

## **OH 1/21 - Interview with Jessie Merle Hall**

### **TAPE 2, SIDE A - Construction of Lock 1**

Of course I saw all the beginnings of the locks.

#### **What do you remember of that?**

I remember seeing the construction works. In fact I made friends for life of one of the lock engineer's wives who'd just been married and came up there. We always kept in touch, right up until our boys were at Scotch together. Then she died.

#### **Were the locks operational in your time?**

Yes, several of them. I can't remember which ones were finished and which were still in the course of construction when we left in 1926. I know Blanchetown was finished. We went through that several times. I think Lock 3 was finished. If I'd known you were going to ask about that my brother might have remembered.

#### **What did the construction of the locks mean to you?**

Well a lot more business for one thing. There were quite big establishments there. They had quite a lot of staff. A high river for longer.

#### **Did your father, do you think, see any drawbacks?**

No, he didn't in those days. Now they seem to think they've had something to do with the salinity.

#### **About how long would it take you to run between Morgan and Mildura?**

I can't remember just how long, but we reckoned three months for a trip altogether - up and back again. We would stay at the townships and do some business there, but it was mostly done out of the towns of course. And tremendously important before the days of easy transport. Quite an event in the lives of a lot of people who were a long way from shopping centres.

#### **Are there particular stopping points that you remember of the Morgan to Mildura trips?**

That particularly appealed to us as children you mean?

**Yes.**

Oh yes, wherever we had friends who had horses (laughs). And we would go riding with them. Particularly my sister, who was a mad keen horsewoman always. And I liked to get to the towns and be able to see other shops and go and see my friends and have fun with them.