 1890 after the death of her husband.

Albert Clampett is an Irishman, having been born on 17th September 1860 at Waterford in southern Ireland. His father, Mr Joseph Clampett, an Alderman and Warden of Waterford Cathedral, is an exporter of dairy produce. Albert is the fifth son. He went to Trinity College, Dublin – that bastion of the Protestant faith – where he studied medicine for two years. Then, having been ‘called’ to take up Holy Orders, he changed and took a B.A. in 1882. Whilst seeking a preferment Mr Clampett spent some time teaching in the village of Roundthorn some seven miles NE of Manchester. Then, having been accepted by the Bishop of Rochester, he removed to Surrey, where, on 21st December 1884, he was ordained deacon and appointed stipendiary curate of St Saviour’s, Herne Hill Road, Camberwell. He served a curacy of four-and-a-half years there and was ordained priest on 21st December 1886 – the same year in which he took his M.A. from Trinity College. He was very popular, being regarded as a “gifted and eloquent preacher and a hard-working divine”.

Amongst the parishioners at St Saviour’s was Miss Alice Patten who sang in the choir and taught in the Sunday School. She had a beautiful soprano voice and the curate a splendid tenor voice. Soon they were singing duets and falling in love. They sang in choral societies, which on occasions performed before Queen Victoria in the Albert Hall. During the year 1888 the Bishop of Adelaide, George Wyndham Kennion, went to England to try to procure some young priests to come and serve in our Diocese. Apparently Albert Clampett was most impressed by several talks he heard given by the Bishop and decided to accept a Living presented him to come to Australia – provided Alice would accompany him!

Shortly after their marriage they emigrated on a ship called the *Austral* and after a tedious and rough journey (which made Alice frightfully seasick) they reached Adelaide in early June 1889. To add to their woes, they

were put ashore at Largs Bay in small boats – Albert was wearing his frock coat and top hat, and Alice her best going-away dress – and both were soaked to the skin! They spent a week or so with Dean Marryat and his wife at St Luke’s Rectory in the City before taking up the appointment of Priest-in-Charge of the Yorke’s Peninsula Mission on 25th June. Before they left, the Bishop had a quiet word, saying: “Clampett, I think you would be well advised to discard your top hat and long coat. I don’t think they will be necessary on the Yorke’s Peninsula”. The thought of young Mr Clampett on horseback trying to weave his way through gum trees and along dusty tracks wearing a top hat and frock coat was the cause of much merriment! He was soon ‘kitted out’ with a soft felt hat and more suitable apparel.

It was rather a ‘baptism of fire’: the land was in the grip of drought, the parishioners were very poor and the accommodation consisted of only the bare necessities. This Mission District, centred on Maitland, is spread over thirteen towns – some just tiny settlements where services are held in kitchens and living rooms – and there are twenty-six Wardens to work with! Alice’s mother, Mrs Patten joined them there in 1890, arriving with the baby’s layette several weeks before George was born on 4th May. After two years of successful work there Albert accepted the oversight in May 1891 of Laura and Gladstone, together with its attached Mission in the Mid-North of the Colony. Baby Harold was born there on 10th February this year.

And so we come to the Clampett family’s arrival in Mitcham. A goodly crowd was present for the special service held in St Michael’s at 7.30 p.m. on Thursday, 15th June when Albert Wyndham Clampett, M.A., was duly instituted by the Archdeacon of Adelaide. Going on past records, it seems that no sooner do we get accustomed to our incumbents’ ways of running this Parish than they remove to greener pastures. I wonder how long this one will stay.

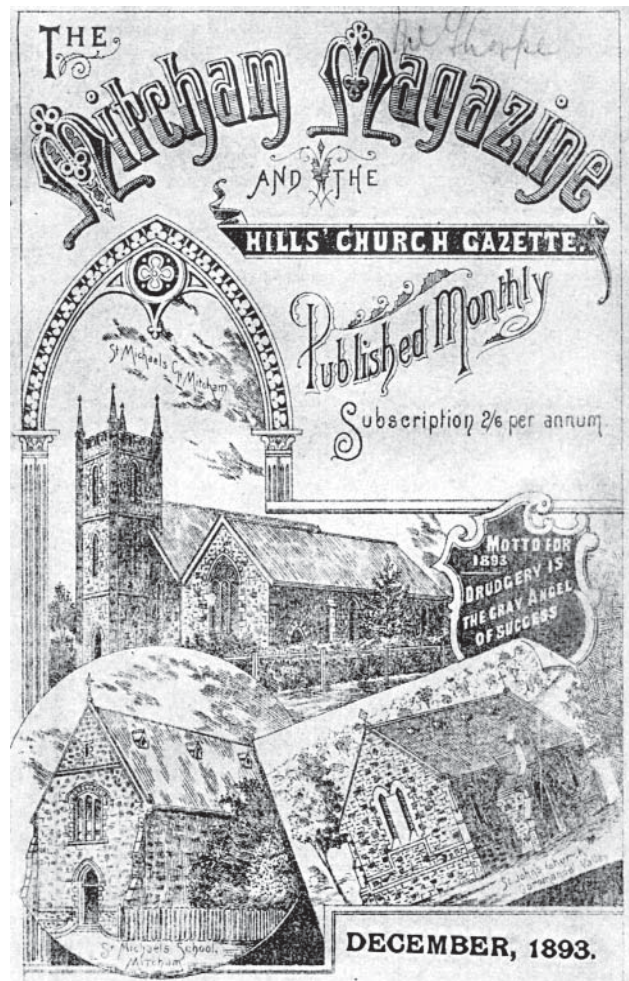
I suppose it is a bit early to tell yet, but I think he will fit into Mitcham life very well indeed. He is small of stature (no more than 5 feet 6 inches at most) with a pronounced hooked nose, has thinning dark hair, twinkling eyes and an infectious laugh. What he lacks in height he makes up for in other ways: he enjoys singing, has a great booming voice and gives fiery addresses from the pulpit. I would describe his speaking voice as that of a cultured English gentleman: certainly no trace of a traditional Irish brogue. Alice Clampett is a tiny lady – I doubt she would be 5 feet high – and of course has a lovely speaking and singing voice. So now you have a picture of our new Rectory family!

2nd December 1893

... A Special Vestry meeting was held in July to receive the report of the Gas Committee. A contract has since been let for the removal of oil lamp fixings and the installation of gaslights in the Church. It is hoped that part of the cost will be offset by the sale of the two present chandeliers and wall brackets to the Hahndorf Institute.

Enclosed is a copy of *The Mitcham Magazine and the Hills’ Church Gazette* [Fig. 4-3]. I thought the charming drawings on the cover depicting St Michael’s, our Day School and St John’s Church at Coromandel Valley would give you a good idea of their appearances. Some years ago St John’s had to close its doors for three years for lack of an incumbent, and now the Cure is again vacant. At a meeting held in St John’s on 23rd November to consider the best means of continuing, it was agreed by a majority of twelve-to-one to ask the Reverend A.W. Clampett to take charge. This resolution was duly ratified by the Executive of the B.H.M.S. Since his arrival in Mitcham, Albert Clampett has cheerfully continued the good work begun by Reverend Frederick Samwell at Belair, where some forty or fifty people have been attending an evening service each Sunday at ‘Hope Lodge’, the former Belair Inebriates Retreat. The superintendent, the Reverend Morton Lockhart, who also trains young men for Presbyterian Missionary work, has kindly been making available a suitable room and a good organ for the services.³

Fig. 4-3 *The Mitcham Magazine and the Hills’ Church Gazette*, December 1893. St John’s Church at Coromandel Valley (bottom right) was part of the Cure of Mitcham at that time. On the left is St Michael’s Day School prior to the addition of extra classrooms along the southern side of the building. (MPA)



Michaelmas 1894

... In your last letter you asked whether I had been so bold as to become involved in the issue of ‘Votes for Women’. Indeed, my friends and I attended some of the rallies led by Catherine Helen Spence and her gallant campaigners. Many good Protestant ladies have been involved in the crusade for a number of years through the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union. When the *Constitution Amendment Act* was finally passed in July we were there to cheer and wave our flags. Fancy being the first women in Australia to achieve this milestone!

That dear courageous lady Mrs Catherine Thornber died in May. It was her late husband, Robert, who gave the land upon which St Michael’s stands. Since his tragic death about forty years ago Mrs Thornber and her daughters have been conducting a school from their home in Unley Park. It opened on 26th October 1855 and has always had a very high reputation. Many of the leading families from this district prefer to send their daughters there to be educated. It is also a very fashionable boarding school for country girls, with many of our wealthy pastoralists sending their daughters there.⁴

24th April 1896

... The Church is looking splendid. Last year it was painted outside and some structural repairs carried out, and recently the interior has been beautified by the placing in the west wall of a very charming large coloured-glass window, with suitable monograms. I believe it was made here in Adelaide by the firm of E.F. Troy which has only recently taken up this type of work. Owing to settlement in the building, the old window, which was plain glass, was seriously cracked and had long since ceased to be water-tight. The new window was the outcome of a gift of £20 remitted from England by Mrs Helen Browne, wife of Mr Leonard G. Browne. She is a daughter of Mr Henry Strong Price, that wonderfully generous man who did so much for St Michael’s over many years. Following his death at the end of 1889 she inherited the family home, ‘Delamere’, and seems to be carrying on her father’s philanthropy.⁵

As well as the new window, Mrs Browne has provided a brass alms dish and two collecting plates, which look well with the handsome brass altar cross given a year ago by Lt-Col and Mrs Jervois. Florence Jervois is Helen Browne’s sister, so no doubt there was some collusion about these gifts!

At last night’s Annual Vestry the Rector desired to have the opinion of the Vestry as to the desirability of the members of the choir adopting a uniform dress – the ladies black hats and black dresses with white collars and cuffs, the gentlemen surplices. It was unanimously agreed that such a change would be most desirable.

On the whole, the financial position is the best it has been in years. The debt on the Day School Hall, which in 1893 was over £400, has been wiped out and an additional classroom to cater for the increasing number of pupils is in the course of erection ...

21st August 1896

... On Wednesday, 12 August I attended a most

moving ceremony in the Cathedral to celebrate the first anniversary of the formation of the Mothers’ Union in South Australia. It was introduced here by our new Bishop’s wife, Mrs Dorothy Harmer, and is going from strength to strength. We are indeed most fortunate to have as our Diocesan President the Governor’s wife, Lady Victoria Buxton, who arrived at the end of October. She has been a member of the Mothers’ Union for many years and was President of the All England Conference in 1895. There are now twenty-two branches in South Australia with some 600 members, about fifty of them being from Mitcham.

Albert Clampett was guest speaker at a Mothers’ Union meeting held on 22nd April. He took the opportunity to stress the great need for Religious Instruction, saying that since 1875 the Bible has been excluded from our State schools and that every endeavour must be made to reverse the Government’s stand on this important matter...⁶

24th April 1897

... The word ‘Federation’ is on everyone’s lips at present. Adelaide has just been host to the second Federal Convention, and for the past month the delegates from all the colonies except Queensland have been in earnest dialogue drawing up a Constitution. Their proposed *Constitution Bill* is now to be debated in each of the colonial parliaments. The ladies of South Australia are much envied by those in the other colonies, for having gained our suffrage in 1894 we had the satisfaction of voting for the first time at the general election held on 25th May last year. Now we hear that we shall be permitted to vote at Vestry meetings and to elect synodsmen!

There was much joy in the Parish when Alice Clampett was safely delivered of a daughter on 8th December last. Baby Mary Gladys, known to everyone as ‘Little Miss Mollie’, was baptised on 14th February. This date, 14th of February 1897 – Septuagesima Sunday – will be forever etched in the memories of the people of Mitcham as the day of The Great Flood!

After suffering the most appalling drought conditions, parts of the Colony were subjected to violent thunderstorms and floods that caused havoc and immense damage. One of the worst-hit areas was Mitcham where two people were drowned in the usually placid Brownhill Creek. There has been nothing like it since the flood in May 1875 when the Mitcham Keystone Bridge, then under construction, was washed away. However, that followed a period of prolonged heavy rain (over seven inches in one week) culminating in a heavy downpour that flooded most of the Adelaide Plains. By contrast, the recent one occurred in the middle of summer and without warning. I can do no better than quote from the *Register* of Monday, 15th February which provides a dramatic account of this awful event. It all began about 3 o’clock, just as Mollie’s christening service began:

After a long spell of heat, during which the thermometer registered as high as 107 degrees in the shade, the people of South Australia were anxiously watching for signs of a change. Saturday broke cloudy and was as disagreeably

hot and humid as a day in the tropics... Sunday proved to be as hot as Saturday. The atmosphere in the morning was muggy, the sun being hidden behind a dense mass of cirro-stratus clouds...

Shortly before 3 o'clock dense black clouds were to be seen gathering in the north-east, whilst lightning began to play in the south-west. The air became more and more suffocating, and for quite a quarter of an hour hardly a leaf moved... Presently a cloud of dust preceded the approach of what might be fairly termed a cyclone. So thick was the air that it was difficult to see across a street. No sooner had the violence of the wind spent itself than the pattering of enormous heat drops could be heard heralding the heavy fall of rain which followed in their wake. Directly afterwards the air was cooled by the fall of an immense shower of hail which lasted fully five minutes... The cirro-stratus travelling from the north-east were seen to collide with the upper clouds in suspension, and turn over and over, emptying as they rolled a perfect deluge of water over a large area of the country, extending apparently from the south-east corner of the city in a south-easterly direction towards the coast. A portion of the clouds was diverted and travelled due south towards the Mount Lofty Range, where it was caught by the high hills, letting fall its burden in large sheets.

This all took place before 4 o'clock, and from then till about 5 o'clock rain fell steadily and continuously... At Burnside and in the southern suburbs it was reckoned that at least 2 inches was the fall. In the northern and north-western suburbs hardly any rain fell, nothing more than a passing shower...

The Brownhill Creek came down in flood, and in its course caused the loss of two lives – the only victims... Mr J. Moyse and Miss Maud Clark took refuge from the rain under the Mitcham Bridge, and were without warning carried away by the flood. For some time they were able to hold on to the trees...until a cow came down the stream and knocked Miss Clark away...and with the aid of a fence she managed to climb on to a shed, whence she was with great difficulty rescued by Mr Benson. She was conveyed to Mr Playford's house, but not until nearly every vestige of clothing had been torn from her by the violence of the water. Mr Moyse was not so fortunate, as, after a fruitless struggle, he was swept down the creek, and his dead body found near the Hawthorn Bridge. As the waters passed through Mr Benson's garden (better known as Prince's) the ground surrounding Mr Hooper's house was flooded, and in endeavouring to escape Mrs Hooper was washed away and drowned... In his statement Mr Hooper said:- "Shortly after 3 p.m. a neighbour called out, 'Get out of the house, a flood is coming'. I ran out and saw the yard full of water. I called out to my wife and picked up the baby. We got out of the back door and waded to the fence leading to Muggs Hill Road. I got over the fence and handed the child to a neighbour. I then tried to assist my wife, and just at this time the fence between my place and Mr Benson's gave way, and my wife was washed away..." The body of Mrs Hooper was afterwards found with a log of wood across it and partly covered with debris about 30 or 40 yards from where she was washed away...

This tragic loss of two young lives from such a small community plunged the whole Village into mourning. The Hoopers lived in a little cottage next to the ford on Muggs Hill Road and had been married for only a year. She was twenty-three years old. John Moyse, whose family are local quarry operators and stonemasons, was only twenty-two.

There had been an unofficial report of five inches of rain falling at 'Birksgate', the home of Sir Thomas Elder. Three weeks after the flood the whole of South Australia was shocked to hear that Sir Thomas had died whilst in residence at his summer home, 'The Pinnacles', at Mt Lofty. He was buried in the Church of England Cemetery at Mitcham [see Fig. 10-17]. Like his sister Joanna and brother-in-law Robert Barr Smith, Sir Thomas was a Presbyterian by birth, and, like them, he too gave generously to all religions. Over the years St Michael's has received many substantial subscriptions from him.

At last Wednesday's Annual Vestry the Rector drew attention to the "desirability of cleaning and decorating the interior of the Church, of removing the present pillars which were an obstruction to sight and sound, and erecting in place of them round iron pillars of small circumference". Although the Rector's suggestions met with the approval of the Vestry, the resolution was not formally proposed because of the demand likely to be made on the parishioners to erect a daughter church at Hawthorn.

The first moves for another church came a month ago when a meeting was held at the Misses Thornber's Unley Park School, at which a committee was formed to canvass families in the surrounding areas. They reported that forty-four families – made up of 105 adults and 126 children – would support the building of a new church, preferably in the Hawthorn area.⁷

Since then there has been considerable animosity concerning parish borders between Reverend Albert Clampett and Reverend Arthur West from Unley, who chaired the meeting. Albert Clampett has always understood that Northgate Street, Unley Park, was the northern-most boundary of the Mitcham Parish, while Mr West contends that the division is along Napier Terrace (better known now as the Cross Road). His argument is based on the fact that when Unley Council severed from Mitcham and became a separate District Council in 1871, this road was established as the boundary between the two Council areas. A recent copy of *Church News* contains a vitriolic letter from Mr West on the subject. In it he claims that not enough Unley parishioners were pressed to attend the meeting because they had already decided "a scheme so preposterous as this could never be allowed by the central government in the Diocese". It was a scheme, he claimed, which in effect proposes to "plant a church on the extreme frontier of one parish with the avowed intention of feeding upon the parishioners of a neighbouring parish", and that this is "by all laws of courtesy and equity and Church custom, foredoomed to speedy annihilation".⁸

Mr Clampett responded to these allegations in the following edition saying, in effect, that Mr West's letter was calculated to arouse bitterness, and that "a narrow

parochialism characterised it because there was not an upheaval to affiliate the proposed church to Unley”. He added that, assuming the Cross Road to be the boundary, Mr West had “not the slightest objection to placing the proposed church on his side of the road, on the ‘frontier’ of the Mitcham Parish”. It is this dispute over the Parish boundary that led to the very specific wording of the following motion passed at Vestry last Wednesday:

That this Vestry is entirely in sympathy with the proposed erection of a church at Hawthorn, and expresses the opinion that having regard to the fact of the locality of Hawthorn being in the immediate neighbourhood of the west and Lower Mitcham portions of St Michael’s Parish and looking to the best interests of this Parish and to the proper support of the incumbency it is both desirable and vitally important that church be affiliated with St Michael’s, Mitcham.

For the people who live in those western districts, it is a long walk of between one-and-two miles to their nearest church. Apart from St Michael’s, their only other options at present are St Mary’s on the South Road, St George’s at Goodwood or St Augustine’s at Unley. Obviously, Mitcham can not afford to lose the pew rents which would accrue to a new church, hence the reference to the “best interests of this Parish” and the “proper support of the incumbency”!

The Parish Boundaries Board of Synod has been asked to arbitrate, so I will let you know the outcome...

Friday, 13th May 1898

... We have just returned home after attending the laying of the foundation stone of the new church at Hawthorn which is to be called the Church of Saint Columba. It was a fine, warm afternoon and a large crowd was in attendance to see the Bishop and the Governor’s lady perform the ceremony. There are high expectations that it will be ready to use by the end of the winter.

The Synod Board’s decision – much to Albert Clampett’s chagrin – vindicated Reverend Arthur West’s stance on the matter of the boundary between the two parishes. However, it did concede portion of the Unley Park area to Mitcham and advised that the matter would be further reviewed when Hawthorn ultimately became a separate parish.⁹

At our Easter Vestry Mr T. Hedley Robin did not stand again for the position of People’s Warden, which he has held these past four years, as he intends to identify himself with St Columba’s. No doubt we will lose the services of other stalwarts such as Mr Robert Thornber (son of Robert and Catherine) and Mr James Cunningham, both of whom live in that district. They also serve as Lay Readers at St Michael’s.

30th October 1898

... As predicted six months ago, the Church of St Columba is already open for worship and the service of licensing the building took place a week ago. Only the tower and nave have been constructed at this time [seen in Fig. 4-4]. When funds permit the transept and chancel

will be added. At present the Church can hold some 200 worshippers, but when complete it should seat between 450 and 500 making it considerably larger than the Mother Church of St Michael!

As well as this new church in the northern portion of the Parish, we shall soon have another in the hills to the south at Belair. On 24th September Bishop Harmer laid the foundation stone of a modest building to be called the Church of the Holy Innocents – the first in the Diocese to be so named.

Two years ago the Rector expressed the hope that the choir of St Michael’s would adopt a uniform. His wish became a reality when the surpliced choir made its first appearance on St Michael and All Angels Day. The cassocks and surplices were the outcome of a gift made by Mrs Barr Smith to the Rector. It is hoped to commence construction of a much-needed choir vestry before the end of the year ...

7th October 1899

... Over the years Parish magazines have been published under various names and in various formats, the most recent being the *Mitcham Magazine and the Hills’ Church Gazette* which “withdrew most modestly from the struggle for existence some two years ago”. However, as the ‘Hills’ areas are no longer a Mission District associated with St Michael’s, and as we now have our daughter church at Hawthorn, the decision was made for the Wardens of St Michael’s and St Columba’s to jointly accept the responsibility of issuing 150 copies per month of a new magazine called the *Mitcham and Hawthorn Parochial Magazine*. I think the cover is very handsome [Fig. 4-4].

The Rector is the Editor of this revised and enlarged publication, and in the first edition he wrote: “On the first Sunday in each month the Magazine will be placed in your seat, and if not taken by you on that Sunday (what a tale of duty neglected will the untouched Magazine unfold!) it will be forwarded to your address.” He believes that every parishioner has a right to know what his parish church is doing, and should know of its struggles as well as of its joys; also that it is “wise to take people into our confidence and unwise to throw a cloak of mystery over the affairs of the parish until Easter comes, when the Wardens make their disclosures to a very thin house”. We shall certainly be in our seats on the first Sunday in each month ready to collect our Magazine!

A raging influenza epidemic, which has forced an entrance into almost every home in Mitcham, combined with exceedingly rough, boisterous and cold weather, severely depleted the number of parishioners attending our Patronal Festival this year. The choir, under the Rector’s leadership, excelled with lovely anthems. Both Albert and Alice have beautiful singing voices and the choir has responded well to this. One of the members, Mr John Dalby Boorman, has been in the choir for nearly forty years, which, according to the Rector must be an “unequalled record in the history of any choir in the Diocese”. Mr Boorman still occupies the same corner seat, and his presence there can guarantee that the vocal portions of the service are,

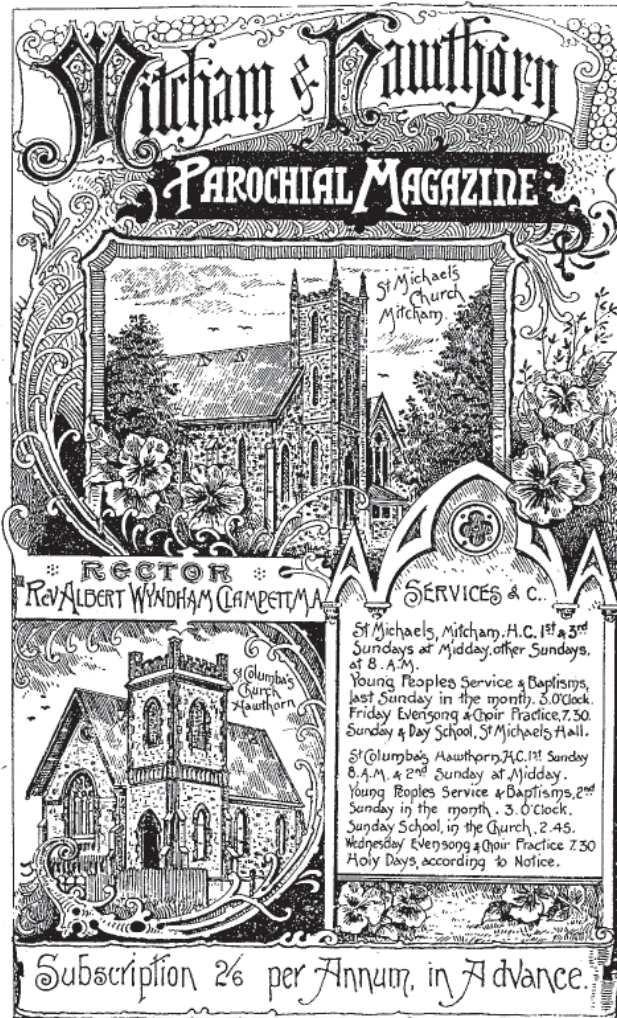


Fig. 4-4 *Mitcham and Hawthorn Parochial Magazine, August 1899. The daughter church of St Columba at Hawthorn is shown bottom left. Note the new choir vestry adjoining St Michael's tower. The photo-lithographer was a local pharmacist, J.H. Secombe. His original shop, still bearing the mortar and pestle symbol in the gable, stands on the corner of Princes Road and North Parade, Kingswood. (MPA)*

so far as one man can do it, removed from risk and uncertainty. His son, Laurie, is also in the choir.

The choir members now have their own vestry for robing. Made of matching stone, it has been built at the front of the Church adjoining the southern side of the tower. It was officially opened on Sexagesima Sunday and cost in the region of £60. Personally, I think it has spoilt the appearance of the building [seen in Fig. 4-4].

As usual the Church was decorated with hundreds of arum lilies for the celebrations which did much to brighten our lives, as did the Children's Flower Service the following week. Afterwards the older girls placed some of the flowers on the grave of our former Sunday School scholar, Ethel Thorpe, who died recently of tuberculosis after weeks of intense suffering. She was only eighteen years old.

Several weeks ago the old sanctuary rails in the Church were removed, the sanctuary platform altered and the worn blue carpet migrated to the vestry. Handsome brass altar rails now divide off the sanctuary completely and a rich Axminster carpet of beautiful oriental pattern covers the floor. It all looks very splendid! These improvements were the outcome of a bequest of some £40 from the family of Mr Charles B. Newenham (formerly the Sheriff of South Australia) who died some twelve years ago in England. You may remember that he was one of the founding fathers of St Michael's back in 1848 when he was living at 'Springfield House'. I understand the money was actually a bequest from his son, the late Reverend George Newenham, who died tragically in 1853 at an early age just a year after his marriage to Miss Lucy Gill [see page 188]. George, by his will, left certain monies to his father upon certain Trusts, and directed the payment out of such monies of a legacy for St Michael's upon the death of Lucy (which has now occurred, hence the delay of twelve years since the father's death).

The Church of the Holy Innocents at Belair was far enough advanced for a service to be held in the new building on Christmas Day last, and the Church was formally dedicated three days later (Holy Innocents Day) by the Dean of Adelaide. Apparently there is an exceptionally high proportion of adherents to the Church of England living in the Belair district, and such was their enthusiasm to assist in the building project that the Church was ready in just three months. What a contrast to the four years it took to build St Michael's! The Rector is the Reverend King William Pobjoy.¹⁰

Perhaps in anticipation of a favourable outcome to the referendum regarding Federation, a new *Standard Time Act* came into operation on 1st May. All clocks at post and telegraph offices throughout South Australia were put back thirty minutes at midnight on 30th April 1899, meaning that there will be a half-hour difference in time between us and the Eastern Colonies.¹¹

Monday, 29th October 1900

... At 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon Bishop Harmer officiated at the benediction of the 'Children's Window'. This lovely stained-glass window represents Christ as a boy in the Temple. It was executed by the local firm of Messrs Montgomery and Grimbly at a cost of £25. For nearly three years the children of the Sunday School have been subscribing a small amount (from threepence upwards) per month which was collected on the first Sunday of each month. We are glad the young children have carried out their resolution, and are sure it will always be a pleasure to them to remember they have offered to God something of themselves to beautify the place of His sanctuary.

At the Easter Vestries of both St Michael's and St Columba's resolutions were carried to the effect that it would be in the best interests of the Parish to secure the services of a curate to assist the Rector whose work has doubled since the opening of the Hawthorn Church. By August the finances had been guaranteed and it was hoped that a suitable man would be found within two months. However, it would seem that young clergymen



Fig. 4-5 *Mitcham Institute, c.1950. The West Wing (seen on the left) and the Mitcham Boys' Club and Gymnasium (at the rear) were both built in 1900 whilst Reverend A.W. Clampett was President of the Mitcham Institute Assn. The Boys' Club was demolished in 1972 and the Mitcham Village Art & Crafts Centre now occupies the site. (MLHC, Arnott-Rogers Collection)*

are scarce, and in spite of advertisements being placed in Church papers in Ballarat, Sydney, Melbourne and Perth, no answers have as yet been received. The Rector has even communicated with friends in England and Ireland, and hopes some earnest man may be stirred to come and labour in this portion of Christ's kingdom!

This has been a particularly busy year for the Rector who has many commitments outside of his Parish work, not least of which is his role as President of the Mitcham Institute Association. He has had the oversight of additions to the building costing about £390, and the construction of a Boys' Club on land behind it [Fig. 4-5]. A fine new library and reading room, containing a splendid selection of books and magazines, was opened in the Institute at the end of April; and on 29th September the Hon. Joseph Vardon formerly opened the Mitcham Boys' Club and Gymnasium. This hall, which cost £270, is made of iron and is well fitted with the usual furnishings. At present thirty-eight lads have joined.¹²

THE EDWARDIAN ERA (1901–1911)

"The Queen is dead. Long live the King!" These traditional words announcing the death of a British monarch rang out on 22nd January 1901. Victoria, Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, was dead. January 1901 marked not only the end of the Victorian era and of the nineteenth century, but also saw the end of the colonial period in Australia. The first day of the twentieth century ushered in Federation: an *Act to Constitute the Commonwealth of Australia* having received Royal Assent in July 1900, a Proclamation was issued uniting the colonies as States of the Commonwealth of Australia as from the 1st of January 1901.

* * *

Sunday, 26th May 1901

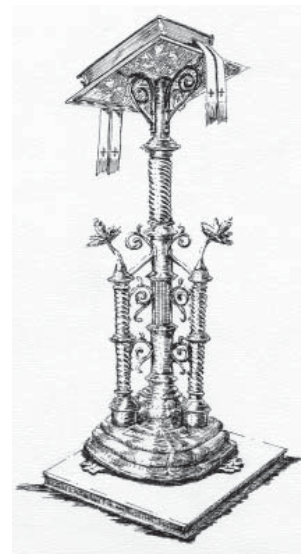
... At last we have a curate. The Reverend Joseph Thomas Huston took up his duties on 13th January. He had been working in the Riverina Diocese in New South

Wales since being ordained deacon nearly two years ago, and came to us with excellent credentials. Mr Huston is the proud possessor of a splendid up-to-date limelight lantern and a large number of slides. He organised a Lantern Service at the Hall on Good Friday evening which was crowded. It was most impressive and views of the closing scenes of our Lord's life were shown. On Monday, 29th April a free lantern night was held for the youngsters, who rolled up in great numbers, and had a gorgeous time all to themselves. Lantern lectures will be held in the Hall during the winter months. The views will be interspersed with music and song, for which a charge of sixpence will be made with all profits for parochial purposes.

Mr Huston has formed a youths' club to be known as the 'Lads' Guild'. It hopes to include not only those connected with the Church, but also those who have drifted away and are at present 'unattached'. The objects aimed at are reverence for sacred things, and due observance of Sunday. They plan to meet fortnightly when matters literary, scientific and social will be discussed, addresses given, papers read, debates held and elocution taught. A feature will be some simple science chats aided by a lantern. The clergy hope this class may be of much help and pleasure to many youths, and may yet become the parent of a Parish 'cricket-football-chess-drafts-field club' and Boys' Brigade! Meanwhile, the choir boys of St Michael's have formed themselves into a cricket club and played their first match on 26th January against the choir boys of St Paul's, Port Adelaide. Members of the congregation provided all needful cricketing material, and each member of the team pays a small subscription each week which helps replenish worn-out stock.

On Easter Day a handsome brass lectern was dedicated to the memory of Henry Morgan Hawkes to commemorate his long and useful work in this Parish. He had been a Vestryman since the early 1880s and served as a Warden for the past nine years. He died in August last year at the age of fifty-one years. The lectern, a gift from the parishioners, was made in England by J. Wippell & Co. of Exeter and cost nearly £31 [Fig. 4-6].

Fig. 4-6
The brass lectern was dedicated on Easter Day 1901 as a memorial to Henry Morgan Hawkes. (P. Oborn, 1977)



At the Easter Vestry the Rector drew attention to the fact that the Jubilee of the Church would be in October 1902, and said he hoped the congregation would evolve a scheme for commemorating so interesting an event. Something of a permanent character should be done, such as some structural improvement in the Church, or the increasing of the Endowment Fund.

Now that the Colony of South Australia is part of the Commonwealth of Australia I can no longer be your ‘Colonial Correspondent’. There must be a change in name, something more in keeping with the twentieth century, so I shall remain

Your most affectionate and devoted
‘Commonwealth Correspondent’

22nd April 1902

... On Advent Sunday last year a magnificent three-light stained-glass window on the east wall above the altar was unveiled by the Rector and dedicated by Bishop Harmer [see page 191]. The window, designed by Morris & Company, dominates the whole interior of the Church with its rich colours and beautiful patterns [see Fig. 4-13]. It was crafted in the glass workshops of James Powell & Sons of Whitefriars, London, and is a sample of the very highest stained-glass window art.

The window was a gift from Robert and Joanna Barr Smith in memory of her brother George Elder and his wife Jane who lived at ‘Knock Castle’ near Largs in Scotland. George died suddenly on 5th October 1896 and Jane a few months later. Like his older brothers, William and Alexander, George spent several years in South Australia before returning to live in Scotland. Sir Thomas Elder, who stayed in the Colony, was the youngest of the four brothers.¹³

Enclosed with this letter is a photograph of the Clampett family taken last Christmas [Fig. 4-7].

Our curate, Mr Huston, took his last service at St Michael’s on 28th March. He was ordained priest on 22nd December and has accepted work on the staff of the Bishop’s Home Mission Society. At last week’s Easter Vestry it was announced that his replacement will be the Reverend Brice Lee Jackson, M.A. who, like Mr Clampett, is a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin. He has been engaged in parochial work in Ireland, and he and his wife have just sailed from England and should arrive in Adelaide during the first week in June.

Our decorations in the Church this year for Harvest Thanksgiving were rather more modest than in the past. The Rector made it clear that it was “not at all necessary to turn churches into something like market stalls” and that “a few samples of the fruits of the earth tastefully arranged” would suffice! An unexpected occurrence during Evensong assumed an air of inflated importance after being reported in *Church Commonwealth* (our Australia-wide Church of England newspaper):

The gas failed at St Michael’s, Mitcham, on Thursday evening... It was Harvest Thanksgiving. Due to water in the pipes, the gas refused obstinately to give its light. Lamps and candles were procured with as little delay as possible. These served to light up the choir sufficiently to

enable them to carry out the service without any alteration, but the large congregation had to be content with a very dim light indeed!

It was somewhat novel to see some very helpful members of the congregation holding lamps to enable the lads of the choir to see their music. We had the combined choirs of St Michael’s and St Columba’s for the occasion. Young Laurie Boorman was one of the soloists in Garrett’s *Harvest Cantata*, as was Mrs Alice Clampett.

Plans for commemorating the Jubilee of the Church in September are well under way, and it has been decided that the main aim will be to raise a sum of not less than £250 to act as a further Endowment of the Church.

Through the efforts of the Girls’ Friendly Society an American ‘Estey’ organ was purchased and presented to St Michael’s Hall, where it is in great demand. The young ladies worked most diligently towards a Sale of Work and raised over £31.

Mitcham has started a Brass Band, which, if all forecasts be correct, will charm us at intervals during the long winter evenings. The members meet every evening in St Michael’s Hall for instruction. Not a drum or note has yet been heard beyond the voice of Mr Bushell, the instructor, who is initiating some into the mysteries of staves, clefs, and notation. The members are waiting for funds to purchase the instruments which will cost about £70...

10th October 1902

... We have been at ‘sixes-and-sevens’ these past weeks having repairs done to the house following the severest earthquake on record which occurred on Friday, 19th September. There had been a slight tremor early that morning, but at five minutes past 8 o’clock in the evening there was a roar and rattle as of the firing of heavy artillery, accompanied by violent convulsions of the earth,

Fig. 4-7 Christmas lunch in the Rectory, 1901. (L. to R.) George, Mrs Alice Clampett, the Rector, Harold and Mollie. The maid, Ellen Orchard, is carrying in the plum pudding. Ellen, who lived on a farm up in the Brownhill Creek Valley, worked for the Clampetts for twenty-one years. The children called her ‘Crab Apple’. (Bowen Family album)



which shook buildings to their foundations, and fairly paralysed the people. Chimneys tottered and fell, pieces of stone and plaster crashed to the ground and ceilings descended. On a lighter note, I read in the paper that in one of the city churches the choir was practising the hymn in which occurred the line ‘Through Storm, Through Earthquake, and Through Fire...’ and that at the precise moment they sang those words there was a rumble, rumble, rumble and the hymn was merged into a grand finale of more or less musical shrieks as the singers made a frantic rush for the door!¹⁴

The geologists tell us that Mitcham – and St Michael’s in particular – is in a precarious position, situated as it is between two major ‘fault lines’, known as the Burnside and Eden Faults. Fortunately the Church sustained no major damage, which is a miracle considering the ongoing problems we have had with walls cracking! I recall that back in 1877 the cracking was so bad that there were serious suggestions about demolishing the whole building! Thanks be to God, we were able to celebrate the Jubilee within the Church rather than holding a wake amongst its ruins!

The Jubilee was a joyous occasion with many past parishioners joining the celebrations. Special ‘Golden Offerings’ for the Jubilee Endowment Fund raised some £168 on the day. This, together with some additional funds, has been lodged into the ‘Church of England Endowment Society Inc.’ and it is hoped the Society will, at some future time, subsidize this amount in accord with their regulations. It was disappointing not to reach our goal of £250.

The other cause of much celebration was the publishing of a small twenty-seven-page booklet giving a short review of the first fifty years of St Michael’s. It was written by the Rector as part of the Jubilee Festival. In his foreword he modestly hopes that, when the centenary of the Church is observed, “the little chapters we fill may not compare unfavourably with those we are reviewing”.

In this, the Jubilee Year, I thought you might be interested to know a few statistics about St Michael’s, viz: the present number of communicants is 130 and the aggregate number of attendances at Holy Communion for the 12 months to 31st March was 622. On the Sunday School roll there are 145 young people and 8 teachers, and on the Day School roll 77 under the care of Mrs Gurner and her assistant Miss White. The Girls’ Friendly Society (which is managed by Mrs Alice Clampett with assistance from the Misses L. Waite, F. and M. Love, M. and A. Rymill and Miss Tolmer) has over 50 members. Mrs Clampett is also Presiding Associate of the Mothers’ Union, and Mrs F.C. Howard is Hon. Treasurer of a Provident Club run in connection with it.

So much seems to have happened in the Parish over the past few months that I neglected to mention our new curate, Mr B. Lee Jackson. He took up his duties on the 8th June and has been a tower of support to the Rector, particularly in the work associated with St Columba’s. A well-attended gathering of members of both congregations assembled in St Michael’s Hall on 6th June to welcome Mr and Mrs Jackson to Australia, and to this Parish in particular.

When our daughter church of St Columba at Hawthorn was opened just on four years ago, the cost of the nave, land and furnishings was put at nearly £1,200. The present debt is about £150, and the congregation is preparing to raise, by means of a series of Bazaars, some few hundred pounds to build a Parish Hall. They are very enthusiastic, and there is no doubt but that in a short time this desideratum will become a *fait accompli*!

Much of our time of late has been in connection with raising money for the Jubilee Endowment Fund: a concert and comediatta in the Institute in May, a Ping-Pong Tournament in the Hall in June (Mrs Barr Smith provided the prizes) and a Bazaar next week. The ladies have also been given the task of canvassing the whole of the Mitcham and Hawthorn districts in connection with the ‘Religious Instruction in State Schools League’. We have been given papers with a view of securing signatures of those desirous of joining the League. The Rector is very passionate about this subject, and hopes that throughout the State a strong movement will be made to remove the prohibitions which boycott the Bible from our State Schools.

8th December 1902

... The children of the Sunday School and Day School have just had their annual picnic under the jetty at Brighton Beach [Fig. 4-8]. The number attending this year was the largest on record, 240 all told, which included seventy parents and other adults. After a short service in the Church – which, as usual, included the hymn “Do no sinful action...” – our merry throng set off in seven of Hill & Company’s large four-horse drags for the hour’s pleasant ride to the beach. In an incredibly short time garments were dispensed with and the sea became alive with young urchins and lasses, some diving and swimming and some paddling, but all perfectly happy. Appetites were keen, and the teachers had a really busy time satisfying the many and wondrous capacities of the youngsters. On arrival the Rector rang his bell and

Fig. 4-8 Sunday School picnic at Brighton Beach, December 1902. Mollie Clampett (centre) is wearing a large black hat. (Bowen Family album)



everyone lined up for a currant bun. At lunchtime the bell heralded the distribution of great washing-baskets-full of delicious corned-beef sandwiches. Races and contests, including cricket matches, were keenly entered into during the afternoon, and about 7 o'clock a start was made for Mitcham. We certainly slept well that night and I am sure all the children did!

I must tell you more about those sandwiches. They were made the night before at the Rectory and packed between vine leaves and sheets to keep them fresh. This sandwich-making is an annual event, and Alice Clampett somehow manages to gather in her rich gentry friends to help each year. Slaving away in the Rectory kitchen one might find the likes of the Misses Waite, Rymill and Grasby, Mrs Jean O'Halloran Giles and even Lady Duncan! The meat is usually donated by Mr Thorpe, the butcher. The Rector, not to be outdone, rolls up his sleeves and carves the great slabs of beef for the horde of busy workers.¹⁵

At last, some thirty-three years after the laying of the foundation stone, our Cathedral Church of St Peter is finished. In 1894 work came to a standstill through lack of funds. Then a bequest of £4,000 to the Building Fund by Sir Thomas Elder in 1897 enabled the completion of the nave and the carrying of the towers to the height of the roof. That work was consecrated on 14th July last year during the visit of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York, who were in Australia for the opening of the first Federal Parliament on 9th May 1901. Yesterday the towers and spires were dedicated thus completing the project.¹⁶ The erection of the actual towers and spires was made possible by a most noble gift from our very own Robert Barr Smith. In August 1900 he wrote a letter to Bishop Harmer offering to finish the building, concluding with the words:

I am a Presbyterian by birth and tradition, but fully appreciate the good work the Anglican Church is doing in South Australia. If I do this thing, as I hope I shall, I give willingly To the Glory of God, For the permanent beautifying of the City of Adelaide, For the love I bear my wife.

The estimated cost of £10,000 was to cover Mr Walter Torode's tender for erecting the towers and spires (£8776) with the balance required for the apsidal end and new vestries for the clergy and choir. When the Bishop suggested a plaque be placed in the Cathedral to commemorate Mr Barr Smith's gift, he wrote back that he hoped the Bishop "would not be angry with him, but that he would prefer there should be no brass plate as the towers will always speak for themselves and be 'to the Glory of God' and an ornament to the City no matter who built or helped to build them". This is so typical of him! He hates people making a fuss and much prefers to do these things anonymously if at all possible.¹⁷

Compared with the great English cathedrals ours probably rates no higher than many priory or abbey churches, the total length of St Peter's being less than the width of the transepts of York Minster. But to us it is a magnificent structure.¹⁸

Sunday, 12th July 1903

... Our former curate, Reverend B. Lee Jackson, is returning to Ireland having been offered a Living adjoining his former parish in the north-west of Ireland. He has only been with us for a short twelve months, but long enough to win universal esteem and respect. The Rector views his departure with much regret, for in Mr Jackson he had a friend and helper, ever staunch, courteous and reliable.

We have also lost our verger. After fifteen years faithful and loyal service Mrs Splane has retired. Advancing years made the work too much for the good lady, who at nearly eighty years of age is entitled to fulfil her days in ease and rest from the anxieties of work. The Rector has appointed Mr E. Dickson to the position, who, with the help of members of his family, will combine in one the separate offices of verger, organ-blower and bellringer, and will do the washing of the choir surplices. I think, over the fifty years since St Michael's opened, we have had only three vergers: James Bragg for twenty-eight years, David Mundy for about seven, then Mrs Splane for the past fifteen.

The Rector is keen to start a Church Lad's Brigade for boys of thirteen years or more. The object is the advancement of Christ's Kingdom amongst lads of all classes, the promotion of reverence, discipline, self-respect, and all that tends to true manliness. The Brigade works on military lines, and the annual camp is a big attraction. The greatest difficulty is procuring a good officer, who needs to be gentlemanly, interested in lads, a thorough churchman, and full of earnestness. If only we had Major-General Downes in the Parish still!

11th September 1904

... We have another splendid piece of furniture in the sanctuary at St Michael's: a carved reredos presented to the Parish by the members of the Girls' Friendly Society. They have worked for nearly two years to raise the money for this beautiful gift. Made of Singapore cedar, it was carved by Mr John Cain of North Adelaide, and incorporates a re-table or gradine to accommodate the cross and vases of flowers [seen in Fig. 4-13]. It was dedicated by the Rector on Easter Day.

On 7th April we attended the consecration of the Lady Chapel in the Cathedral. It is a very intimate space and contains three beautiful Morris & Company windows made, like ours, in the workshops of James Powell & Sons of Whitefriars, London. And like ours, they are a gift from Robert Barr Smith. In fact, the left-hand light is very similar to the one over the altar at St Michael's, with the same cartoons used in many of the design elements. As usual, in order to avoid public acclamation, Mr and Mrs Barr Smith did not attend the ceremony.

We seem to have had an extremely busy social life this past winter, most of it connected with raising funds for various parochial projects. But what a pleasant way to while away the cold evenings! On Friday, 27th May a gathering of a social character, in connection with the inauguration of a combined St Michael's and St Columba's Literary Society, was held in the Hall. Some forty people indicated their desire to join and the meetings

are to be held fortnightly. The Rector was instrumental in forming a Literary Society at the Mitcham Institute in May last year.

We also have a St Michael's Choral Society which is under the baton of our organist, Mr Abel Warhurst. It opened in June last year with twenty-seven members and rehearsals are held weekly in the Hall. On Monday evening, 25th July, they gave a most creditable performance of Root's very attractive cantata *The Haymakers* in the Institute, the voices being supported by a small orchestra, all under the conductorship of Mr Warhurst. The proceeds are to be devoted to providing St Michael's Hall with stage fittings to obviate the necessity of hiring the Institute when anything requiring scenery is performed.

The following night we were again in the Institute, this time for a dance that raised nearly £21 in aid of St Michael's Hall funds. The dance went with a swing and cheeriness from the beginning, and as it did not finish until 12.30 a.m., a special tram was organized to leave for Adelaide an hour later than usual.

Our present curate, Reverend Tom Percy Wood, who took up his duties last March, was priested on St Peter's Day at the Cathedral. He trained at St Barnabas' College and assisted in the nearby parish of Goodwood as a deacon before coming to Mitcham.

There have been some stupid and misleading rumours circulating to the effect that St Michael's Day School is to close. The Rector is most upset, and has told parents to take no notice of any such reports. Where such a rumour began is hard to imagine, for at the Speech Day last December it was stressed that the work of the School during the year had eclipsed all previous records. The number on the roll was seventy-two. The Inspector of Church Schools said that only one other – namely St Paul's in Flinders Street kept by the Sisters of the Church, which secured a percentage of 94% – came higher than Mitcham with 93%. This was a most excellent result...

11th December 1905

... Quite a lot of renovation work has been done on the Church over the past year. Writing in the Parish magazine in February, the Rector pointed out that the inside of the north wall was in a very bad state and the whole body of the Church looked shabby. He said it required the skill and care of workmen for a week: "God's House should be the best kept in the Parish, but as the rain at present gets through the roof in many places it cannot be said that it is." Since then it has undergone a thorough repairing, renovation and cleaning, and has been painted inside and out. The sanctuary area has been transformed by a handsome lincrusta wallpaper tastefully decorated in gold and browns, and new incandescent lights have been installed. The seats have also been re-arranged in order to give the main nave a wide alleyway of six feet up the centre, which throws all the arrangements and furnishings of the pretty sanctuary open to full and unbroken view [seen in Fig. 4-13].

The work was made possible by the proceeds of a most successful Bazaar in September that raised in excess of £114, plus a gift of £50 from Robert Barr Smith. On

top of this, on hearing that the balance-sheet presented a deficit of £42, mainly in connection with the renovation work, he sent the Rector a cheque for the full amount which has cleared the Church of all indebtedness. I heard he was also a generous donor to St Columba's, giving £100 to enable a start to be made on the building of their Parish Hall which was opened on 9th July – less than four months after the laying of the foundation stone! To have built a Church costing over £1,000, of which amount only £70 is still owing, and to have commenced a Parish Hall at a cost of £800, all within six-and-a-half years, is indeed a praiseworthy accomplishment.

Our curate, the Reverend Percy Wood left in April to take up his appointment as incumbent of Laura (the Rector's former parish). His replacement is Mr Charles Fishbourne Hall, a student at St Barnabas' College, who took his B.A. at the University of Adelaide. He was ordained deacon on 30th April and immediately entered upon his duties as assistant curate in the Parish of Mitcham. Next year we are to have two new teachers at the Day School, and in addition to teaching Religious Instruction to the pupils, the Rector is arranging for Mr Hall to give regular lessons in ordinary class subjects with a view of specially helping the boys and the senior girls.

The Rector has chosen not to send his own children to St Michael's Day School. George is now a student at St Peter's College, having had his earlier education at a school called Concordia at Fullarton. His younger brother, Harold, is just finishing his primary years as a student at Kyre College in Thornber Street, Unley Park, and will start at Saints in the New Year.¹⁹

Little 'Miss Mollie' Clampett is growing into a fine young lady. She is now nine years old and attending the Misses Thornber's Unley Park School [Fig. 4-9]. The Rector goes to the School on Monday mornings to give Scripture lessons, and recently someone asked Mollie why she did not stand up with the rest of the class to say "Good Morning Mr Clampett", to which she replied "Because I said 'Good Morning' at breakfast time."²⁰ She catches the horsetram to Unley Park and is a great favourite with the tram drivers who sometimes let her hold the reins on the last leg of the journey home. On Sunday mornings a 'special' horsetram runs between

Fig. 4-9 Students at the Misses Thornber's Unley Park School, 1905. Mollie Clampett is fifth from the left in the second row from front. (Bowen Family album)



Thornber Street and the terminus at Upper Mitcham to convey the pupils of the School to and from a service in St Michael's. It is chartered from the Adelaide, Unley and Mitcham Tramway Company.²¹

A little boy by the name of Howard Florey attends the juniors' class at the Misses Thornber's School. He lives in a large house called 'Coreega' adjoining the Rectory and Mollie has the responsibility of holding his hand and escorting him to the School on the horsetram. Howard, who is eighteen months her junior, is a rather serious child with a mass of fair curls and Mollie has nick-named him 'Floss'. His father, Mr Joseph Florey, a self-made man who has boot-making factories here in Adelaide and in Melbourne, purchased 'Coreega' several years ago. His first wife died of consumption and he subsequently married Bertha who had been her nurse. Unfortunately their obvious wealth has not guaranteed Bertha the niche in society that she so craves. I'm afraid our landed gentry and professional folk do not take kindly to her rather ostentatious mode of dress, her 'uneducated' voice and quick tongue. However, she is a good wife and mother – and a good business woman – who is keen for her children to do well. They all attend St Michael's regularly, and Alice Clampett is Howard's godmother.²²

The United Friendly Societies' Service was held in St Michael's yesterday. Members of the Lodges met on the Mitcham Reserve, and headed by the Mitcham Brass Band, marched to the Church. The procession was met en route by the Rector and choir. The Church was soon filled – every point of vantage used – and to our regret many had to be told "the Church was overcrowded, and there was no more room". It was inspiring to see so many hundreds of men in their bright regalia assembled in God's house for the solemn act of worship...

Sunday, 30th December 1906

... At the end of September we had our first visit from the new bishop, Arthur Nutter Thomas, who returned three days later to confirm twenty-seven of our young parishioners. Our curate, Mr Hall, who has been here since May 1905, was ordained to the priesthood on 10th June and will be leaving us at the end of January for the country parish of Kapunda. Another curate, the Reverend G. M. Searcy, will take his place on 3rd February.

St Columba's at Hawthorn is going from strength to strength, and the ladies there decided to form a separate branch of the Mothers' Union. The inauguration service was held in St Columba's on 3rd May, and after the service the Rector enrolled eleven members.

As from July our Parish magazine has undergone a transformation, both in name and format. It is now known as the *Mitcham and Hawthorn Parish Messenger*. The Diocese of Adelaide also has a new paper. The Bishop chose the name *Adelaide Church Guardian* for the sixteen-page monthly publication. It is good to have our own diocesan paper again. Some years ago we used to enjoy reading *Church News*, but this was discontinued in favour of *Church Commonwealth* following Federation.

In the middle of the year a rotunda was built on the Mitcham Reserve for the Mitcham Brass Band. It is a splendid setting for out-of-door concerts and now that

summer is here they are providing us with many pleasant musical evenings. The kookaburras sometimes join in the chorus as though they too are praising God for all his bounty.

After a long and honoured career the Misses Thornber have just retired as principals of the Unley Park School. For over fifty years this admirable establishment, begun by their mother, has contributed in no small degree to build up in this State a cultured, a reverent and a respected girlhood and womanhood. A Miss Jacob will take over operations in the new year.²³

26th November 1907

... Two items in particular have caused much anxiety to the Rector this year: the Day School and the shocking condition of the Rectory. Writing in the July issue of *Mitcham and Hawthorn Parish Messenger* he complained that he was unable to work the Day School efficiently with only a handful of parishioners subscribing to the funds. Some advised him to close it, but he felt that one of a clergyman's most sacred duties is to "feed the lambs" and that every parish priest knows he can do this best through the agency of a Church school. This is particularly so without the moral uplift and direct religious instruction being permitted in our State schools. The Rector is Secretary of the Diocesan Board of Education, which was set up in 1887 to establish and assist Church schools, so this matter is very dear to his heart. At present there are twenty-one Church Day Schools in the Diocese. The teachers are doing excellent work for the children and the State, but they are very poorly paid and a small bonus at Christmas time assists them in supplementing the very slender incomes they receive.

In a similar vein, he expressed deep disappointment that only ten people from the St Michael's end of the Parish still contributed to the Curate Fund, which requires at least £70 a year. A few years ago times were bad, but now that our land is blessed with prosperity, returns increasing and revenues rising, there ought to be a spontaneous and liberal response to important needs. What we should do without the generosity of folks like the Barr Smiths, Waites and Rymills I shudder to think!

Which brings me to the matter of the Rectory. White ants, damp, old age and defective methods of carrying off storm water have all contributed to the problem. In fact, the old portion of the house is so unsatisfactory that some think it would be it wiser to pull it down and build up again. During the Clampetts' tenure no less than three ceilings have collapsed – at some risk to the household – and others are bulging in a threatening manner. So far there has been a very generous response from the St Michael's congregation with the Rectory Fund standing at £315. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that a "very generous response has come from members of the Barr Smith family" who have provided more than half of this: £100 from Robert Barr Smith, £50 from his wife Joanna, and £25 from their daughter Jean (Mrs Tom O'Halloran Giles) who is at present in England! Mr Peter Waite has also given £25, and Mr John Duncan and Mr Frank Rymill £20 each. Of the other twelve donors to

date, whose gifts range from £2 to £10, only one (Mr E. Malpas) is from St Columba's! The Rector has made it plain that the Rectory is the property of all parishioners: "I had hoped for PAROCHIAL help, for I feel that the Parish as a whole should be interested in the accommodation provided for the Rector." Writing in this month's edition he says: "I do not think the general condition of the Rectory and of the rear portion, especially, can be understood – they are open for inspection! We have been shut out from one room for the past three months owing to its dilapidated and unsafe condition." Next week the Rectory is going into the hands of the contractor, Mr Thomas Baulderstone, and the Wardens have taken a furnished house in Pier Street, Glenelg, for the Clampett family for the next two or three months.

Our curate, Reverend Gilbert Montague Searcy, having successfully passed the Licentiate in Theology examination conducted by the Australian College of Theology, is to be priested in the Cathedral on 22nd December. It will make the Rector's life a lot easier having two priests in the Parish, particularly whilst he is living at Glenelg...

19th February 1909

... The Clampett family is back in residence at the Rectory after their annual holiday with the Barr Smiths at Mount Barker. Robert Barr Smith bought an old coaching inn in that village thirty years ago and transformed it into a magnificent mansion set in beautiful gardens. It is called 'Auchendarroch'. They spend the summer months up there and have many house-guests to stay, including several leading Anglican churchmen. The Clampetts usually spend a week or two with them in January or February, and the children regard it as "their summer house".

During the Rector's absence our new assistant curate, Reverend Herbert C. Vindin, took most of the services. He only arrived on 1st January having spent the past year as locum tenens at Holy Trinity Church in Adelaide. Mr Searcy left at the end of December to take up his new position at St Paul's, Port Adelaide.

The little bluestone Baptist Church in Albert Street has been enlarged and a new façade built as part of its Jubilee Celebrations, the dedication taking place on 4th October last year.

We have only just heard that the Reverend Alfred Sells, a former incumbent, died on 25th October at Edenbridge, Kent, a week before his 86th birthday. Another of our former incumbents, Archdeacon Dr George Henry Farr, died in his 85th year at his home in North Adelaide on 7th February 1904.

The other piece of news concerns The Orphan Home for Girls. You may recall that this diocesan home was begun by Mrs Julia Farr back in 1860 to care for orphans or girls whose parents were unable to give them adequate supervision at home. Their ancient building in Carrington Street, Adelaide, was in such a dilapidated condition that the decision was made to sell it or, if they could not, to demolish it. On 8th December the committee made the momentous decision to sell up and move to Mitcham. They have bought Mr and Mrs Tom O'Halloran Giles'



Fig. 4-10 *The Orphan Home for Girls, 1910. The chaplain, Reverend A.W. Clampett is standing at the back. The Orphan Home was renamed Farr House in 1935 and eventually closed in 1983. Until 1909 the large bluestone villa, formerly known as 'The Curragh', had been the home of Mr and Mrs T. O'Halloran Giles. It still stands at 26 Carrick Hill Drive, Springfield, and is once more a private home. (MPA)*

large home, 'The Curragh', which is a little south of the Rectory on the Fullarton Road. Mrs Jean O'Halloran Giles is a daughter of Robert and Joanna Barr Smith and, like them, has been a very generous donor to St Michael's over the years, and a dedicated worker on our various fund-raising committees.²⁴

28th October 1910

... The Orphan Home moved to Upper Mitcham on 21st July and is now fairly established in its new abode [Fig. 4-10]. Already the girls and matron are familiar with St Michael's congregation and Sunday School, and the girls are attending our Day School [Fig. 4-11]. We ladies do whatever we can to assist by donating produce, provisions, books, magazines and games. We also organised a Bazaar in aid of the Furnishing Fund on the day of the official opening ceremony which was performed by the Bishop on 14th August.

The debt on the first stage of the building of St Columba's has now been paid off and plans are in hand for the Church to be consecrated on 20th November. Once again, Robert Barr Smith, on hearing that only £10 remained to clear the debt, made out a cheque for that amount and sent it to the Rector last June. Of the total seating accommodation for 200 at St Columba's nearly 170 sittings are let, and they are already contemplating how to raise a further £1,500 to complete the building to the architect's original plans!

For the past two years the Rector has been Rural Dean of the Eastern Suburbs. He is also Honorary Chaplain to Bishop Nutter Thomas. This mainly involves attending the Bishop on public occasions. The Rector has just returned from a visit to Sydney where he attended meetings of the General Synod of the ‘Anglican Church in the Commonwealth of Australia’. In his review of the proceedings published in the *Mitcham and Hawthorn Parish Messenger*, he noted that a lot of interest gathered round the question of vestments. It was claimed by those in favour of vestments that they were the “historic dress for the clergy celebrating Holy Communion” and that the custom should be revived. Others felt that they had “no doctrinal significance” and that although the Church claims “uniformity in matters of faith, doctrine and ministry, in matters of vesture, surely we may agree to differ”. After a long discussion a motion in favour of permissive use of vestments was withdrawn because “the question is now occupying experts at Home, and we can well afford to wait their decision”.

As well as the subject of vestments, some members of our congregation have been querying the validity of ladies voting at Vestry meetings. In order to clarify the position, the Rector sought a ruling from the Secretary of Synod who wrote: “I have examined the Trust Deed of St Michael’s Mitcham and cannot find anything therein which excludes women from voting at Vestry meetings.” In his opinion women who comply with Clause 14 Chapter I of the Provisions and Regulations of Synod are entitled to vote.

With this current vogue for such large hats still popular, ladies have been respectfully begged “so to adjust their hat pins that they be not dangerous to other people”. It is felt that the “danger of serious accident is very great indeed, especially when communicants are kneeling at the altar rail”.²⁵

We are to have two new Parish groups formed in the near future: a Tennis Club and a branch of the Church of England Men’s Society (C.E.M.S.). The tennis courts are at the back of St Columba’s Hall and, thanks to the

kindness of Mr Henry Mudie who is allowing us to encroach on his adjoining property, we are now able to have room for two courts. The ‘St Michael’s and St Columba’s Tennis Club’, will be opened on Saturday, 5th November.

A meeting to explain the principles and constitution of C.E.M.S. is to be held on 8th November. Following the visit to Australia by the Reverend Henry Woolcombe, many branches have been formed in the Diocese during the past year.

Our congregations have suffered considerably since the authorities stopped the running of the trams on Sunday mornings. For those who live at a distance from any church, this is proving to be quite a deterrent to attending worship, particularly if the weather is inclement. According to the Rector “zeal and energy can accomplish much” and he suggests the young and strong should walk or use their bicycles. Alternatively, as the trams do run in the evenings, that they come to Evensong, marking out at least one morning for Holy Communion...

14th August 1911

... On 11th August Albert Wyndham Clampett was appointed by the Bishop to the high office of Archdeacon of Mount Gambier! He will have oversight of a very extensive area stretching from Belair to Mount Gambier – an area, I would say, comparable with that of all the Southern Counties of England rolled into one! As yet he is uncertain what demands this will make upon the time which he has hitherto devoted to Parish work. Fortunately, at present, we have two priests in the Parish, the curate, Reverend W. Stuart Williams, having been priested on 12th March [seen in Fig. 4-11]. He has done an excellent job since his arrival in the Parish at Christmastide 1909.

For nearly a decade the Rector has been a great advocate of the teaching of religion in our State schools. A new group known as the ‘Scriptural Instruction in State Schools League’ was formed on 6th July with a view ultimately of asking the State Government to grant a referendum to see if the majority really do desire some amendment to the present secular system. They hope to gain approval to introduce what is known as the ‘New South Wales System’, which is already in use in all states except South Australia and Victoria. It is perfectly fair all round and provides that no child shall receive religious teaching against the parents’ wishes.

At the Easter Vestry it was announced that St Michael’s has been the recipient of a most generous gift. Mrs Gertrude Culross has invested in Synod the sum of £500 as an endowment in memory of her late husband, William, a solicitor. The interest on this sum, which is to be known as the ‘William Culross Memorial Fund’, is payable to the Rector of St Michael’s and is intended to secure the income against those fluctuations to which every parish is liable. Mrs Culross has been the Enrolling Associate of the St Michael’s Mothers’ Union branch since its inception, and we frequently enjoy her hospitality at her fine home in Unley Park.

A decision was made at the Vestry to incorporate all our Church property at Mitcham. This will facilitate the

Fig. 4-11 *St Michael’s Day School, 1910. Amongst the students are some of the girls from The Orphan Home. On the left is the Headmistress, Miss Stevenson, and on the right the curate, Reverend W.S. Williams. (MPA)*



legal administration of all Church affairs and do away with the necessity of appointing Trustees. Our Trust goes back to 1848 and has since been subjected to various amendments. About three years ago there was much consternation when it was found that the Trust Deeds of the Church, together with other legal documents, had been mislaid. They were ultimately procured from the office of Mr Charles Hardy, a solicitor and former Warden, where they had been since 1888! They were forthwith lodged for more convenient custody in the Diocesan Church Office.

In my last letter I made mention of the start of a Tennis Club and a branch of C.E.M.S. The latter, which meets alternatively at St Michael's and St Columba's, already has between seventy and eighty members. Now we are to have several new groups for the younger members of the Parish. A 'candidates class' has been formed in connection with the Girls' Friendly Society. It promises to be a great success, and is open to little girls from nine to fourteen years of age. Meetings are held fortnightly under the management of Mrs Alice Clampett assisted by the Misses Waite, Rymill and Love. On alternate Saturdays the little girls are being encouraged to join 'Heralds of the King', the juvenile department of our Missionary Association. At present we have thirty-seven 'Heralds' who, as well as learning about the work of the Church in the Mission field, will be taught to use their fingers in making garments for it.

The boys have not been forgotten and a Football Club is getting into shape. A paddock has been secured just north of the Cottage Homes at Mitcham, the inmates of which take pleasure in watching the boys racing up and down.

We are becoming quite a 'sporty' congregation: the Rector has secured from Robert Barr Smith the right of using the cricket pitch in 'Torrens Park'. For many years this was the home ground of the Mitcham Cricket Club, now disbanded, and the Rector (a keen cricketer) is anxious to form a club to be called 'St Michael's Church Cricket Club'. There is a splendid asphalt pitch all ready, and no more delightful spot than the ground at 'Torrens Park' could be selected on which to spend a healthful Saturday afternoon.

Electricity, that wonder of the modern world which has illuminated many of the Adelaide shops and business houses this past decade, has at last come to Mitcham! Not, as yet, into our shops or homes, but we do now have the very best mode of transport, the electric trams. Since July 1909, when the line was electrified as far as the Cross Road, we have had to continue the journey to the Upper Mitcham terminus by our good and faithful old horsetrams which continued to operate from the depot opposite the Mitcham Institute Building. In his little booklet written in 1902 at the time of the 50th Anniversary of the opening of St Michael's, Albert Clampett predicted the coming of electricity and the ultimate demise of the horsetrams:

The busy Australian resents a 40-minutes' ride through the fresh air in the tram to or from town: the trams have evidently thought it is never good to be in a hurry, and

so Mitcham still awaits a population, and the trams passengers... But electricity is coming and then Mitcham, which now hardly ever moves, save when a stiff south-eastern 'gully' tears savagely through its streets and lanes, mixing up the gardens and their flowers horribly, and blowing to you from the hill districts, rubbish and litter in abundance – then will Mitcham rouse herself – then when from office to the front door of the dwelling will occupy some 20 minutes will men show their appreciation of Upper Mitcham's unrivalled suburban beauty, by selecting their allotments where 'they may build and have it in possession.' Some shudder at this possibility and dismiss the thought. Truly, we love the village as it is, perhaps we shall not love it less when more of our kind come to us to share its loveliness.

The photograph I have enclosed of St Michael's is a rather unusual view [Fig. 4-12]. It shows a gaslight and the eastern gate leading off the Fullarton Road. In June 1907 Dr Gault very kindly presented the Church with this large bracket lamp which had formerly been in use outside his residence and surgery in Lower Mitcham. Although you cannot see them very clearly in the photograph, there is an avenue of young trees leading from this gate to a point near the tower. In 1909 Miss Rymill gained permission from the Easter Vestry to remove some of the existing native trees on both sides of the approach to the Church from the east side and to replace them with an avenue of English Elms. They

Fig. 4-12 East gate, c.1912. This gaslight originally stood outside Dr Gault's home and surgery on Belair Road (now the Lenzerheide Restaurant). The photograph was taken by Charles Petts whose house still stands at 8 Old Belair Road, Mitcham. (MLHC, Petts Collection)



**Fig. 4-13**

St Michael's interior in all its glory at the time of the Diamond Jubilee in 1912. The new altar is surrounded on three sides by brass Communion rails and flanked by dossal curtains. Behind the altar is the reredos (presented by the G.F.S. in 1904) and above it the magnificent Morris window. A rich gold-and-brown lincrusta wallpaper adorns the wall. Note the high pulpit with its candelabra. (Petts and Rawling)

were planted and blessed on 10th June last year, and no doubt will look very imposing in the future. The picture was taken by Mr Charles Petts, a professional artist and photographer, who came to live in Mitcham recently. He is a committed Christian and lay preacher in the Baptist Church, often pedalling his bicycle up to their little chapel in the Brownhill Creek Valley to take services ...

5th January 1913

... The Diamond Jubilee celebrations on St Michael's Day, 29th September, were a great success. They were the climax of a week of celebrations which began on the Monday evening with a C.E.M.S. social in the Hall. This was followed by a service for the G.F.S. on Tuesday evening, an Intercession service in St Michael's on Wednesday night, a grand social for all members of the congregation in the Hall on the Thursday, a Mothers' Union service on Friday afternoon and a service of instruction for all communicants at 8 p.m. that night. Saturday morning saw us dashing around the district collecting a profuse supply of arum lilies with which to decorate the Church ready for the Sunday celebrations. This year we have new flower stands which show off the flowers effectively and keep them alive.

It had been an understanding for some time that when there were at least six lady members in the choir, that they should be robed in cap and gown. This happened today! In fact we now have seven, the youngest being little Elsie Bradey who is about thirteen. The ladies quite upstaged the gentlemen who have been attired in their new cassocks and surplices since Michaelmas [see Figs. 17-4 and 17-5]. All this new finery has been purchased with money raised in connection with our Diamond Jubilee Fund. In total, some £235 was raised – considerably in excess of the £168 donated for our Golden Jubilee Fund ten years ago! On that occasion the money was specifically utilized for

the St Michael's Endowment Fund, whereas the Diamond Jubilee Fund has been expended on 'beautifying' both our choristers and the interior of the Church.

As usual, by far the largest donation came from Robert Barr Smith, in this case £100! Most of this generous gift will be devoted to the needs of the organ, which is soon to have an hydraulic system for blowing installed, new sounding boards provided and a general overhaul. With the balance the Rector ordered from London the new cassocks and surplices for the choir (their old ones having been in constant use for fourteen years) and new sanctuary curtains and hangings. But these things – useful as they are – pale into insignificance compared with the splendid carved altar table presented by Mrs Joseph Fisher [Fig. 4-13]. This now complements our glorious Morris Window which leads the eye from the new altar, past the reredos, and ever upward towards the Heavens. A new pulpit was purchased with general funds and a brass desk for same has been kindly given by another member of the congregation. Following complaints by the Rector that he had to use an enamel jug when christening babies, a handsome brass ewer was donated by Mrs Granville Price [see Fig. 12-15]. The cedar pews have been oiled and dull polished, and new cupboards installed in the Rector's vestry. All in all, dear old St Michael's, after sixty years, looks very grand!

Completing the East End of the Church is a fine Litany desk which was installed and dedicated on 5th May. This resulted from some money received earlier in the year from England from Mrs J. Jervois who lives in Bournemouth. Florence Jervois is a daughter of Henry Strong Price, that dear generous man who left a £250 bequest to St Michael's about twenty years ago. Florence and her husband, Lt-Col John Jervois, also provided the fine brass cross on the altar.

We lost the services of our loyal and devoted curate, Reverend Stuart Williams, last May. He had been with us for about two-and-a-half years, and is now Priest-in-Charge of an area called Koolunga. We now have the services of another Mr Williams – the Reverend Charles Richard Williams – who took his first service on 15th December. A priest from the north of Ireland, he was keen to come to Australia and, at the Rector's request, the Bishop invited Mr Williams to come and share the work at Mitcham.

Mr Eric Wyllie, who has, during the past year, been of very great service to our Sunday School, is now assisting as a catechist at Meningie and Tailem Bend. In February he will enter St Barnabas' College to begin his training, and will thus be the first candidate for the ministry from this Parish.

The Bishop has launched an appeal to raise funds to create a second diocese in South Australia. Obviously the Adelaide Diocese, as at present constituted, is utterly beyond the powers of any one bishop. Cheques amounting to some £510 have so far been forwarded to Church Office from the parishioners of St Michael's. They include a cheque for £500 from Mrs Joanna Barr Smith!

Friday, 8th May 1914

... It was nice to see so many young people at last night's Easter Vestry, including both of the Rector's sons and Henry Tutt who have all accepted the responsibility of becoming sidesmen. Miss Mollie was also there chatting with her young friends.

This has been a busy week for the Rectory family with celebrations to mark Albert and Alice Clampett's Silver Wedding Anniversary. Mollie tells me that her parents have received a most handsome gift from Robert and Joanna Barr Smith: a magnificent silver tea service! Apparently Robert made discreet enquiries of Mollie regarding the family's tea-making facilities. Being a forthright young lady, she unabashedly told him that the silver tray currently in use was "only Sheffield plate", and that the silver teapot was "also Sheffield and it leaks"! The new service now holds pride of place in the Drawing Room together with a beautiful Morris & Company portière embroidered by Mrs Joanna Barr Smith.²⁶

We have not seen much of the Barr Smiths since they moved to their 'retirement cottage' in Angas Street about a decade ago, but the Clampetts still spend a week or two with them each summer at Mount Barker. Mr Barr Smith celebrated his 90th birthday last February and still has a clear head for business matters and watches with keen interest the progress of current events.

We were all saddened by the sudden death of Sir John Duncan last October following a gallstone operation. Although an Elder of the Presbyterian Church, he was a good friend of St Michael's, as was his uncle Sir Walter Watson Hughes (the Copper King) from whom he inherited his wealth. His lovely home, 'Strathspey', is the newest of our Mitcham mansions, having only been built in 1899 on some nineteen acres of land (part of the old 'Springfield' estate) fronting the Fullarton Road. The Duncans and the Clampetts are neighbours, and on

many occasions Albert Clampett could be found playing billiards with Sir John whilst they discussed religion and the affairs of the world. A small lane separates the two properties. This is a private road to enable the men from the Village, who are Mr Frank Rymill's gardeners, to gain easy access to his 'Springfield' property.²⁷

Another person who will be sadly missed is Mrs Julia Farr, that indomitable woman who started The Orphan Home for Girls and The Home for Incurables, and who was, for a brief period, our 'lady in residence' at the Mitcham Rectory. She died about three weeks ago at the grand old age of eighty-nine years.²⁸

We have just heard some amazing news. Last October Mr Peter Waite intimated to the Council of the University of Adelaide that it was his desire to create an establishment to undertake agricultural research on his land at Urrbrae. This will not take effect immediately, but is subject to his own and Mrs Matilda Waite's life interests. He has also purchased a further 114 acres which is to be given to the State Government for an agricultural high-school where country boys can come to learn. This land is across the other side of the Fullarton Road from 'Urrbrae', and surrounds 'Woodside House' where Nathaniel Oldham (an early Warden of St Michael's) lived for many years. The whole scheme is admirably conceived, and in a country like Australia with its great scope for trained agriculturalists, the gift (said to be worth £50,000) must become a national boon.

The background to Peter Waite's wonderful gesture is rather sad. It follows the death last year of his thirty-eight-year-old son, David, who disappeared at sea whilst travelling to England. Peter's only other son, James, has lived in London for many years and intends to remain there. He and his wife Louisa have only one child, a daughter Dorothy, who is about sixteen. With the three Waite daughters – Elizabeth, Lily and Eva all unmarried and 43, 41 and 33 years respectively – it is unlikely that Peter and Matilda will have any more grandchildren [Fig. 4-14]. Any hope of founding a family dynasty in South Australia is gone. The girls are all well-provided for and have no wish to inherit 'Urrbrae', hence the momentous decision to leave the property to the University.²⁹

The Rector is still urging us on to gain more and more support in the matter of scriptural instruction in State schools. He wants to form a women's auxiliary committee, and also to involve all the menfolk who are members of the C.E.M.S. He wants us to map out the district and have it thoroughly canvassed, suggesting that if each member would give six evenings to this work we would, in a few weeks, add hundreds to our numbers: "Members of our League by the thousand we must have. This national question must occupy us during the year of grace 1914."

* * *

In mid-1914 of this 'year of grace', as the Venerable Archdeacon Albert Wyndham Clampett looked back over two decades as Rector of St Michael's, life in the Parish of Mitcham was very pleasant, sedate and tranquil. King



Fig. 4-14 Peter Waite with his daughters Lily and Eva on the steps of 'Urrbrae House' in the late 1890s. Lily and Eva were largely responsible for raising the money for the G.F.S. to purchase the reredos and the Estey organ. Together with Miss Adelaide Rymill, they donated the English-oak sanctuary screen as a 'Thank Offering for Peace after the Great War 1919'. (Courtesy Urrbrae House, University of Adelaide)

George V had been on the throne for four years and peace reigned in Europe, albeit uneasily.

At fifty-three years of age Clampett was in his prime. He has been described as a man of "sanguine and energetic nature"; a man who, in spite of his small stature, possessed a beautiful voice which was "a joy to hear", whether preaching, speaking in public or singing. He was an Honorary Canon of the Cathedral and regarded as one of the best orators at Synod, his eloquent, but forceful, speeches being "accentuated by a sense of both drama and humour". He was proud of his achievements at Mitcham and "would not tolerate any infringement of what he considered the rights of that position".³⁰

St Michael's was debt-free and resplendent with many new furnishings and fittings donated during the Diamond Jubilee celebrations in 1912. The daughter church of St Columba at Hawthorn was thriving, there were generous endowments to provide a welcome addition to the Rector's stipend and enough money generated from both congregations to pay for the services of an assistant curate to take much of the load off Clampett's shoulders.

The large, rambling old Rectory on the eastern side of Fullarton Road, which always seemed to be in need of repairs, was, none-the-less, a comfortable home for the Clampett family. George was about twenty-four years old and Harold twenty-one, whilst 'Little Miss Mollie' was in her nineteenth year.

Writing in the *Mitcham and Hawthorn Parish Messenger* at the conclusion of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations in 1912, he summed up the atmosphere of life at St Michael's in these words:

True, our Parish Churches cannot compare with the many old parish churches in the home land. Yet what they in their beauty and enrichment are to them, ours are to us. The truth they hold and teach, we hold and teach. The truths our fathers prized, we prize. We have no break in the continuity of the past, in creed or doctrine, in office or in sacrament. Here, we have a shrine set on a hill, beautiful in its aspects, offering its silent and spoken witness to our Village and to the passer by...

Again, this Church stands in our midst to-day, and it is what it is, because it holds on to and proclaims, through storm and sunshine, through indifference, misunderstanding, through doubt and sin, the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, the doctrine of the living Lord, as revealed in the inspired and written word.

Our commemoration marks no end. 'Tis but a brief period in the flow of time, urging and calling us to go onward from strength to strength.

This 'year of grace' came to an abrupt end in August 1914 when the world was plunged into war and South Australia suffered one of its most severe droughts on record.



Fig. 5-1 Mitcham Camp, c.1915. The area is now part of the suburb of Colonel Light Gardens. (MLHC)



Fig. 5-2 Mitcham Signal Depot, 1913. No.1 Detachment Cable Section (28th Div. Signal Company) leaving the depot on Princes Road with a field telegraph cable wagon. Built in 1879 to house the horsetrams, the building was no longer required when the electric trams began in 1911. It was later used as a builder's yard and is now the site of 'Mostyn Court' Elderly Citizens' Units at 66 Princes Road. (Courtesy Ben Oborn)

Fig. 5-3
Harold Clampett (left)
photographed prior to
embarkation in 1914
on the Rectory lawn with
'Granny' Patten, George
and Mrs Alice Clampett.
(Bowen Family album)

