

A Short Autobiography – Part Four

We crossed the new bridge at Mexborough and had a pint in the Ferryboat Inn and I realised I'd just fulfilled a childhood ambition – the number of times my brother and me had crossed on that ferry with parched blue lips and raging throats, buckets of blackberries in scratched and brambled hands and still a mile to walk to grandma's. The number of times we'd passed the door of the Ferryboat Inn and longed to step inside and sample the magic brew that could slake a miner's thirst!

It was the first time John, our son had seen the snow, he walked outside in bare feet and pointed to the sky in amazement, like an aborigine seeing his first DC3.

My time was running out fast, where had the twelve weeks gone? I was beginning to feel cheated. Chris and John were staying on for another three months, I would go back to work in Sydney and try to find us a place to live. I didn't relish that thought.

Eventually the day arrived. This time parting was harder, much harder than the first, but I shed no tears in front of dad. There were just a few people who came to say goodbye, I could handle that, I hated big send-offs. Slowly the train slid out of Midland Station. I waved for as long as I could see them, once out of sight, they were strangers again. Alone in the compartment, I chose a seat and closed my eyes tightly to stop the tears. It was the early hours of the morning, I didn't recognise the street. Arm in arm my little brother and me marched in the straightest line we could and sang until our lungs near burst,

“Mull of Kintyre, oh mist rolling in from the sea, my desire is always to be here
.....“

We were the happiest kids in Sheffield.