

Maughan Thiem Motor
Company Pty. Limited
1912 — 1982



Acknowledgements

The production of this history owes much to the kindness of a number of people whose assistance is gratefully acknowledged.

The staff of the Newspaper Section and South Australian Collection of the State Library was always helpful. The Archives Branch of the State Library located obscure documents and made available some early photographs. Several people kindly consented to being interviewed: Mr T. H. Baldock, whose active association with the firm went back to 1914; Mr H. Payne, who served the company for 47 years; Mr A.E. Tough, whose association with the company extended over 44 years; Mr G.M. Maughan, who was company secretary for many years; and his son, Mr W.M. Maughan, who has an extensive interest in early cars. Mr Alan Behrens provided much helpful information about the early days of his father's involvement in the firm. The former secretary of the Collegiate School of St Peter, Mr Evans, kindly searched out information about College property leased to the company. The Royal Automobile Association of South Australia readily made its library facilities available for extensive use and consented to the use of an early photograph. Mr Peter Heuzenroeder gave helpful advice about tracking down old legal documents, as did also the Companies Office. Mr George Brooks generously supplied photographs from his impressive collection and helped in other ways. The News kindly consented to the use of photographs and a cartoon published in The Mail. Mr Lou Moss, of the Adelaide College of the Arts and Education, supplied excellent prints from old photographs from the early days of the company. The managing director of Maughan Thiem, Mr I.G. Ullett, readily made company records available and the company secretary, Mr I.M. Forbes, made numerous arrangements to lighten the task of digging into the company's past. The Board of Directors, which commissioned this history, was helpful in numerous ways and provided much useful information.

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Foreword

Maughan Thiem Motor Company Pty. Ltd. is proud of its years of service to the South Australian motoring public, and to commemorate its 70th anniversary has commissioned the writing of this history.

Since the early days of motoring in this state, the Company has played a prominent role in the selling and servicing of motor vehicles, and indeed the growth of the Company is part of the development of motoring in South Australia.

I am confident that, in the years to come, Maughan Thiem Motor Company will continue to play an important part in the state's motoring history.

**B.M. Thiem,
Chairman of Directors.**

Maughan Thiem Motor Company Pty. Limited

Board of Directors:

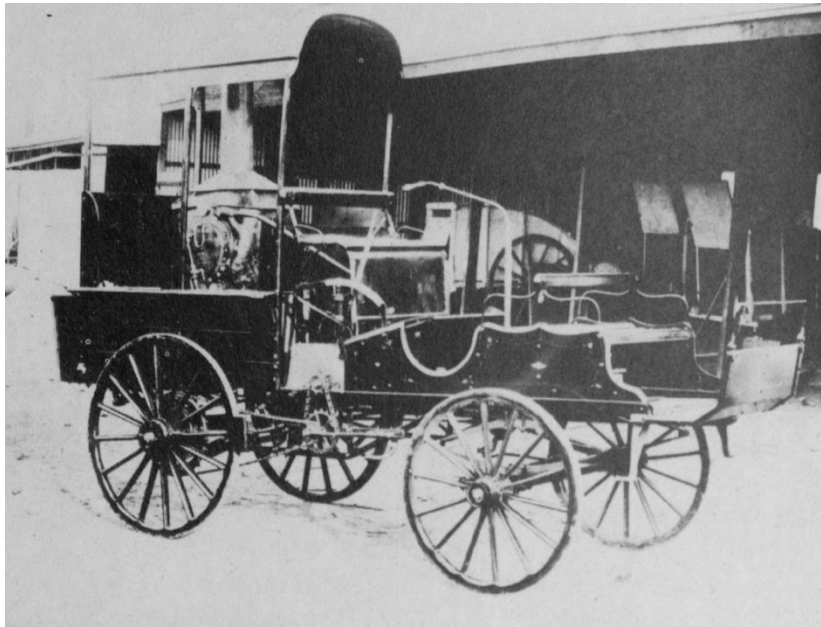
Bruce M. Thiem Chairman
Ion G. Ullett Managing Director
Maurice Thiem
Graham M. Maughan
Raymond E. Hanrahan
Bruce F. McFarlane

Chapter One

The Automobile Arrives in South Australia

This is not a history of the motor car in South Australia but of a company which sells and services it. Even so, something needs to be said about the development of motoring in the State in general, for companies such as the one whose history this book describes played their part in the early story of the motor trade in South Australia. In fact when Behrens & Marshall, as the Maughan Thiem company was first called, made its appearance it was only some fourteen years since motor vehicles had made a tentative and exploratory appearance in the state.

World developments in motor travel began to catch up with South Australia in the latter half of the 1890s in two nearly simultaneous ways. On the one hand a few pioneers produced their own experimental automobiles, and on the other hand some began to order vehicles from overseas. Naturally enough, the local products of that time were of great importance and interest to their creators and those associated with them, but it was to be some time before cars were produced commercially in South Australia, and these early experimental models had little effect on early motorised transport. The imported vehicles came in far greater numbers and were more important to the community of that time and, incidentally, for the fortunes of those who sold and serviced them.



Steam-Powered Car built by David Shearer, Mannum - *Courtesy, The News.*

It is usually agreed that the honour of being South Australia's first car builder belongs to David Shearer of Mannum, a maker and repairer of agricultural machinery. By the 1890s he was working on the production of a steam-powered vehicle which subsequently performed well for some years between Mannum and Adelaide. It was said to be capable of developing 20 horsepower, and on a trial run in June 1899 it carried six people as well as its supply of firewood and water. While Shearer was producing his steam car Vivian Lewis of the Lewis Cycle Works, his foreman T.P. O'Grady, and another employee Murray Aunger were working on an internal combustion engine in their factory in McHenry Street. They were assisted by the fact that a Mademoiselle Serpollet, a relative of the French family of motor manufacturers, brought to Adelaide a petrol-driven Gladiator tricycle to exhibit on 30 May 1898 during a race meeting at the Jubilee Oval run by the Ariel Cycling Club. The machine proved to be temperamental before its public and was taken for overhaul to the Lewis Cycle Works, which had the South Australian agency for Gladiator cycles. This gave Lewis, O'Grady and Aunger the opportunity to examine the internal combustion engine, and they in turn produced a small 3-horsepower air-cooled engine which was fitted to one of the tandems used as a pacing machine on the race tracks. It was fuelled by kerosene with tube ignition; later O'Grady converted it to petrol and electrical ignition. The modified engine was mounted on bodywork made by Duncan & Fraser, and the result was a small four-wheeled vehicle, chain driven and guided by means of a steering wheel. The early versions of both the Shearer and the Lewis vehicles were tested on South Australian roads about 1898, and claims are made that each was first actually on the road. In the following four or five years a few more local products appeared on the scene and rendered fair service to their inventive owners.¹

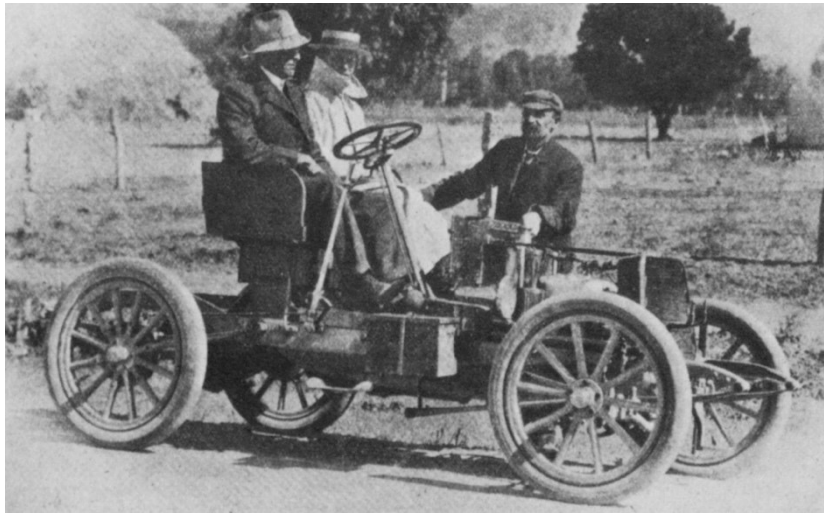
While some produced their own horseless buggies others began looking to more established sources overseas. About the time that Shearer and Lewis were testing their vehicles Mr Gordon Ayers ordered from England a Dechamp Victoria and Dr A.H. Gault an American two-cylinder New Orleans. Ayers' car was imported for him by Vivian Lewis, who assembled it in his factory and shortly afterwards imported a Gladiator car for Mr Bertie Barr-Smith. Others followed, and in September 1903

1. Concerning early motoring in the State there are numerous accounts, some of doubtful accuracy. By far the best published work is Stuart Nicol, *Bullock Tracks and Bitumen, South Australia's Motoring Heritage*, Adelaide, 1978. The unpublished thesis. *Motoring in South Australia 1880-1910* by Kevin Fagan and David Micallef, gives a very useful account of the ten local products between 1899 and 1904.

fifteen motorists formed the Automobile and Motor Cycling Club of South Australia, later to become the Royal Automobile Association of South Australia. In 1905 it already had a membership of 79, which rose to 95 at its meeting on 16 October of that year.² In all they owned some 25 different makes of car. The most popular was the Oldsmobile, of which there were probably 45, then the De Dion numbering 25 and the Darracq 18. Some of these vehicles were put through their paces in various trials and endurance tests, as of course were their drivers. In April 1903 B. Thomson and A. Day, in a 6-horsepower De Dion Bouton, took four days to complete the first recorded motor trip from Adelaide to Melbourne. In 1905 a Darracq won a hill-climbing contest on the Norton Summit road at an average of 28.4 miles per hour. The most sensational event occurred in 1908, when H.H. Dutton and H.M. Aunger spent June to August crossing Australia from Adelaide to Port Darwin in a 25-horsepower Talbot.

In the first decade or so imported automobiles rapidly multiplied on South Australian roads. By September 1905 the number stood at about 120, in 1907 about 306 cars were registered and 429 in 1908; in 1910 the number was 1376, by June 1913 it was 3313 and by 1916 it had risen to 7400. The motor car was becoming a permanent and more obvious aspect of the South Australian way of life, and its debut met with a rather mixed reception.

In the main coachbuilders, wheelwrights, and others who catered for horse-drawn traffic had little difficulty in adjusting to this new phenomenon. The more far-sighted carriage builders found it simple to apply their skills to the automobile body, even though for a time some had
g o o d r e a s o n t o b e l i e v e t h a t t h e m o t o r



A. Rymill driving a Darracq, Hill-Climbing Contest, 1905 - *Courtesy, R.A.A.*

2. *Australian Motor and Scientific Journal*, 1.3, November 1905, p. 7.

car was a toy or a luxury which would never entirely replace the horse. And, of course, they had plenty of time in which to adjust. Even as late as May 1913 the motoring columnist of *The Mail* still found it pertinent, when commenting on the delivery of the fourth Commer lorry to the Municipal Tramways Trust by Eyes & Crowle, to add: 'Surely this is another evidence of the passing of the horse! As a matter of fact, I believe the stables which formerly housed the horses used by the Trust are now being converted into a garage for the motor lorries.'³ The following year the same paper found it newsworthy to comment again on the passing of the horse. The sub-headings read: 'Motor Cars Becoming Universal. Fewer Horses and a Falling Chaff Bill.'⁴ While horses were gradually yielding ground to the car, coachbuilders cashed in on the new market. By 1910 Holden & Frost, founded by J.A. Holden as a leather business in 1856, added to their illustrated catalogue a supplement for motor car owners and soon afterwards branched out into building bodies for cars and motor cycle side-cars.⁵ The Adelaide firm Duncan & Fraser, which was established in 1865 as a coachbuilding business, also found a new market in the car. The firm provided the body for Vivian Lewis' little car and moved into the business of importing car chassis. For a time they had most of the motor business to themselves when they had the agency for the Oldsmobile, to which they added the Argyll and the Standard. In the firm's 1919 publication Duncan & Fraser claimed to have been the first to have put the petrol-driven motor-car on a commercial basis in South Australia,⁶ and they certainly justified this claim by securing the agency for the Model T Ford car, for which they provided the bodies. So profitable was the automobile business that by 1919 Duncan & Fraser abandoned coachbuilding. The advent of the car gave firms such as these very little to complain about. They had time in which to accept the new reality, and they did so with obvious success. So, too, did cycle stores such as Vivian Lewis' Cycle Works, which secured the agency for De Dion cars and later for other makes such as Talbot, Star

and Renault; or Schumacher & Co, which introduced the Humber and Humberette.

The public at large, however, was far from unanimous in its reception of the motor car. Some welcomed it, others were indignant and apprehensive. When a Motor Traffic Regulation Act was introduced into the South Australian Parliament in 1904 both sides took up the cudgels and continued to wield them when an amending Act Relating To Motor Vehicles was introduced in 1907. In speaking to the 1904 Bill Charles Tucker complained that motorists 'were simply running amuck' with their speeding and reckless driving. His fellow member for Alexandra, Alexander McDonald, spoke of the large number of ladies in country

3. *The Mail*, 10 May 1913. p.5.

4. *The Mail*, 10 January 1914, p.9.

5. Nancy Buttfield, *So Great a Change. The Story of the Holden Family in Australia* Sydney.

6. *Duncan & Fraser Ltd, Adelaide, 1865-1919*, issued by the firm in 1919; also SA Cheney, *From Horse to Horsepower*, Adelaide, 1965. p.53.

districts who rode horses but were now afraid to venture out on horseback for fear of meeting motor cars. Stories of reckless driving, terrified horses, accidents and hair-raising escapes were recounted by others. The Premier and Chief Secretary, John Greely Jenkins, was less alarmed at prospects for the future. A year or two ago, he conceded, horses had been frightened by cars on the road he most frequently travelled, but now it was rare to see a horse shy. Other members of the House regarded the car as a sign of progress and were indignant at the suggested limit of ten miles an hour in the city. Peter Allen of Wallaroo said that the State would never progress if the rate of speed were so regulated that the slowest individual in the city could get out of the way of motors. Others wanted to know how a policeman standing at a street corner could judge the speed of a car with sufficient accuracy to gain a fair conviction. Would he perhaps be given a car and break the speed limit himself so as to keep up with the speeding motorist? Attempts were made to persuade the House that the car was safer and more amenable to control than was the horse and that accidents involving horses were far more frequent than those involving cars. Councillor J.R. Baker, a member of the Automobile Club and later its president, wrote in the press an article commenting caustically about 'the lover of horses' who thought the motorist had no right to the road at all, should stop his car for every horse, and apologise for his existence. There was no speed limit for horses, wrote Baker: and who would be prepared to say that the equine species would shy at a motor doing fifteen miles an hour and laugh at one going at ten? But the lovers of horses were not to be won over. In December 1907 Sir John Downer expressed the prejudice of many when he said that motor cars were nothing else than infernal machines which travelled the roads at any speed from ten to sixty miles an hour, did an enormous amount of damage to the highways, and committed an indescribable nuisance to people who were not rich enough to indulge in this intolerable form of amusement.⁷ In due course regulations under the Motor Traffic Regulation Act. 1904, were gazetted. Within the inner city of Adelaide the speed limit was set at 10 miles per hour and 4 miles per hour at intersections ,

7. The debates are reported in *South Australian Parliamentary Debates*, 1904 and 1907. Baker's article is in *The Advertiser*, 3 October 1904. p.6.



Intersection of King William, Rundle and Hindley Streets (Undated photograph in H.A. Behrens' Album) - *Courtesy, State Library.*

and in Rundle and Hindley Street between 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. on Saturdays the limit was 3 miles an hour. In specified metropolitan municipalities the limit was 15 miles an hour, and for the rest of the State 30 miles an hour. Further, if a driver left his car in the city he had to take precautions against its being started in his absence; to all intents and purposes the car could not be left unattended.⁸

These regulations were modified in later years, but motorists were and remained indignant at the limits placed on their freedom which seemed to them to be unrealistic and discriminatory. For a time little was done to placate them. Police traps were set over distances of a quarter of a mile over which motorists were timed by police using stop watches, and in due course the journal of the Automobile Club and the newspapers advised their readers where police had set traps to catch the unwary. Then technology came to the aid of the police; it was reported in August 1913 that the latest mode of trapping motorists in the busy streets was by plain clothes detectives carrying speedometers on push bicycles.⁹ Car owners saw all this as a form of persecution, and it took a long time for hostility between motorists and the authorities to subside into a degree of mutual respect. In time, of course, this happened. The number of motorists steadily increased and infiltrated parliaments and city councils. Nor, in spite of Sir John Downer's opinion, were they merely the rich indulging in an intolerable form of amusement. By 1910 the 1376 cars registered in South Australia were owned in the main by farmers, doctors, flour millers, wine growers, stock agents, dentists, solicitors and other professional and business people. Country centres such as Kadina, Maitland and Mount Gambier had their fair share of the infernal machines.¹⁰ The motoring public was rapidly including the upper and middle classes of society whose views, channelled through the Automobile Club, were bound in the long run to get some hearing. They in turn gradually accepted the need for controls, even if they continued to protest when they seemed archaic or unnecessary.

By 1914, two years after the establishment of Behrens & Marshall, the swelling number of motorists in the State owned between them no less than 232 different makes of car. Of these, the makes with the highest number registered in South Australia were:¹¹

Ford	1142	Star	139
De Dion	285	Flanders	134
Talbot	245	I.H.C.	115
Humber	202	Oldsmobile	111
Argyll	180	Studebaker	103
Overland	145		

8. *South Australian Government Gazette*, 7 September 1905. 24 May 1906.

9. *The South Australian Motor*, 1.3. August 1913, p.69.

10. Julia Morton, 'Motorists and Motor Legislation in South Australia 1900-1910', History Thesis. The University of Adelaide, 1962, p. 11ff.

11. *The South Australian Motor*, 11.4, September 1914, p.122.

These figures make it quite obvious that by 1914 the car most often seen on South Australian roads was the Model T Ford, the first Ford marketed in Australia. Henry Ford had said, 'I will build a motor car for the great multitude. It will be so low in price that no man will be unable to own one.' The introduction of the Model T on 1 October 1908 came near to fulfilling his desire. On 10 December 1915 the millionth Ford car was built, and six years or so

before that date the Model T Ford had come to Australia and to many parts of the world.

The Model T appeared in South Australia in 1909, and its impact on motor registration figures is apparent. In 1908 cars registered in South Australia totalled 429; in 1910 the figure was 1376. This flimsy-looking 20 horsepower vehicle, half the weight and about half the price of most other makes, found a ready market. The Ford Motor Company of Canada Limited, incorporated 17 August 1904, had engaged the firm Markt & Hammacher to handle its exports, and the firm's agents travelled the British Empire promoting the Ford car. Australia and other dominions quickly developed into important markets. When production of the Model T ended in May 1927 world-wide sales totalled well over 15 million vehicles.

The rapid spread of the popular 'Tin Lizzie' was followed almost as quickly by the repetition of Ford jokes. Behrens & Marshall, under which name Maughan Thiem first traded, decided to collect some of the prevalent Ford jokes as an advertising stunt, presumably on the principle of joining what cannot be fought. In response to popular demand the firm had them printed in 1916 in an advertising booklet 'Fun and Fancy about Ford'. The reader was assured in the foreword that the jokes caused such whole-souled laughter that not even the staunchest Ford enthusiast would be offended. Fashions in humour change and today the jokes are hardly likely to produce much laughter, whole-souled or otherwise; but a couple of the jokes bear repetition, if only for their historical interest. One, obviously from across the Atlantic, told of the doctor who drove up to the general store in his new Ford one cold day in December, jumped out quickly, and threw a blanket over the car to keep the engine warm for re-starting. A small boy standing near shouted, 'No use covering it up, Doc, I saw what it is.' Another was about the family suffering from ptomaine poisoning after being at a picnic. When the doctor asked if they had eaten something which had been left standing in a tin they realised the source of their trouble. The lunch basket had been left standing all day in their Ford car. The booklet also repeated the rumour that with every Ford sold in 1917 two grey squirrels would be given away free. They had been specially trained to run along behind the machine and gather up the nuts as they dropped off.

The public jested about the Tin Lizzie but continued to buy it in large numbers, and firms selling and servicing it flourished on the proceeds. The coachbuilders Duncan & Fraser, which had added motor importing to its business, became agent for the Ford shortly after the first appearance of the Model T. The firm did a very brisk trade. In July 1913 in one fortnight 97 Fords arrived in Adelaide, all of which had been ordered before arrival, and in the twelve months to May 1916 Fords registered in the State numbered 573 while all other makes combined totalled 827.

The Maughan Thiem company under its earlier name, came into existence on the crest of this Ford wave. The staff of Duncan & Fraser included two young men who were to be of great importance to the new firm. One was an engineer and the other a clerk; and, apart from the fact that they both worked for the State's Ford distributor, they shared a common interest in working on motor cycle engines. In July 1912 the engineer, Hubert Andrew Behrens, left to form his own business. The clerk, Alfred Ross Thiem, remained with Duncan & Fraser for a few months longer, although from the beginning he planned to join Behrens. The new partnership

inherited their sound knowledge of the Ford and of the firm which sold it.

Chapter Two

A Business is Launched

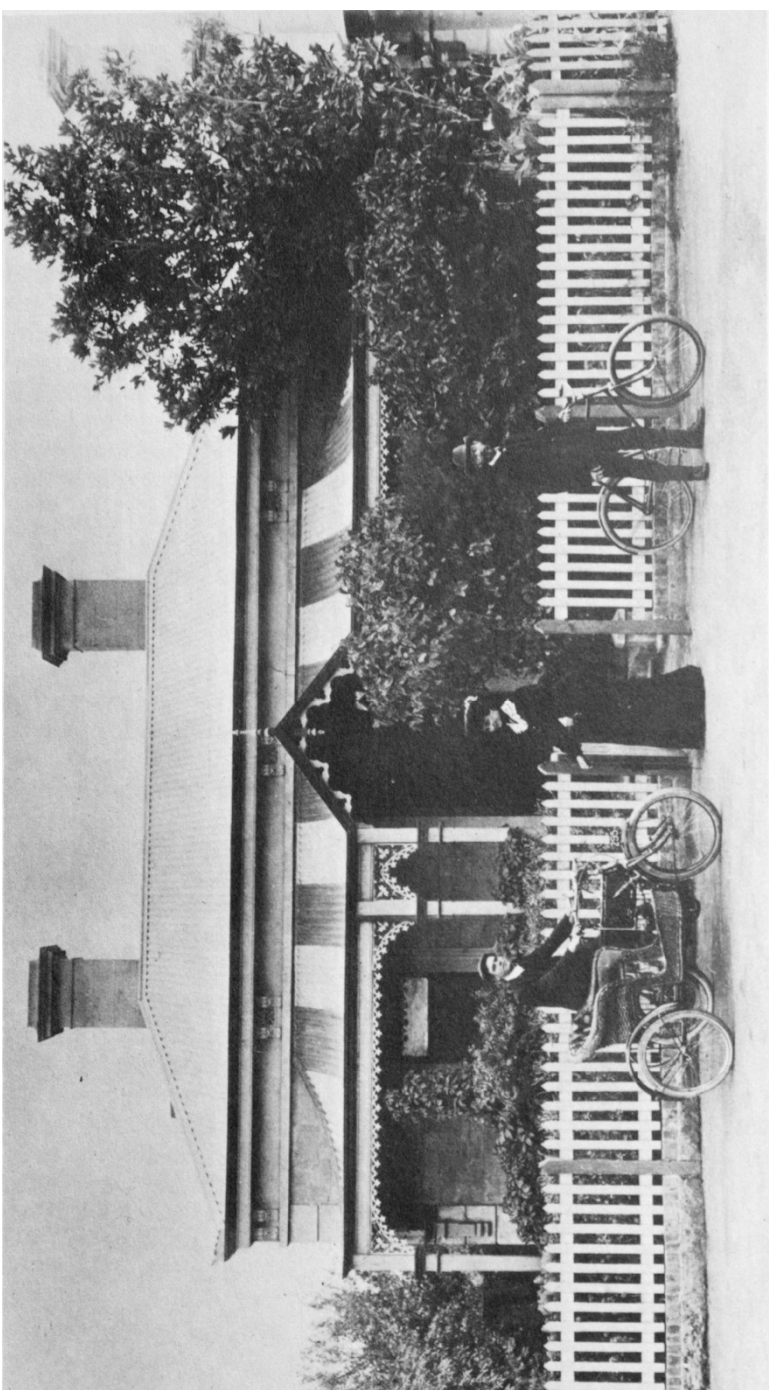
The Maughan Thiem Motor Company Pty. Ltd. was formally inaugurated by an indenture dated 2 July 1912 containing the Articles of Partnership between Hubert Andrew Behrens and Eric Myles Marshall. The partnership was for an initial period of four years and nine months dating from the first day of July 1912. The firm, it was noted, traded under the name Behrens & Marshall, and the first article of partnership stated that

The partnership business shall be that of Motor and Cycle Builders and Electricians and Importers of Motor and Electrical goods and Appliances and shall be carried on at Flinders Street Adelaide, aforesaid upon the Leasehold premises acquired by the said partners or at such other place or places as the partners may from time to time agree upon.

From the beginning of the partnership provision was made for the inclusion of Alfred Ross Thiem as a third partner; this was stipulated in a further agreement, also dated 2 July 1912, to which later reference will be made. It was with this intention in mind that the partners made provision for the firm's capital, which was set at £300. Of this amount the partners themselves contributed £150 in equal shares, their fathers each lent £50 for the duration of the partnership, and Alfred Ross Thiem lent £50 for one year. It was anticipated that within that year he would become a partner and convert the loan into an equal share of the capital.

In all probability Behrens was the prime mover in forming the business. An American journal later described him as 'an antipodean live-wire... chock full of vim and vigor', and others remember him as outgoing, intensely enthusiastic about anything that appealed to him, accustomed to getting his own way, and ambitious. In 1912 he was 24 years old. He was born 8 February 1888 at Norwood, a suburb of Adelaide, where he lived all his life, and from early school days was known as Johnnie Behrens. His father, Theodor Louis Joseph Behrens, was a bank clerk and his mother Mary Marguerite, nee Eickhoff, was closely associated with St Ignatius Catholic Church at Norwood.¹ Johnnie Behrens was a keen motor cyclist. He became a member of the Automobile Club of South Australia, and from 1906 or earlier took part in the various hill-climbing events and speed trials run by the club.

1. Obituary in *The Southern Cross*, 22 October 1926, p. 13.



H.A. Behrens with his Parents, Norwood

By profession he was an engineer. In a newspaper interview in 1919 he said that he had been connected with the motoring trade for the past fourteen years, that is, since about 1906 when he was 18 years old. Three years of that time had been spent with Duncan & Fraser, where he gained a sound knowledge of the Ford car.² An early photograph, which shows a young Johnnie Behrens with his mother and father outside the parental home at 113 William Street Norwood, reflects some aspects of the early history of the firm. Johnnie Behrens appears in the picture with a cycle. In notes which he wrote in 1964 Mr Ross Thiem recollected that he and Johnnie Behrens started the business by working together at the home of Behrens' parents at Norwood. Apparently they worked together on motor cycle engines in Behrens' back yard or on their verandah. This informal motor cycle business lasted for a year or so before the firm was formally set up and moved to Flinders Street; and Ross Thiem waited until later to join the partnership. A few years later a newspaper article briefly recalled those days:³

Seven years or so ago, when a small business was launched at Norwood, the aspirations of the young men did not soar so high as their integrity and resourcefulness compelled.

But they obviously did have aspirations. It is recalled that they used to joke about having to expand their business and that they did so into the kitchen, until Behrens' long-suffering mother kicked them out. By July 1912 the ambitions were formally realised.

There is no surviving information to tell how Eric Myles Marshall entered the partnership in July 1912. He may have known the other two socially or through common interests. Perhaps Ross Thiem was the catalyst, for the Marshall and Thiem families lived within short distance of each other at East Adelaide when the partnership was formed and the two young men may have known each other. Eric Marshall's skills certainly complemented those of Johnnie Behrens and made him very suitable for the partnership. He was an electrical engineer, and Behrens regarded him as a very talented technician.⁴ He was born 23 August 1888 and was about Behrens' own age. His father, Alfred Witter Marshall, was a well-known Adelaide personality. His business 'The Old Music Shop' at 49A Gawler Place, two doors from Rundle Street, was familiar to buyers of music and musical instruments and concert tickets, and Alfred Marshall was a prominent Freemason, was active in local politics, and was a justice of the peace.⁵ Eric Marshall, his youngest son, is remembered as a quiet, sensitive, even unassertive person. Perhaps in the early days of the partnership he found it hard to fit in with Johnnie Behrens' extrovert enthusiasms, and he may have felt somewhat isolated when Behrens' close friend Ross Thiem formally joined the partnership in April 1913. At all events his effective connections with the firm did not last long.

2. *The Mail*, 21 June 1919, p.14; 30 August 1913, p. 7.

3. *The Mail*, 20 April 1918, p.16.

4. Mr Alan Behrens kindly provided this, and much other, useful information.

5. Obituary in *The Advertiser*, 17 December 1915.

By September 1915 he was working for the British government on aeroplane engines at the Gnome Engine Company at Walthamstow in Essex, about six miles from London.⁶ It was an anxious year for him. His brother Percy took part in the Gallipoli landing, and his father died at the end of the year. By the beginning of November 1917 Eric Marshall was back in Adelaide, and he resigned from Behrens & Marshall as from 7 February 1918.⁷ In February 1918 he enlisted in the Australian army at Adelaide, and on 8 May 1918 embarked at Sydney for England with the Australian Flying Corps. On 12 October 1918 he transferred to the Australian Service Corps as a driver and served in France with the 1st and 3rd Motor Transport Company until disembarking again in England on 19 June 1919. On 30 August 1919 he arrived back in Adelaide where he was discharged 16 September 1919. On 17 April of the following year he married Dorothy Martin at St Agnes Church, Grange, and died of acute appendicitis on 17 June 1927. In effect, Marshall's connections with the firm ceased when he first left for England in 1915.

Before Marshall left the firm Ross Thiem on 10 April 1913 gave formal notice of his desire to enter the partnership. He had delayed joining Behrens in the partnership so that he could give his employer Duncan & Fraser up to twelve months' notice. It has already been mentioned that from the beginning provision had been made for him to join Behrens and Marshall in the new firm. An agreement between Hubert Behrens, Eric Marshall and Ross Thiem was signed on 2 July 1912, the date on which the original partnership was established. In this document it was agreed that Ross Thiem would be taken into the partnership within the first twelve months, provided certain conditions were met. These were, firstly, that he increase his loan by a further £25 to match the £75 paid into the partnership by each of the other two; that, secondly, he promise 'to use his best endeavours from henceforth to introduce business to the said partnership firm and to benefit the said firm to the best of his ability'; and, thirdly, that he give one calendar month's notice in writing of desire to enter the partnership on equal terms with the other two partners. By indenture dated 21 April 1913 Ross Thiem became an equal partner in the firm.

Ross Thiem brought his own particular skills into the business. He was described as a clerk in the indenture of 21 April 1913 and as an accountant a few years later. He rapidly developed administrative and managerial aptitudes which served the company well; and, further, like Johnnie Behrens he spent some years with Duncan & Fraser and, as *The Mail* later noted, it was soon apparent that he had the ability and qualifications to be regarded as a motor expert.⁸ He was born 22 March 1891 near Kadina, and was 22 years old when he entered the partnership. His father, John Frederick Thiem, was a farmer when Ross was born,

6. *The South Australian Motor*, 111.34, 1 March 1916, p. 294; *The Mail* 7 April 1917, p. 8.

7. *The Mail*, 10 November 1917, p.14: unidentified news cutting in Maughan Thiem's *Cuttings* album

8. *The Mail*, 5 August 1922, p.24.

and he later moved to East Adelaide and became manager of the Farm Implement Department at Duncan & Fraser. Ross Thiem was educated at St Peter's College, and in 1908 he followed his father's footsteps to Duncan & Fraser where he did the clerical work and met Johnnie Behrens. The two remained close friends long after Behrens left the partnership. Behrens' son Mr Alan Behrens still remembers with affection the short stocky figure of Ross Thiem, often with a chest-warmer pipe in his mouth, whose shrewd common sense often restored peace when the partners disagreed. He was also later well-known as the owner of the Sunnyside home at Beaumont and as the owner of a property at Mount Osmond which was subsequently subdivided to become a housing estate. When the Maughan Thiem Motor Company became a limited company in 1928 Ross Thiem became Joint Managing Director. He was Chairman of Directors for many years, and he retained an interest in the company until he died 4 September 1971.

In the same year that Ross Thiem formally entered the partnership a further indenture was drawn up which introduced a fourth partner into the firm. On 24 December 1913 an agreement was signed admitting Frederick Milton Maughan of Parkside, Engineer, into the partnership from 2 January 1914 upon equal terms with the other three. By this date the share of each of the existing three partners in the business, capital, good will, stock in trade, assets and profits was estimated at £320. Behrens, Marshall and Thiem under the new agreement increased their share to £350, paying the difference into the partnership banking account, and Maughan also paid £350 as his share. In addition he was required to pay to the other three the sum of £33:6:8 for one quarter interest in the good will of the business. Moreover John Frederick Thiem, the father of Ross Thiem, and Milton Moss Maughan, the father of Fred Maughan, were each to lend £125 at 5 per cent interest.

Frederick Milton Maughan was a son of Milton Moss Maughan, who became Director of Education 21 August 1913, about the time Fred Maughan was admitted into the firm, and a grandson of the Reverend James Maughan whose name is associated with the Maughan Methodist Church. He was born 5 June 1887 at Moonta, where his father was then teaching, and was therefore the oldest of the four partners. He was educated at Sturt Street school and Way College and then did his apprenticeship in engineering with J.S. Bagshaw & Sons.⁹ He then went on to the School of Mines and completed a four-year associate diploma course in mechanical and electrical engineering; the award was conferred at the end of 1912.¹⁰ Fred Maughan – Moggie Maughan to his friends – was technically and socially suitable for the partnership, and the papers were signed a year after the diploma was conferred. In 1920 and for a few years after that date it was advertised that Mr F. M. Maughan A.S.A.S.M., of Behrens & Marshall and in due course of

9. *The Mail*, 2 September 1922, p.23.

10. The South Australian Institute of Technology kindly supplied the date.

Maughan-Thiem Motor Co. was conducting short courses in motor car mechanism at the School of Mines on Tuesday evenings. The fee was £1:1:0 and half rates for apprentices.¹¹

Some eighteen months after Fred Maughan entered the partnership Eric Marshall left for England, where he took up work in the aeroplane engine factory. For the three partners who remained in control they were, in many respects, good years. As is told elsewhere the business flourished and expanded; and, moreover, there were many rich and satisfying social occasions, tours and times of relaxation. Nevertheless the energetic enterprising qualities which the three partners brought to the business and ensured its success also contributed to occasional disagreements. For a short time these became more serious and resulted in the dissolution of the partnership.

On 23 June 1919 Behrens left for an extended overseas tour which took him to the United States and Canada. It was a tour taken on behalf of the firm, and included visits to Ford in Canada, the Sterling Truck Company in Milwaukee, and other similar places. He arrived back in South Australia late in February 1920, and one journal noted that he was 'full of enthusiasm about American "hurry-up" business methods.'¹² Perhaps his partners found this uncomfortable; but, more to the point, he also brought back a number of agencies, some of which had nothing to do with the motor vehicle business. To the other two partners these agencies seemed a departure from established policy and inconsistent with the business developments which had proved highly successful; they were a dissipation of energy which might prove detrimental to their concentration on the motor trade. For his part, Johnnie Behrens possibly thought that they were being unduly conservative about his new agencies. In 1916, when he was on the committee of the Motor Traders' Association, the press noted that 'Full of new ideas, Mr H.A. Behrens, a young member of the trade, is said to be chief spokesman at meetings of the South Australian Motor Traders' Association'; and on his return from overseas the same paper reported that he had come back with 'more modern ideas of business.'¹³

The solution to the disagreement which followed seemed to be the formation of another company to handle these agencies, and this was tried. On 15 March 1920 a new firm, Behrens-Thiem Company, commenced business as factory representative throughout Australia and New Zealand. Although it bore only the names of Behrens and Thiem, in fact Hubert Andrew Behrens, Alfred Ross Thiem, and Frederick Milton Maughan were registered as the persons carrying on the business.

11. *The South Australian Motor*, VII. 10, 25 February 1920, p.46; IX.2. 25 June 1921, p.47; IX. 10. 25 February 1922, p. 60.

12. *The South Australian Motor*, VII. 10, 25 February 1920, p. 46.

13. *The Mail*, 5 February 1916, p.5; 27 March 1920, p 15.



The Sky's The Limit. F.M. Maughan, A.R. Thiem, H.A. Behrens

The temporary address was given as 150 Flinders Street, the premises of Behrens & Marshall.¹⁴ Shortly afterwards an office was taken in Pirie Street.

For a while this arrangement appeared to have resolved the issue. The Behrens-Thiem Company advertised and sold its various lines, and Johnnie Behrens and Ross Thiem made interstate promotional trips. Nevertheless the partners had been divided by the new agencies and the company which had been formed to handle them. Although F. M. Maughan was formally a partner in the Behrens-Thiem Company his name was not included in that of the company. He took over sole management of Behrens & Marshall, and in reporting this the press added that the policy of Behrens & Marshall would remain unchanged.¹⁵ The Behrens & Marshall letterhead printed about this time included the line: 'President: F.M. Maughan A.S.A.S.M.' By 21 August 1920, five months after the establishment of the Behrens-Thiem Company, the three decided to dissolve their partnership. There was some dispute about certain financial arrangements connected with Behrens' overseas tour, and this was submitted to arbitration. A month later, on 30 September 1920, H.A. Behrens retired from Behrens & Marshall and F.M. Maughan retired from the Behrens-Thiem Company.

For the following three months the firm Behrens & Marshall continued to operate under this name, although its advertising added the names of F.M. Maughan and AR. Thiem after the company name.¹⁶ However, by 23 December 1920 Maughan and Thiem had decided to change the name of the firm, and on that date the Registrar of Companies signed a certificate of the Original Registration Of A Firm. The registered firm was given the name Maughan-Thiem Motor Company, its business was given as motor traders and importers, and the persons carrying on the business were Alfred Ross Thiem and Frederick Milton Maughan. The firm commenced business under the new name in December 1920. It advertised in the press over the name Maughan -Thiem Motor Company (superseding Behrens & Marshall), and news items drew attention to the change.¹⁷ A further agreement of 28 July 1922 confirmed and renewed the partnership.

Since the establishment of the Behrens-Thiem Company in March 1920 Ross Thiem had retained his membership in both firms. That ended with the formation of the Maughan-Thiem Motor Company. A few days after this, on 10 January 1921, he retired from the Behrens-Thiem Company. For a while his place was taken by a mechanic from Maughan-Thiem, Harry Esmond Wadham, but on 11 July 1921 he too retired from Behrens-Thiem. The disagreement of 1920 was finally resolved by the formation of two

14. This and the following company detail is taken from documents filed with the Companies Office and now lodged with the Archives Branch, State Library of South Australia. Some detail appeared in the press.

15. *The South Australian Motor*, VII.1 1. 25 March 1920, p.46; *The Mail*. 27 March 1920, p.15.

16. For example, *The South Australian Motor*, VIII.7, 25 November 1920

17. *The South Australian Motor*. VIII.8, 23 December 1920, pp.15.1 6; *The Mail*. 25 December 1920, pp. 14, 15.

quite independent companies carrying on their own distinctive business. The Behrens-Thiem Company retained Ross Thiem's name, perhaps in the hope that he might re-join it; but after a brief closure during the depression years it was re-constituted as H.A. Behrens & Company. Understandably, both firms saw themselves as descendants of Behrens & Marshall. The letterhead of H.A. Behrens Pty Ltd stated that it was established in 1912, and Maughan-Thiem Motor Company similarly saw itself as a continuation of the Behrens & Marshall partnership of July 1912.

Soon after the partnership was dissolved Ross Thiem's brother, Bruce Mayoh Thiem, started work with the Maughan-Thiem company. Bruce Thiem was about ten years Ross's junior and, like his brother, he was educated at St Peter's College. At the age of 17 he went to work with E. Laughton & Co, stock and station agents, of Currie Street, and about two years later he went to Wilcox Mofflin, Limited, wool, skin and hide merchants, also of Currie Street. Then followed about six months with the coach and motor body building firm of John Dawson, after which he went to Maughan-Thiem Motor Company. Bruce Thiem was about 20 years old when he joined the firm in about 1921. Five years later, on 1 April 1926, he was admitted as a partner. When the firm became a limited company in 1928 he became a director, and he was later secretary, managing director, and chairman of the board of directors.

H.A. Behrens and A.R. Thiem with Mrs Behrens and Mrs Thiem in a Model T Ford on the



Coorong Beach during a business trip to Sydney.

Chapter Three

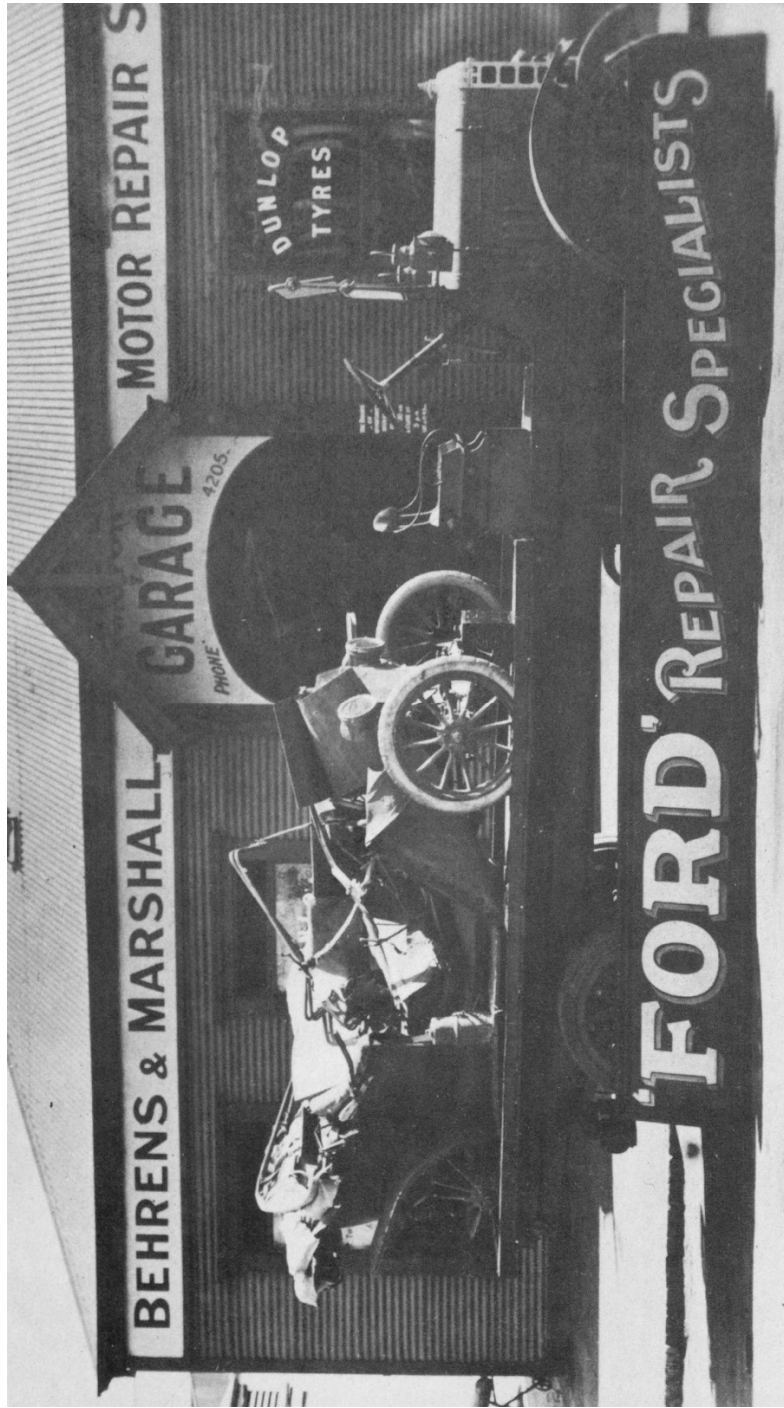
'A Progressive Firm'

The firm of Behrens & Marshall started its career, according to the articles of partnership dated 2 July 1912, as motor and cycle builders and electricians and importers of motor and electrical goods and appliances. The skills of the two foundation partners were thus included in the official statement of the business of the partnership; Behrens was an engineer, Marshall an electrical engineer. In its first appearance in Sands and McDougall's *South Australian Directory* in 1913 the firm was described as motor and general engineers. Before venturing out into more ambitious enterprises the partners started with what they knew they could do well.

It is therefore no surprise to find in the firm's first ledger that repair work was the main profit earner during the first six months. Income for the opening half year which ended 31 December 1912 totalled, £1452, and of this repair work accounted for £805 and sales £506. It is recalled that most of the repair work was on Model T Ford cars, for example on the differential. This was apparently prone to trouble, and Behrens & Marshall did a thriving business in repairing it. As with most things, there was a right and a wrong way to put the Ford differential together again. Mr Bert Baldock ruefully remembers the first time he was entrusted with this task. After he had re-assembled it the engine was started and the clutch was let in with the car in forward gear; but the car moved off in reverse. The differential cases had to be changed around to rectify the problem. The Behrens & Marshall mechanics were kept busy with all manner of repair work, and although after the first six months the value of sales exceeded that of repairs this was due to an increase in sales of accessories rather than to a decline in repairs. In 1919, during a visit to Canada, H.A. Behrens went as far as to say that over 75 per cent of the cars owned in South Australia had passed through their garage for attention at some time or another.¹ In fact for a while, during the depression years of the 1930s, income from repairs was second only to that from the sale of used cars and exceeded income from new car sales.

By 1917, and possibly earlier, Behrens & Marshall were also in the business of buying used cars and trucks, putting their engineering skills to work in reconditioning them, and reselling them. From the firm's records it

1. *Ford News*, Overseas Edition, December 1919, p.3.



is clear that some of these were used as shop vehicles before they were sold, and the majority were Fords.

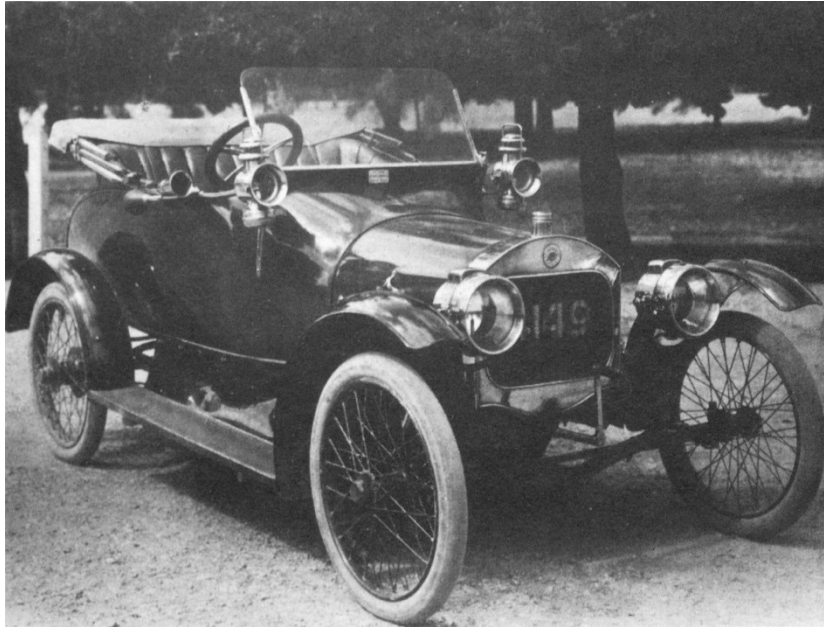
After the opening six months sales took the leading place in the firm's profit and loss accounts. For the ten months ended 31 October 1913 sales brought in £1658 and repairs £1120, for the twelve months ended 30 April 1916 the figures were £5275 and £1259 respectively, and so forth. From the firm's various advertisements it is possible to gain an idea of the items it sold. Even as much of the repair work was carried out on the Model T Ford, so too many of the accessories were for the Ford. For example, in February 1916 Behrens & Marshall advertised the 'Perfection' self-starter for the Ford car; they bought their supplies from Cornell Ltd of Pirie Street. Later they advertised another brand of self-starter for the Ford, the 'Genemotor', made by the General Electric Company. Later again, in September 1919, they turned to yet another Ford self-starter which was also a lighting system for the vehicle. This was the Heinze-Springfield, apparently a good selling line priced at £38:10:0. Perhaps this was the one Mr Bert Baldock remembers; if so, the lighting was driven from the fly wheel, so that the faster the car was driven the brighter the lights shone, and the slower the pace the dimmer the lights. In April 1916 Behrens & Marshall, now describing themselves as Motor Specialists, advised those wanting to do their own minor Ford repairs economically to buy from them cylinder head wrenches for 2 shillings, valve grinders for 2 shillings, fan belts for 2 shillings, and anti-rattlers for 2 shillings and 6 pence. There were other Ford accessories, such as the Holley manifold which was said to give an increase of 23 to 28 miles per gallon on a half-ton Ford lorry and 14 to 18 miles per gallon on a one-ton Ford truck; the Moore auxiliary transmission for Ford cars and trucks; and the Duntley ignition timer for Ford cars.

Another unusual Ford line which Behrens & Marshall handled was the Redden 'Truck-Maker', supplies of which they obtained from the sole South Australian agents Cornell Ltd. The Redden was designed and developed by C.F. Redden and was a kit for converting Ford touring cars into one-ton trucks. The Ford wheels were removed from the back axle and replaced by sprocket wheels with solid rubber tyres. A channel steel truck frame was slipped over the frame of the car and bolted into position, and the whole conversion took only a few hours. The first supply of the Redden truckmaker arrived in Adelaide in October 1916, priced at £130, and Behrens & Marshall continued to sell it until early in 1919. The firm in its advertising claimed to be always first in the field with the latest accessories for the Ford, and it quickly established a reputation in caring for the needs of the Ford owner.

The firm also carried a varied and colourful array of other lines not exclusively designed for the Ford. For example, in March 1916 Behrens & Marshall were advertising No-Jah, 'the only efficient shock absorber Made in Australia for Australians' and supplied by Cornell Ltd. In the same year they were sole agents for Castrol oil. There were many other items, such as the self-aligning Shafer roller bearings for front wheels, tyres by Goodrich, Dunlop and Barnet Glass, Essenkay tubes which were advertised as proof against blowouts, Shell benzine, Pyrene fire extinguishers, the Stewart vacuum gasoline tank which was claimed to save 10 to 15 per cent fuel consumption, Edison batteries, and the Stewart mechanical horn which, it was promised, would clear the way.

In the main, the items which Behrens & Marshall needed for their repairs and sales business were bought locally and from a wide range of suppliers. The firm's first ledger contains the names of some 90 firms from whom purchases were made between August 1912 and July 1914. But from the beginning the partners' ambitions extended beyond the retailing of accessories obtained from local wholesalers and the servicing of cars. The 1912 articles of partnership included importing in their business description, and by the end of the first year of business this ambition was realised. The 1914 *South Australian Directory* included Behrens & Marshall in the list of 'Cycle and Motor Car Makers, Importers and Agents'.

On 30 August 1913 Behrens & Marshall's first advertisement in *The Mail* made it known that the firm was agent for the Enfield Autolette, and a small news item in the same issue repeated the information. Officially classed as a cycle car the Enfield Autolette had a body described by the press as a 'torpedo' body 'of the streamline type'. It was powered by an 8-10 horsepower water-cooled motor and did 45 miles to the gallon, had three forward and one reverse gears, and was priced at £200.



Enfield Autolette, sold to Mr R.G. Cheeseman

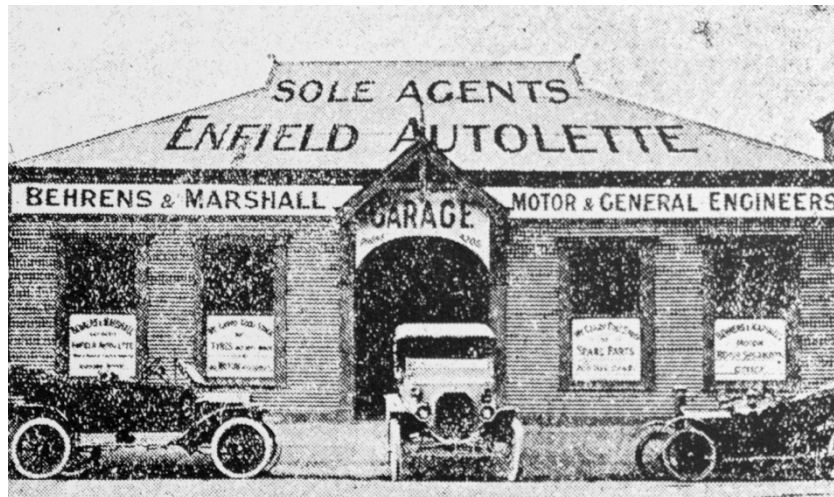
It was classed as a two-seater, but was wide enough to carry three. This little car quickly attracted favourable attention, and the motoring columnist of one paper reported after a test drive that 'all that could be heard from the engine was a soft purr.'² By the end of 1913 Behrens & Marshall had sold quite a number and had booked many further orders, and indeed for a while the firm was closely associated with the Enfield. According to a newspaper report Behrens' wedding on 20 May 1914 was to be a real motorists' turnout at which the Enfield would take a prominent place,³ and by 12 June 1915 The Mail had a photograph of the Flinders Street premises with the words 'Sole Agents Enfield Autolette' painted across the roof. Just how long the Enfield agency lasted is not known. The same photograph re-appeared in the press in April 1918; but by September 1922, when details of the firm's various agencies can be extracted from its profit and loss accounts, it is not mentioned.

With the Enfield Autolette the firm commenced a long and successful history of handling motor agencies and franchises. In 1916, perhaps encouraged by this first venture, Behrens & Marshall obtained two more agencies in the one year. Shortly afterwards others followed.

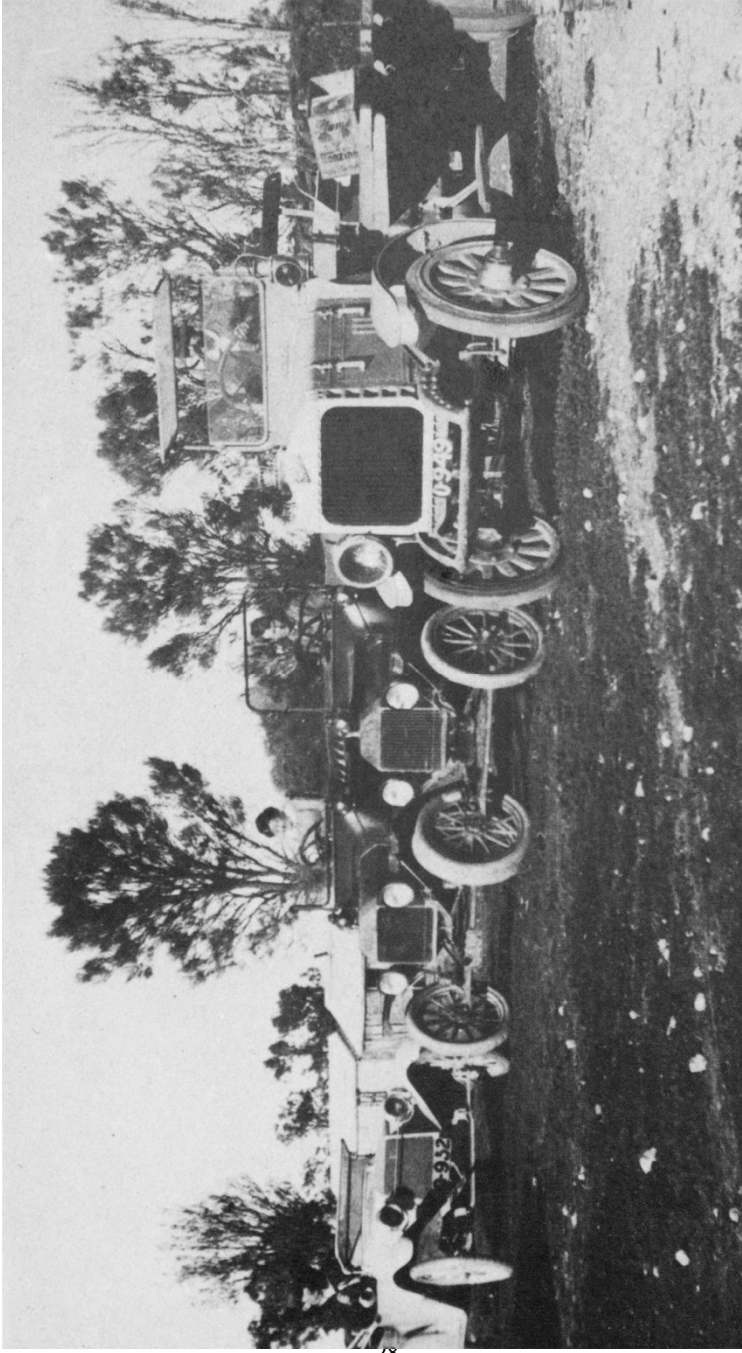
The first was for the Sterling heavy duty truck, which Behrens & Marshall were advertising as sole agents by June 1916. This was advertised as a worm drive chain-driven vehicle with solid wheels, built with the Steel Railway Car Builder's factor of safety. In 1916 two models were offered; the two-ton truck selling at £775 and the three-and-a-half ton truck at a price of £850. Later, in May 1919, Behrens & Marshall supplied what was reported to be the largest motor in the State and perhaps in Australasia.

2. *The Observer*, 31 January 1914, p.20.

3. *The Mail*, 2 May 1914, p.6. Behrens married Winifred Woods at St Ignatius Church, Norwood, with which his mother was closely connected.



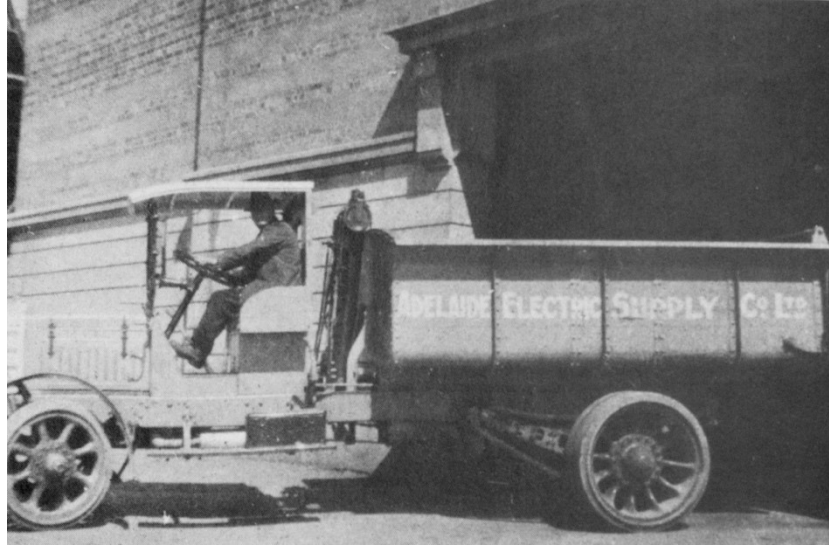
The Flinders Street Premises — Courtesy, *The News*.



Sterling Trucks

This was a Starting seven-ton dump truck fitted with a Wood's patent hydraulic hoist which loaded and unloaded the truck automatically. The vehicle was supplied to the Electric Supply Company to carry coal from Mile End to the city at an automatically governed speed of 15 miles per hour to save wear and tear on the motor. It was fitted with large dual wheels at the back, fourteen inches wide, to carry what was said to be a heavier load than previously carried by any motor vehicle in Australia. Due to delays it apparently took two years for the Sterling Motor Truck Company in Milwaukee to land it in Adelaide. Behrens & Marshall still had the Sterling agency in 1920, but it too had disappeared from the firm's books by September 1922.

Sterling seven-ton Truck, supplied by Behrens & Marshall to Adelaide Electric Supply Co Ltd.



The first car handled by the firm, the Enfield Autolette, was small and relatively cheap; the next was much larger and was an unusual and expensive car. This was the Enger, for which Behrens & Marshall advertised themselves to be sole agents in December 1916. The unusual feature was that it was a twin six which could be run on six cylinders or switched over to twelve. The firm's advertising made much of this for a while, pointing out that the car had emergency power in abundance but used fuel for this surplus power only when called on to do so. The Enger is not mentioned in the itemised company accounts from September 1922, and press news items give no indication how many were sold.

The expansion of Behrens & Marshall's business to include the importing, display and selling of cars and trucks led in turn to the



Behrens & Marshall's Workshop, Flinders Street, about 1916

beginning of another aspect of the firm's long history. The premises were seen to be inadequate for its growing operation and more space had to be found. This became a constant feature of the company's history for many years to come.

When the partners commenced business in July 1912 as motor and general engineers they had obtained a sub-lease on premises at 150 Flinders Street, owned by the Collegiate School of St Peter and leased to the coachbuilders Thomas Barlow & Sons as showrooms. On 1 February 1912 James Archibald McGavisk became proprietor of Barlows,⁴ whose main premises were in Hindmarsh Square, and apparently McGavisk decided to vacate 150 Flinders Street soon after taking over the business. McGavisk lived in Queen Street Norwood, close to where Behrens lived with his parents, and this may have been how Behrens came to acquire the premises. At all events, the premises were sublet for a term of three years to Behrens & Marshall, who paid Barlows the sum of £8:13:4 per month in rent. On 3 August 1915 Behrens & Marshall took over the lease from the College in its own name. Late in 1921 Flinders Street was re-numbered and the firm's address was changed to 134 Flinders Street. The little iron building next to the Somerset Hotel which is on the corner of Flinders and Pulteney Streets was ideal for the firm's original business. The floorspace was divided into a workshop and a garage, and the workshop was fitted up with the latest facilities for repairing motor cars and cycles, including two large drills. A newspaper reporter observed that neatness and cleanliness were features of the premises.⁵ However, there was hardly enough room to assemble and display the vehicles imported under the new agencies and more space had to be found. In June 1915 work was commenced to enlarge the Flinders Street property, and when the alterations were finished in August twice the number of cars could be accommodated.⁶ However, the storage and assembly of vehicles as large as the Sterling truck required even further space, and this was found nearby. The company's ledger shows that, in addition to the rent paid to the College, from October 1917 a rental payment of ten shillings a month was made to Rogers Brothers. Rogers Brothers was a motor engineering firm which had commenced business at 249-251 Angas Street in August 1913 and at the end of 1915 had moved to a more spacious garage and workshop at 195-9 Flinders Street, at the time on the corner of Ackland Street which has since disappeared.⁷ In April 1918 *The Mail* printed an article on Behrens & Marshall, a 'Progressive Firm', and reported that after setting up in Flinders Street the firm had acquired the bulk store of the Continental Garage, which had been closed since the war.⁸ It is remembered that the Continental Garage was on or near the south-east

4. *The Mail*, 22 June 1912, p.17. The Secretary of the Collegiate School of St Peter kindly supplied information about the lease.

5. *The Mail*, 30 August 1913, p.7.

6. *The Mail*, 12 June 1915, p.7; 21 August 1915, p. 11.

7. *The Mail*, 6 September 1913, p.22; 25 December 1915, p.1 1.

8. *The Mail* 20 April 1918, p.16 .



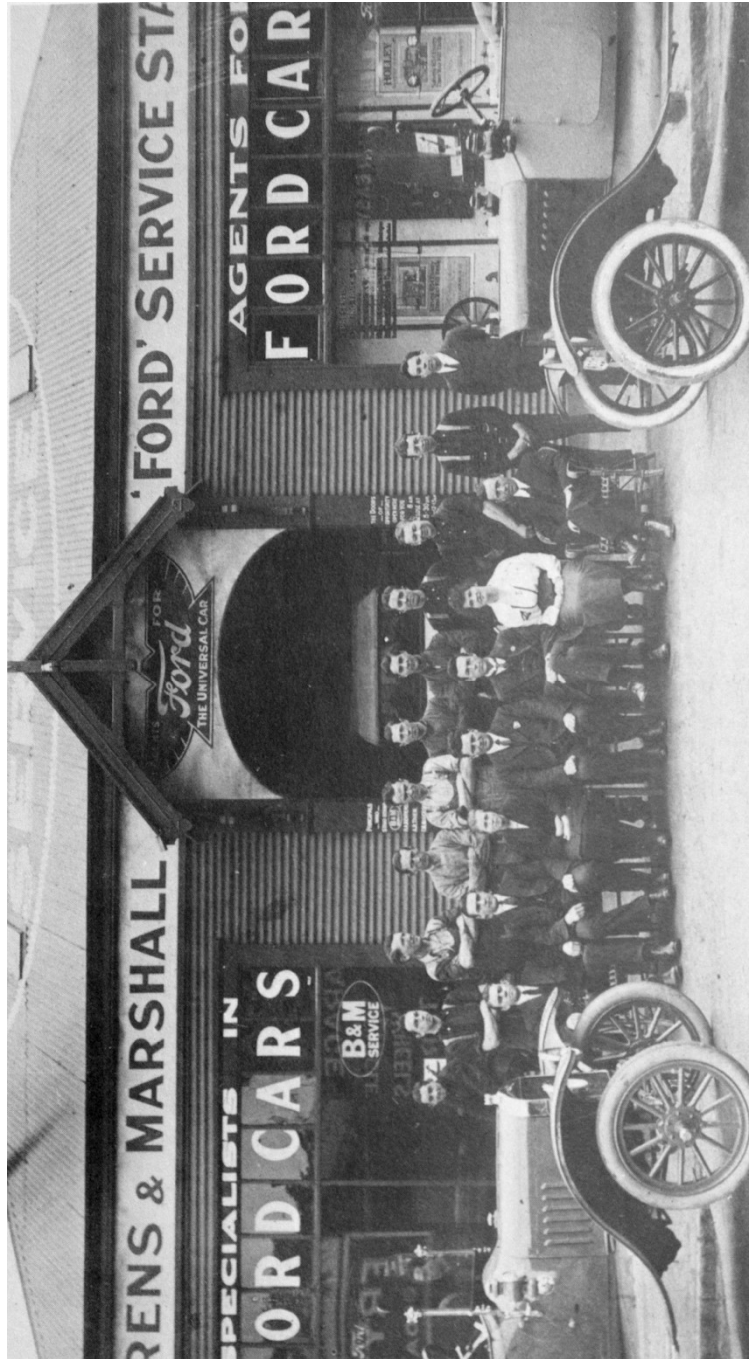
Behrens & Marshall's Bulk Store (The Continental Garage) - Courtesy, *The News*.

corner of Flinders and Pulteney Streets, and perhaps this was the property to which Rogers Brothers moved at the end of 1915 and part of which they rented to Behrens & Marshall as a bulk store. Even then expansion continued to be the order of the day. Ten months after occupying part of Rogers' premises Behrens told his employees that the premises were again being extended.⁹

While the Enfield, Sterling and Enger agencies pushed the firm out into additional floorspace Behrens & Marshall retained its close association with the Ford car. From the beginning the firm had specialised in repairs and accessories for the Ford, and a Mail reporter on 20 April 1918 wrote words which the partners used as an advertising slogan when he said that there was not a part of this particular make which had baffled them. There were sound business reasons for the firm to relish such a reputation. Since its appearance in South Australia in 1909 the Model T Ford had taken the market by storm and the local distributors Duncan & Fraser did a thriving business. Both Johnnie Behrens and Ross Thiem had worked for Duncan & Fraser and had a thorough knowledge of the most popular car on the road. An agency for the Ford was out of the question since it was already pre-empted, so the firm expanded its business by handling other agencies while still backing up its claim to be a Ford specialist. Then for a while Behrens & Marshall became even more closely associated with Ford cars.

In 1918 Duncan & Fraser set new records in sales of the Model T Ford. In October that year fourteen new Fords were delivered in one day, 42 in

⁹. The Mail, 17 August 1918, p.12.



Flinders Street Ford Service Station, August 1919

one week, and 120 in one month. This was a record, not only for Duncan & Fraser, but also for South Australia.¹⁰ By that time Duncan & Fraser had decided on a new policy to handle the growing sales and demand. Early in May 1918 the press announced this new urban Ford policy. Duncan & Fraser had decided to utilise existing channels of marketing to promote Ford interests in the State. This was to be done by appointing what they called 'limited urban dealers', who would operate in specified districts near their own garages and thus be at hand to give service to Ford buyers in their districts. The choice for the first of these appointments was obvious. Newspapers reported that Behrens & Marshall, one of the most enterprising and businesslike motoring firms in Adelaide, specialised in repairs and accessories for the Ford and had always recognised the sterling qualities of that car. Duncan & Fraser had therefore appointed Behrens & Marshall as the first limited urban dealer, with the privilege of selling new Ford cars in the city and suburbs.¹¹ Behrens & Marshall in turn made sure that the firm's advertisements during the following months made the public aware of the benefits to be derived from this arrangement. The prospective buyer was assured that if he bought a Ford from Behrens & Marshall he was entitled to free specialist advice at the firm's Ford Service Station. The very term 'service station', long before it came into popular currency, sounded progressive, and the promise apparently attracted customers. Press reports indicate that for some time Behrens & Marshall sold new Fords at the rate of ten to fifteen per month. By the time the firm changed its name to Maughan-Thiem Motor Company in December 1920 it was described as 'essentially a Ford service and sales organisation.'¹² In July 1920 the firm gained press publicity for a special 'sporting prince Ford' which it built. The engine was specially made with aluminium pistons, leak-proof rings and light connecting rods. The coachwork, finished in royal blue with gold points, was done by J.S. Bagshaw & Sons Ltd, where Fred Maughan had served his apprenticeship, and the complete car weighed only 12 hundredweight. It was said to be capable of 50 miles per hour without any difficulty.¹³

As the firm's business grew so did its staff numbers. The firm commenced in 1912 with two employees who were gradually joined by others. Mr T. H. (Bert) Baldock remembers starting work there in 1914, when he was about fourteen years old. He applied to Behrens & Marshall because he knew two boys working there. He was interviewed by Johnnie Behrens, and the interview was apparently not very promising; two boys had just been put on and it seemed doubtful whether there was a vacancy. Nevertheless an envelope, embellished with the admonition 'Run Postman Run', carried the news that he had a job with the firm, where he started as head messenger boy. His first duty, he remembers,

10. *The Mail*, 2 November 1918, p.15.

11. *The Mail*, 4 May 1918, p.14; 11 May 1918, p.14; *The Observer*, 18 May 1918, p.14.

12. *The South Australian Motor*, VIII.8. 23 December 1920, p.60.

13. *The Mail*, 10 July 1920, p. 14.

was to be introduced to a broom, and he had to keep the floors clean and pick up any nuts and bolts from the floor. Behrens apparently walked past one day and dropped two shillings. When Baldock pointed this out to him Behrens replied, 'Yes, but what about all those washers and nuts and screws that you've missed on the floor. They're worth more than two bob.' Apart from learning such lessons in thrift and attention to detail Bert Baldock was required to run messages, such as buying the parts required for the firm's motor repair work. En route he also bought the staff lunches and was rewarded with a cake or such by the girls in the office. One of the mechanics, Mark Welsh, was a keen fisherman, and Bert Baldock also bought his bait for him. This was a concoction known as 'gentles', consisting of maggots kept in bran. Of course, there was more serious work to do. The boys were apprentices and were introduced to the mysteries of the motor engine and the workings of the car in general.

By Christmas 1917 the staff numbered twelve, in addition to the four partners. Bert Baldock still remembers them. Mark Welsh was an engineer, originally from Broken Hill. The two cousins Alec Hersey and Fred Hersey were on the workshop staff. So too was Alf Pfitzner, nicknamed 'Dirty Dick' because he did some of the dirty jobs such as repairing Ford differentials; so too were Ken Johnson, who was nephew of Eric Marshall, and Clyde Close and Charlie Bradley and Les O'Connor. The office work was in the hands of Miss Henderson, Miss Sullivan and Miss Copeland. Marjorie Copeland remained with the firm for over forty years and was one of the longest-serving members of the staff. Others joined the staff shortly after Christmas 1917. W.R. Sommerville joined as a salesman in 1918. Mr Les Rasch became secretary; he was also organist at a church in Maylands which Miss Copeland attended. L.R. Rasch remained with the firm until the end of 1925 when he left to go into his own business, at first in partnership with George Mason and then on his own.

A series of newspaper cuttings held among the company papers makes it clear that from an early time the partners gave serious thought to relations between staff and management. For a time there was much publicity for various schemes of profit-sharing which, it was claimed, reduced friction between capital and labour and gave employees a proprietary interest in their firm, which in turn led to increased output and quality, obviated strikes and lockouts, and even increased the number of jobs available. By the beginning of 1918 Behrens & Marshall had decided to introduce a scheme of this sort into its business. The partners promised a bonus to the staff as a reward for quality workmanship. This was regarded as the payment to the employees of a dividend out of company profits and therefore as profit-sharing. To celebrate the distribution of bonus dividends the partners entertained the entire staff at a dinner at Bishop's Cafe in King William Street, where the occasion was marked by speeches and entertainment. The first of these dinners was held 31 January 1918, and they became regular events.¹⁴ One of the

¹⁴. The South Australian Motor. V.58. 1 March 1918, p.353; The Mail. 2 February 1918, p. 14. Subsequent dinners were also reported in the press.



The Staff, Christmas 1917 Back Row: A.J. Pfitzner, C.H. Close, A.H. Hersey, M.P. Welsh, J.A. Hersey.
 Centre Row: Miss R.E. Henderson, F.M. Maughan, H.A. Behrens, A.R. Thiem, E.M. Marshall, Miss W.A. Sullivan,
 Miss L.E. Copeland. Front Row: C. Bradley, K.A. Johnson, L. O'Connor, T.H. Baldock.

bonus slips remains in the possession of the Maughan Thiem company. It is typed, signed by Behrens, and reads:

THE FIRST BONUS - and we trust
that the one following will be
greater. Are you interested?
- B & M SERVICE
H.A. Behrens

The amount of the bonus varied according to the years of service. The bonus paid in August 1918 was equivalent to five shillings for each week of the previous month for senior employees and half that amount for juniors. In December 1918 the men received £2:8:6 each and again the boys received half that amount. Wages were not high, and these payments were a very welcome addition to the pay packet. They also created a measure of competition between the sections of the firm. Workshop staff, for example, insisted that spare parts used on a job should be credited to staff using them rather than automatically to the spare parts section. The monthly dinners accompanying the bonus distribution were abandoned for three months during the influenza epidemic of 1919, and the resumption of these occasions was marked by an excursion to Brighton in November 1919.

The partners tried to foster good relations between staff and management, not only by the distribution of bonuses at monthly dinners, but also by a series of lunch-hour talks. The talks lasted for half an hour and were usually on matters of practical interest to the staff. Mr Hugh Duncan of Duncan & Fraser, for example, spoke on 'Tyres and their Repairing', Mr C.W. Wittber spoke on dismantling the car engine and the care of tools, Mr Moody of the Savings Bank on the value of a Saving Bank account and Mr A. Ferguson spoke on the value of a technical education for men in the engineering business and exhorted the apprentices to devote their spare time to study.¹⁵ At the monthly dinner at the end of May 1918 Fred Maughan introduced the new superintendent of technical education, Dr Fenner, who then spoke to the staff about the advantages of profit-sharing and congratulated the firm on its progress. On the eve of his departure for his overseas trip Behrens said in a newspaper interview:¹⁶

We thought it a good plan too, to adopt the principle of profit sharing and get together with our employes as much as possible. We like to think of our men working with us rather than for us. From our message boy upwards our staff can see us practically at any time of the day. Human nature should be properly studied, and then it will be found that if you give to the world the best you have the best will come back in return.

The advocates of scientific management would have applauded his statement; and the motoring editor of *The Mail* regarded the conditions it described as evidence that Behrens & Marshall was a progressive firm.

¹⁵. These lunch-hour talks were reported in *The Mail* from time to time.

¹⁶. *The Mail*, 21 June 1919, p.14.



R.G. Cheeseman's Enfield (left) and T. Hawkers Perry (right) departing for Broken Hill in 1914.

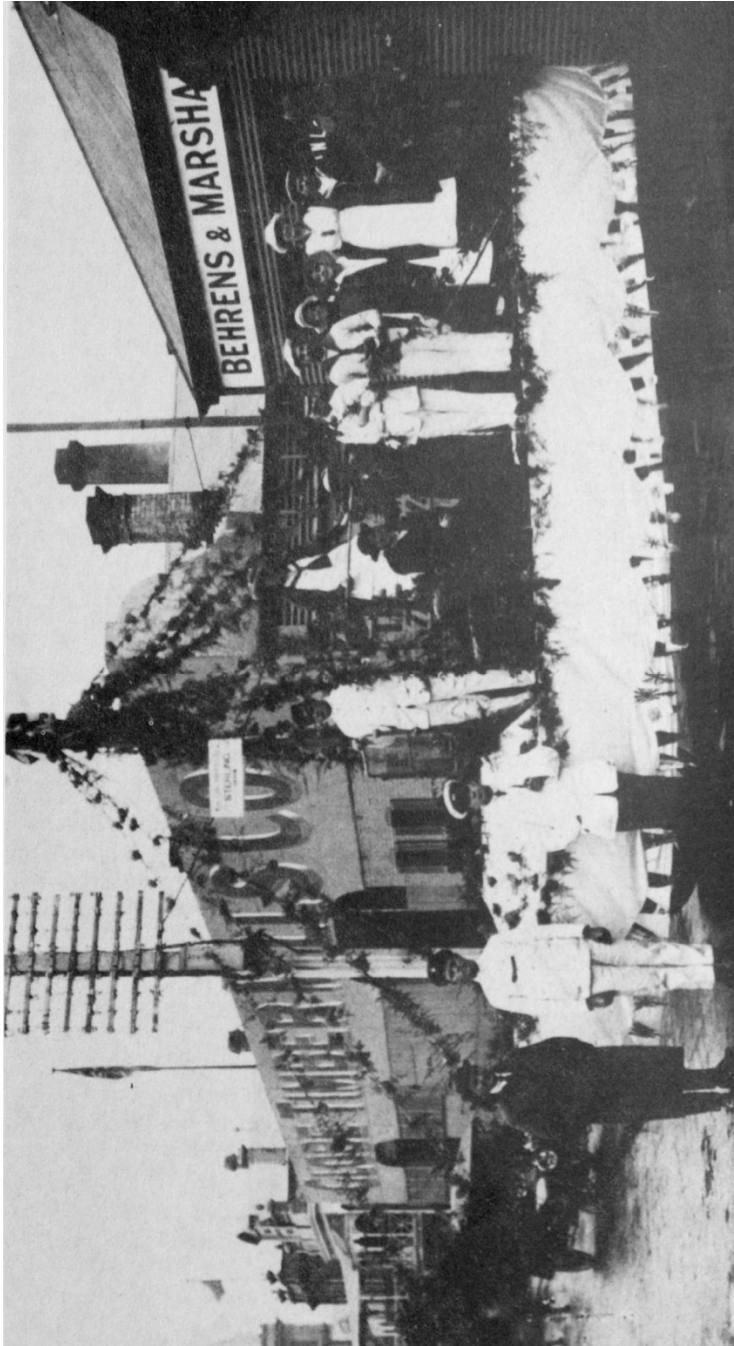
During the years of World War One the staff shared in a fund-raising effort for Red Cross. On Friday 28 July 1916 an Australia Day Procession was held in Adelaide to collect money for the Soldiers' Fund to care for returned men. Eleven motor trading firms took part in the procession, including Behrens & Marshall.¹⁷ The firm, it is recalled, rigged up a Sterling truck to resemble a ship. Some of the employees were dressed as sailors and held out collecting baskets on the end of rods. Johnnie Behrens' son, then a small child, took part in the event, and he remembers that his new white pullover became very dirty from diving under the seat to recover the odd coins which missed the baskets.

Needless to say, the staff was occasionally called on to use its skills in various ways. For example, in January 1915 it was reported that in addition to an exceedingly busy workshop Behrens & Marshall had the agency for the Goldfields Diamond Drilling Company of Melbourne and was engaged in boring for water in many suburbs around Adelaide. The firm had four power plants continually working at this, apparently with a good measure of success.¹⁸ In addition, the firm's engineering skills were turned to the service of the Ford car in an original way. In March 1915 it was reported to have manufactured in its own works an armoured oil gauge designed for the Ford. By the time of the report a large number had been fitted and a good stock was in supply.¹⁹

17. *The Mail*, 29 July 1916, p.13.

18. *The Mail*, 30 January 1915, p.6.

19. *The Mail*, 27 March 1915, p.6.



Behrens & Marshall's Float in Procession to Raise Funds for Returned Soldiers, July 1916 –
Courtesy, State Library.

Behrens & Marshall was apparently the first Adelaide firm to install a kerbside Bowser petrol pump. In July 1917 Eyes & Crowle had asked permission from the Adelaide City Council to have one in front of its Pirie Street premises, but the Council had refused.²⁰ Over two years later *The South Australian Motor* caustically commented that, although in Melbourne and Sydney nearly every garage had a Bowser pump on the kerb in front of its premises, the idea was too modern for Adelaide.²¹ The comment was obviously designed to influence the Adelaide City Council, for early in October 1919 that body had eventually given permission to Behrens & Marshall to install a Bowser on the edge of the footpath outside its premises. The Bowser, which first appeared in 1885, could supply petrol direct to the car tank at a rate of eight gallons a minute, and the risk taken by 'a certain progressive firm' in Flinders Street in experimenting with it was applauded by the editors of *The South Australian Motor*.²² The Mail noted that it was the first kerb pump installed in Adelaide.²³ The City Council, however, obviously could not make up its mind about this innovation. Behrens & Marshall was given permission to let it remain in position for six months after it had been inspected by various officials,²⁴ and motorists made full use of the pump which was available all day and night. By August 1920 the Council had decided that the pump must be removed and that no further pumps were to be installed; but two months later it reversed the decision and resolved to allow Bowser petrol pumps in certain thoroughfares for an annual rental of £10:10:0.²⁵

20. *The Register*, 18 July 1917, p.5.

21. *The South Australian Motor*, VII.6, 25 October 1919, p. 16.

22. *The Mail*, 18 October 1919, p. 18; *The South Australian Motor*, VII.8, 23 December 1919, p. 18.

23. *The Mail*, 18 October 1919, p. 18; 29 November 1919, p. 16.

24. *The Mail*, 20 December 1919, p. 17.

25. *The South Australian Motor*, VIII.4, 25 August 1920, p. 18; VIII.6, 25 October 1920, p. 18.

Chapter Four

Prosperity and Depression

The changes which took place within the management of Behrens & Marshall in 1920 clearly decided the direction in which the firm was to develop in the future. It was to continue as a motor company, and agencies unrelated to that development could be handled by the Behrens-Thiem company. Johnnie Behrens himself had retired from the firm in August 1920, and with him disappeared any temptation to deviate from this course.

To the general public the change must have appeared as one in name only. The newly-named Maughan-Thiem Motor Company continued to advertise itself as a Ford Accessory House and to promote the items it offered to Ford owners. It similarly continued to advertise the other lines of more universal application such as A-Pache self-vulcanising patches, Effecto auto finishes, Shafer self-aligning front wheel roller bearings, and so forth. To be sure, some of the earlier Behrens & Marshall agencies were disappearing from the books, including Enfield and Enger cars and Sterling and Redden trucks; but the important Ford sub-dealership remained in the hands of the company and some new highly successful agencies were added. It was the same course but full steam ahead.

News items publicising the fact that Behrens & Marshall had been superseded by the Maughan-Thiem Motor Company added the comment that this business was now essentially a Ford service and sales organisation. By and large this was true; but even as Behrens & Marshall had coupled its Ford activities with the handling of other profitable agencies so too did the Maughan-Thiem company. Within the first few years of operations under its new name the company gained a package of agencies. Some of these were relatively short-lived, but others proved to be enduring and profitable.

The first of these new agencies was for the Italian Bianchi car, a sturdy 12.1 horsepower 4-cylinder vehicle which cost roughly twice as much as the Model T Ford. The press announcement that Maughan-Thiem company had been appointed local agent for the Bianchi appeared at the end of April 1921, and by the end of the following August the first shipment of chassis arrived in Adelaide, followed shortly by a second. By October the company reported excellent business in Bianchi cars. Both shipments had been sold, and further supplies were on the water.¹ Until about 1925 Maughan-Thiem had good reason for satisfaction with the Bianchi agency, and indeed until the middle of 1923 it was the company's best seller. After that its importance dwindled, and from about the end of 1925 there is no further reference to it in the company's books.

Close on the heels of the Bianchi agency came that for another continental car. In April 1922,

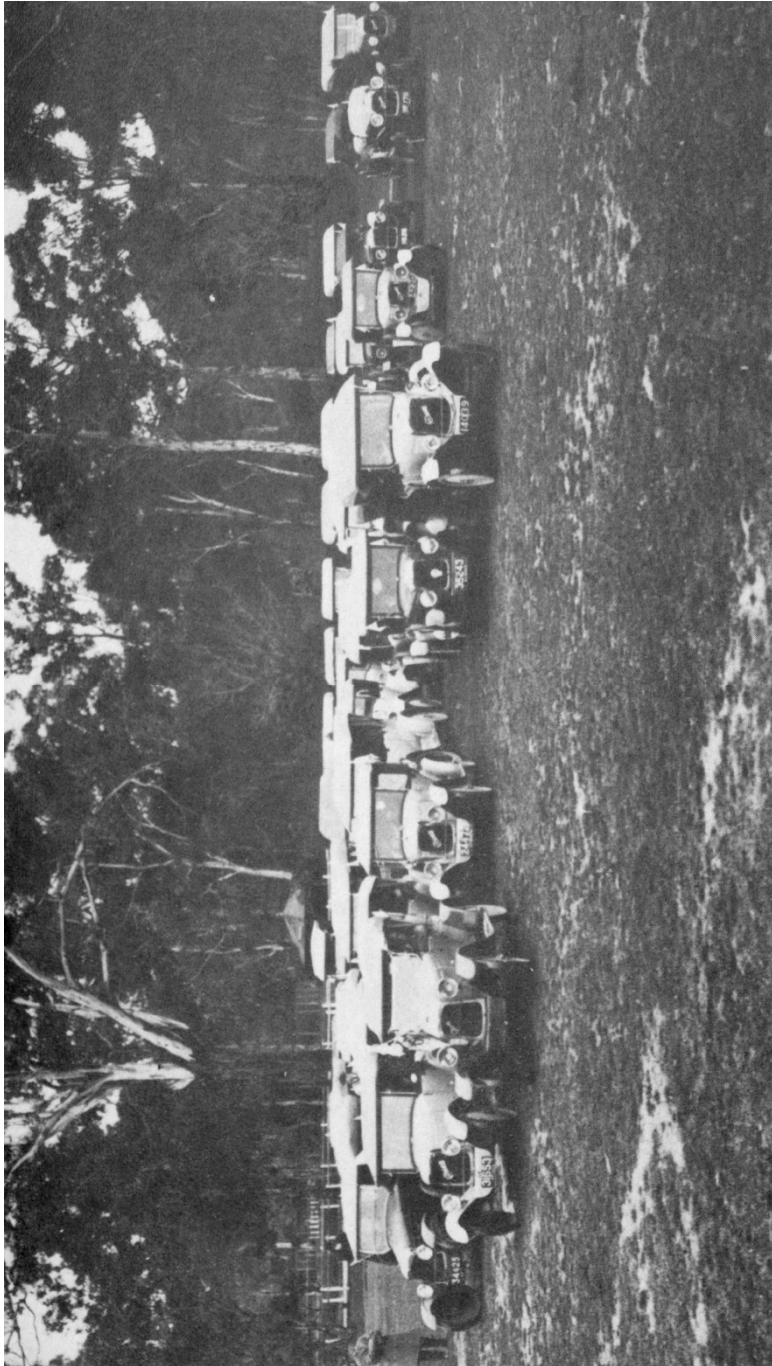
just one year after securing the Bianchi agency, it was announced that the Maughan-Thiem company had obtained the agency for the French Citroen car which was previously handled in South Australia by the Moncrieff Engineering Co Ltd. The Citroen had already made a name for itself before coming to South Australia, and for some seven years Maughan-Thiem flourished in its dealership for this popular make of car. Indeed a Citroen car club was formed, and on Sunday 16 September 1923 what the press called 'rather a unique event in the motoring world' took place. A fleet of 40 Citroens left the Maughan-Thiem premises for Belair, where prizes were offered in an interesting range of events. These included the first car to arrive at Belair, the most attractive car, the best-kept car, the dirtiest car, the car which had travelled most miles, a skilful driving event for ladies, and an event in which mechanical troubles had to be righted. There was also the usual round of picnic events such as threading the needle, a flag race, and an obstacle race.² This was the beginning of a number of such outings which served to emphasise the popularity of the Citroen. The two most favoured models were the larger car, originally a 10 horsepower car which was increased to 11.4 horsepower in about 1926, and the Baby Citroen which was originally a 5 horsepower model and became 7.5 horsepower later on. The Maughan-Thiem company found the Baby Citroen a particularly popular car. It has been described by one who knew it as a sort of cousin to the Volkswagen, a rugged little car about the same size as the later German car with disc wheels. In the 1920s a Baby Citroen was driven all around Australia by a team of trial drivers which included Bill Forrest of Maughan-Thiem, no mean feat for a small car in those days. The Citroen remained on Maughan-Thiem's books until 1929 and for some years was an important agency for the company. In September 1929 the South Australian agency was taken over by Crawford-Richards Limited of Currie Street.

Three months after securing the Citroen agency Maughan-Thiem added yet another overseas car to its business. In 1916 the motoring editor of *The Mail* had commented on the performance of the Stutz car in American racing events and had expressed surprise that there was no South Australian agency.³ Some six years later, in July 1922, the agency for the American Stutz was taken up by Maughan-Thiem, and in

1. The Mail 30 April 1921, p. 15; 22 October 1921, p.17.
2. The Observer, 15 September 1923, p.19.
3. The Mail, 19 February 1916, p.9.



Citroen Cars outside the Pulteney Street Premises, Christmas 1923.



Citroen Carnival, National Park Belair, September 1924

September 1922 the first car arrived in Adelaide and was exhibited by Maughan-Thiem at the spring show.⁴ The Stutz was an expensive 30.6 horsepower 4-cylinder car, priced at about £1,000 when the Bianchi was about £650. In 1923 a new 6-cylinder model appeared. Perhaps it was too expensive to be popular in Adelaide. It is thought that Maughan-Thiem sold one Stutz, but neither the motoring pages of *The Mail* nor Maughan-Thiem's books refer to the company selling any, although for a short time the company's books had the miscellaneous line 'Other Car Sales' which may have accounted for one or two Stutz sales.

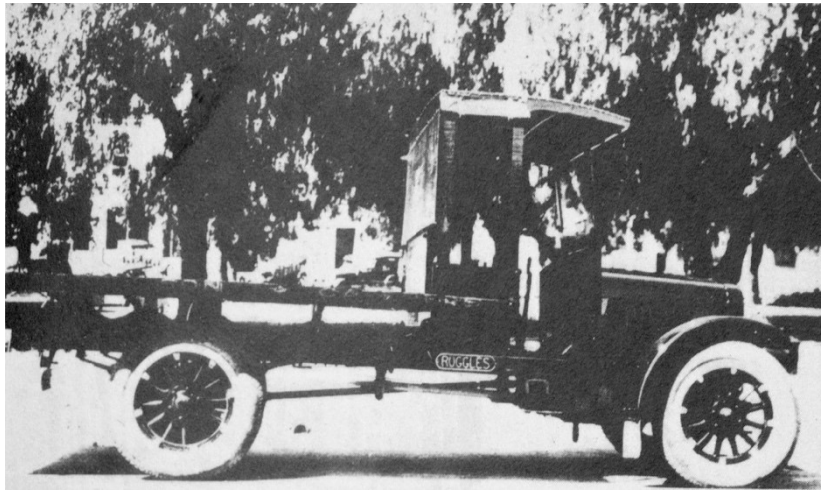
As with the Stutz, the company's next agency made only a brief and very modest appearance. By August 1922 Maughan-Thiem was handling the Corbitt truck. A few were sold, but by 1923 this agency had disappeared from the company's books.

In its Behrens & Marshall days the Flinders Street premises, even after extensions, had become too cramped for the firm's expanding business. Maughan-Thiem's new agencies made it imperative yet again that further premises be found, doubly so because even more agencies were being explored. Fortune favoured the company's search for additional space. The Collegiate School of St Peter, from whom the Flinders Street premises were rented, also had property available around the corner in Pulteney Street immediately north of the Somerset Hotel. It had a frontage of 60 feet on Pulteney Street and a depth of 100 feet, the rear portion of which adjoined the Flinders Street property. In February 1923 the College granted a lease to the Maughan-Thiem company and it was made known through the press that, owing to the rapid expansion of its business, the Maughan-Thiem Company would make a start in March with the building of modern showrooms and a garage on this land adjoining its present property. The building took some months to complete, and it was not until July 1923 that the company was able to announce that it would shortly open bigger premises at 185 to 189 Pulteney Street, where a full range of its agencies would be displayed.⁵ By the beginning of November 1923 company advertisements carried the address 185-195 Pulteney Street, which was shortly afterwards altered to the correct address 185-189 Pulteney Street. This address became that of the company's registered office.

For the time being the projected property expansion seemed sufficient to cope with further ventures and in May 1923, three months after securing the Pulteney Street lot, Maughan-Thiem landed the agency for the American Ruggles truck. For the company this became a lucrative line of business and attracted a brisk trade. On one occasion Ross Thiem drove a Ruggles on a promotion tour across the countryside with a Baby Citroen on the back of the truck to contrast their size. Produced by the Ruggles Motor Truck Company of Saginaw, Michigan, the Ruggles came

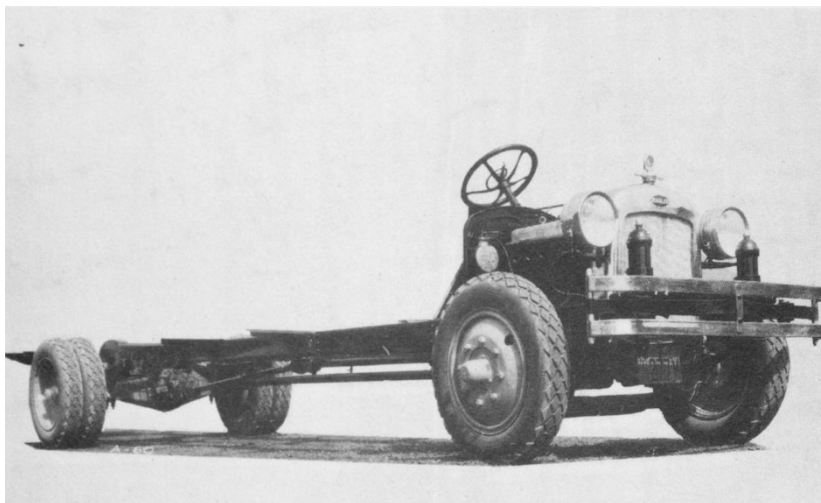
4. *The Mail*, 2 September 1922, p.22; 16 September 1922, p.31; *The Observer*, 15 July 1922, p.13.

5. *The Mail*, 10 February 1923, p.25; 14 July 1923, p.25

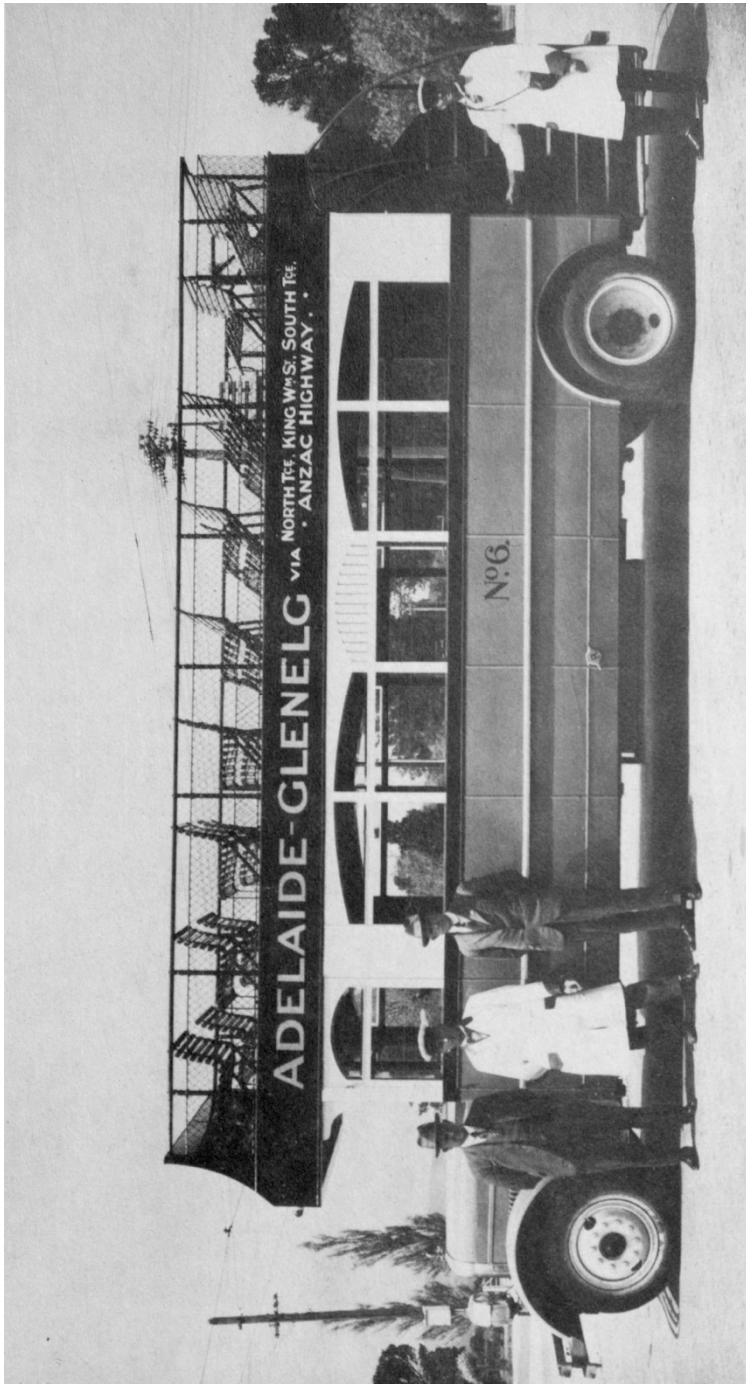


Ruggles one-and-a-half-ton Truck, sold by Maughan-Thiem to Stevens & Son, Caterers.

out in several models. In earlier days they ranged from the three-quarter ton 'Go-Getter' to a two-and-a-half ton model. Later no less than fourteen models were advertised, from one to five tons and including a dump truck for road-building and sandcarting and single and double-decker buses. Mr Mick Tough recalls that Maughan-Thiem handled the first Ruggles double-decker bus, the body of which was built by John Dawson for whom Bruce Thiem had worked for a time. This was used on the Port Adelaide run by the Kent bus line. The company also sold a few



Ruggles Bus Chassis.



A.R. Thiem (left) handing over an early open-top Ruggles Bus for use on Glenelg line

single-decker buses and, especially when the Shell building was under construction in North Terrace, some of the dump trucks. Mr Hugh Payne, who used to drive them in from the assembly site at Beverley, remembers that the Ruggles engine was apt to backfire when the starting handle was used, and it became notorious for breaking the wrist of the unwary. The solid rubber wheels were also a hazard on wet tramlines, and on one occasion Hugh Payne found his Ruggles out of control on the wet tramline in North Terrace and in hot pursuit of a hapless policeman on point duty. Such incidents apparently did not deter buyers, and Maughan-Thiem did well with Ruggles for some ten years.

The Maughan-Thiem Motor Company had come a long way since its early Behrens & Marshall days, when a small staff had attended to the mechanical needs of the Model T Ford. It had taken up profitable agencies for overseas vehicles which the company imported in its own right and not as sub-dealers for another local distributor. Each year profits climbed in a pleasing manner and future possibilities seemed boundless. It is evident that the partners gave serious thought to the form that future might take. In early days the firm had cheerfully associated itself with the 'Tin Lizzie' Ford image; Ford jokes drew attention to the car and helped to promote sales. There was still no point in losing the profitable Ford business, but nevertheless the firm had outlived its 'Tin Lizzie' days and sought some way to shed that image. The solution seemed simple, perhaps suggested by the example of the Ford distributors Duncan & Fraser themselves.

Like Maughan-Thiem, Duncan & Fraser had linked its Ford dealership with the handling of other makes of car, and in 1920 it had set up a subsidiary firm, Duncan Motors Limited, which concerned itself exclusively with selling the Ford. The subsidiary firm was closely associated with the parent company and operated from its Franklin Street premises.

The Maughan-Thiem company decided to take a similar course. In October 1922 it announced in the press that it had transferred its Ford car sub-agency to the Henry Car Company, the address of which was the Maughan-Thiem premises at 134 Flinders Street.⁶ The Henry Car Company flourished for about eight months. The motoring columnist of *The Mail* reported its Ford sales, at first under the heading 'Maughan-Thiem Motor Company' and then later as a separate item under the Henry heading; and by the end of 1922 the new subsidiary company had sold over one hundred Ford vehicles. For a short time the partners obviously held high hopes for its future. When in February 1923 Maughan-Thiem announced its intention to build a showroom and garage in Pulteney Street it added that the Flinders Street premises would be used exclusively by the Henry Car Company for the distribution of Ford vehicles and as a Ford service station. This intention, however, was not completely realised. Pulteney Street was not ready for use until November 1923, and

6. *The Mail* 28 October 1922, p.23; *The Observer*, 28 October 1922, p.16.

Henry Car Company news items and advertisements stopped in the previous June. For about six months after June 1923 Maughan-Thiem in its own name resumed its Ford sub-dealership, and towards the end of October advertised the Flinders Street premises as the Maughan-Thiem Motor Company Ford Service Station where Ford cars and trucks could be bought; but by the end of 1923 Maughan-Thiem had ended its Ford sub-dealership. When the Henry company was set up a complete break with Ford was obviously not intended. The reason for this eventual break can only be guessed in the absence of company records; perhaps it is significant that in June 1923, when the Henry company disappeared, George Mason of Kent Terrace Norwood was given a Ford sub-agency for Adelaide. George Mason, like Johnnie Behrens and Ross Thiem, had spent years with Duncan & Fraser and with its Ford subsidiary Duncan Motors.⁷ Since Maughan-Thiem was successfully promoting other agencies it was perhaps seen fitting that the Ford mantle should fall on Mason's shoulders. At all events, it was not until 1958 that the association between Maughan-Thiem and Ford was resumed.

Meanwhile other agencies came and went. In May 1923, the month in which the Ruggles truck agency was taken up, Maughan-Thiem became agent for the Earl car which had previously been distributed in South Australia by Vulcanisers Limited. The Earl was described as a combination of beauty and utility, with low racy lines and luxurious seating.⁸ But, like the Stutz and the Corbitt, the Earl created scarcely a ripple on the surface of Maughan-Thiem's growing pond. It was basically the same as the Briscoe, which it superseded; but Earl Motors Incorporated of Michigan was only in production for two years and in all only about 2,000 cars left the factory. Maughan-Thiem took the agency about the time production ceased, and the company sold only a few Earl cars. In July 1925, after the Earl agency had vanished from its books, Maughan-Thiem sold one lone Earl.⁹

A year after the Earl agency came that for another American car. The Velie Corporation had been in production since 1908 or 1909, and for a time Murray Aunger had the South Australian agency. When Maughan-Thiem took it in April 1924 Velie had just commenced production of the new Velie Six range of cars. The first shipment arrived in August 1924, and the 50 horsepower overhead-valve aeroplane-type engine created much interest. In June 1925 a cut-away working engine was in operation in the Maughan-Thiem showrooms with every working part visible and lit up at night.¹⁰ Press items and Maughan-Thiem's books show that the Velie, priced at about £500, sold well for a time and in particular in 1925 and early 1926. Nevertheless this agency, like the Earl, did not last long. The Velie Corporation ceased production in 1928, and Maughan-Thiem made no further sales after mid-1927.

7. *The Mail*, 30 June 1923, p.26.

8. *The Mail*, 28 October 1922, p.22; 26 May 1923, p.27; *The Observer*, 5 May 1923, p.15

9. *The Mail*, 4 July 1925, p.29.

10. *The Mail*, 12 April 1924, p. 31, 9 August 1924, p.30: 27 June 1925, p. 29.

Once again, as agencies accumulated, the old chronic problem of floorspace emerged. The new showrooms at 185-9 Pulteney Street were scarcely opened before their limitations were felt. The Bianchi, Ruggles and Velie were selling well, and in the Citroen Maughan-Thiem had a best-seller. Citroen sales for November 1925 topped the State's list of registrations, and in the first five days of the following month forty vehicles were sold. Customers in December 1925 were offered ten body styles from which to choose, and even children were catered for with a toy model selling for seventeen shillings and sixpence. In May 1924 it was reported in the press that, owing to increased business, the company was in the process of enlarging its Pulteney Street premises to accommodate a special department to assemble and demonstrate the Ruggles truck. The alterations, it was said, would increase the company's premises to 20,675 square feet. Apparently this too proved insufficient, for a year later it was again announced that, due to the increased demand for the various lines handled by the company, the showroom space would be doubled for the display of the full range of Citroen, Velie and Bianchi cars and Ruggles trucks.¹¹

In retrospect these years of prosperous expansion in the mid-1920s can be seen as the calm before the storm. Some writers see the years 1925 to 1928 as the prelude to the Australian depression, as a period of stagnation with a fall in production and in per capita consumption of goods and services.¹² The collapse of the Wall Street stock market late in October 1929 is generally seen as the final straw which broke the back of the Australian economy and introduced depression on a full scale. For a number of reasons the full severity of the depression hit South Australia at least two years before that date. The state government had over-spent in an effort to develop utilities such as roads and railways, and a heavy interest bill resulted. To meet what had become a financial crisis nearly all state taxes and charges were increased in 1927: railway fares and freights, water and sewerage rates, wharf charges, hospital fees, taxation, and the rest. From June 1927 unemployment became a serious problem as public works were retrenched; and to make matters worse, 1927 saw the beginning of a three-year drought and rural depression.¹³

By the middle of 1927 the effects on the motor trade were beginning to appear in the State's monthly statistics for the registration of new motor vehicles. In July 1927 there was a slight drop, and this became more pronounced in the following months. By the end of 1927 newspapers were commenting on the slump. *The Mail* pointed out that November was the worst month for the motor trade that year, and blamed the drop in car sales on what it was already calling 'the all-round trade depression.'¹⁴ New registrations in January 1928 were the lowest January

11. *The Mail*, 31 May 1924, p.31; 4 April 1925, p.30.

12. C.B. Schedvin, *Australia and the Great Depression*, Sydney, 1970; N.G. Butlin, in K. Hancock (ed), *The National Income and Social Welfare*, Cheshire, 1965, p.5.

13. M.J. Thompson, *Government and Depression in South Australia, 1927 to 1934*, MA Thesis, Flinders University, 1972.

14. *The Mail*, 24 December 1927, p. 21.

figures since 1923, and the figures for later months in 1928 continued to show the effects of depression: 807 new vehicles registered in January 1928 as against 1,399 in January 1927, 711 in February 1928 as against 1,330 in February 1927, 798 in March 1928 as against 1,323 in March 1927, and so on. There was a slight improvement in November and December 1928 and January 1929, and it appeared that the worst might be over. However, the figures from February 1929 showed that such hopes were illusory; and worse followed. In 1930 new registrations totalled 3,214 as against 7,239 in 1929. The figures for 1931 were disastrous. Only 698 new vehicles were registered in that year. The recovery in new motor sales set in very gradually in 1932, when 1,019 new registrations were recorded, and 1933 was a little better with 1,723. It took a few more years for the new vehicle business to get fully back on its feet. In the meantime the problem was exacerbated by the fact that in many cases those who already had cars locked them up and did not renew the registration, to the detriment of State finance. In September 1931 the consequent loss of revenue to the State government was put at £50,000¹⁵ Until the height of the depression South Australia had been the most motorised State in the Commonwealth. In 1929 there was one vehicle for each 7.8 of population, but by 1931 this had slipped back to one for each 8.7 and South Australia dropped to second place behind Western Australia.

The only slight consolation for motor traders during these years was the used car business. Newspaper columns reflected this change. In 1931 the greatly reduced motoring section of *The Mail*, for example, was often given over to guidance in the selection of second-hand vehicles and in the care and maintenance of old cars. There was hardly any point in continuing to report on new vehicles when figures showed that in that year Adelaide dealers sold six times as many second-hand vehicles as they did new ones. Those who had used cars to sell were even able to find ready customers and demand sometimes exceeded the available supply.¹⁶

These were hard years for the Maughan-Thiem company, as its profit and loss accounts demonstrate. Until the period ended 31 March 1926 business was good and returned sound profits. In the following six months, ending 30 September 1926, a loss of £1,340 appeared in the books. The next six months to 31 March 1927 provided a slight respite with a profit of £957, but thereafter the books show an annual loss until the year ended 30 June 1935, when a small profit of £510 was recorded. The firm had to survive eight lean and profitless years. Sometimes it was unwillingly compelled to increase the hardships of its customers, many of whom could not keep up their payments on vehicles bought on terms and consequently had them repossessed. Maughan-Thiem was obliged to repossess a number of Ruggles trucks, for example, and stored them at Ross Thiem's Sunnyside property. To offset some of the resultant loss the

15. *The Mail*, 19 September 1931, p. 11

16. *The Mail*, 24 October 1931, p. 11.

firm for a while took a carting contract and used some of these Ruggles to carry apples from Balhannah to Port Adelaide. Needless to say, such measures did little to ameliorate company losses.

It was during the depression period that the firm finally decided to become a private limited company, although the forerunners to this decision extended back into more prosperous times.

By 1923 the partners had permitted the firm's secretary Mr L.R. Rasch to put money into the firm and earn interest on it. By September 1925 he had deposited £823 in this way. Shortly after that date Rasch left the firm and took his money with him. Perhaps the partners saw Rasch's example as something worth further exploration, for in 1925 they sought the advice of their auditors Thos. C. Walker & Syme about the possibilities and implications of forming a company and issuing shares. At the time Max Syme, who replied 21 October 1925, was cautious. He obviously knew that Ross Thiem and Fred Maughan were strong-willed men. Whereas, he said, the business was currently their own and they were responsible only to each other, if they formed a company they would no longer own it and would have to administer it for other people. If he were any judge, Syme added, this would interfere greatly with the privileges they enjoyed at present, since they had been in the habit of doing as they pleased. He also pointed out that when shares were issued to an employee 'your relations become somewhat different, and where previously it was always possible to dispense with him, it becomes impossible to do so except with his consent.' To be sure, Syme added a handwritten postscript pointing out that companies had certain things to recommend them; but the apparent dangers which he stressed evidently gave the partners food for thought, and the decision to form a company was delayed. Syme's advice was also heeded in a further respect. Les Rasch's successor as secretary, Harold George Burdon, was also permitted to invest money in the firm at the rate of £1 weekly and to share in the profits in proportion to the amount he had invested. However, in an agreement dated 1 July 1926, eight or nine months after Max Syme's letter, it was specified that this under no circumstances made Burdon a partner nor did it limit the rights of the company to dispense with Burdon's services at any time it saw fit.

By 1928 the partners had become convinced that there were good reasons to form a limited company. In the six months ended 30 September 1927 the firm recorded a loss of £3,177 and in the following six months to 31 March 1928 a further loss of £3,731. In these depression years the firm had obtained the agency for the American Graham-Paige car. Profit and loss accounts offered little comfort to the partners and an injection of capital was needed to finance the import of this new line of business. On 1 April 1926 Mr Bruce Thiem had been admitted into the firm as a partner. He had married a daughter of John Walker Fox, of the Flinders Street firm of builders and contractors Fox Ey & Thomas. Fox and his partner Ernest George Ey agreed to join a limited company if it were formed, and consequently on 1 August 1928 Maughan Thiem Motor Company Limited was incorporated under The Companies Act 1892 as a limited company. The shareholders at the time of incorporation were F.M. Maughan, A.R. Thiem, B.M. Thiem, Mrs G.G. Thiem, and members of the Fox and Ey families. The total capital of the company was increased from the £11,000 represented by the interest of the three partners in the firm to £21,000 in fully-paid £1 shares. The first directors were E.G. Ey (chairman), F.M. Maughan and A.R. Thiem (joint managing directors), B.M. Thiem, and J.W. Fox. H.G. Burdon was secretary although not a

director.

The Maughan-Thiem company had never been content to rest on past laurels, and the newly-incorporated company clearly thought that to do so now was hardly the best way to face hard times. It tried to improve its situation by means of another agency to compensate for dwindling Citroen and Ruggles sales.

This agency was for the new Graham-Paige car. The three Graham brothers had operated a very successful truck manufacturing business in conjunction with the Dodge brothers, who had supplied the engines. In 1926 they sold their truck business to Dodge and gained control of the Paige Motor Car Company of Detroit. The new Graham-Paige Motors Corporation then set about producing a new range of cars bearing its name. In July 1928 it was made known that the Maughan-Thiem company had secured the agency for South Australia and Broken Hill, and by the end of August the Graham-Paige was on display in the company's showrooms.¹⁷ It was fitting that the first Graham-Paige delivered in South Australia, a 629 model seven-passenger sedan, was to Mrs E.G. Ey,¹⁸ whose husband was a shareholder and first chairman of directors of the limited company which had been formed to import the Graham-Paige car. This make of car was in all an impressive limousine, and both Fred Maughan and Ross Thiem drove 612 models for a time. Maughan Thiem was the first company to put out a Graham-Paige coupe utility, which had a wooden utility body.

For a year or so it seemed that the Graham-Paige might fill the gap created by the loss of the Citroen and Ruggles agencies. For the two years ended 30 June 1929 and 1930 it was the company's best line of business, far ahead of its only competitors the 'general sales' and 'repairs' lines. Then the severity of the depression became apparent. New Graham-Paige cars registered during 1930 totalled 36; in 1931 the number fell to 5, and indeed between March and November 1931 no new Graham-Paige cars were registered. In 1932 the number rose to 11, but even that improvement meant that less than one car was sold each month.¹⁹ In those three years 1930-32 Maughan Thiem sold a total of 52 Graham-Paige cars; and by this time it was the company's sole agency. Company records show that 1933 to 1935 were even worse years, although by then other new agencies were

17. *The South Australian Motor*, XVI.3, 25 July 1928, p.28; *The Mail*, 25 August 1928, p.26.

18. *The Mail*, 13 October 1928, p.28.

19. *The South Australian Motor* published lists of registrations of new vehicles.



beginning
to yield
more
promising
results.
Sales of
the
Graham-
Paige,
renamed
Graham
from
1934,
improved

Maughan-Thiem Stand, Royal Show 1935

slightly

from 1936, but by the end of 1938 this car dropped out of the company's books.

Maughan Thiem survived these disastrous times despite eight years of steady losses. The following table, compiled from company profit and loss accounts, shows the effects on the more important lines of business.

Year Ended	New Vehicle Sales £	Used Vehicle Sales £	Repairs £	General Sales £
30 September 1927	13,595	263	1,732	2,148
31 March 1928 (six months)	2,368	—	833	1,099
30 June 1929	9,795	—	1,168	1,645
30 June 1930	5,151	—	1,654	636
30 June 1931	864	1,367	955	452
30 June 1932	639	2,805	971	355
30 June 1933	2,606	1,364	1,337	318
30 June 1934	2,655	1,144	894	267



Cartoon by *The Mail*
January 1930. F.M.
Thiem in a Graham-Paige — Courtesy, *The News*.

artist Coventry,
Maughan and A.R.

Sales of the Graham-Paige gave to new vehicle sales in 1929 and 1930 some slight semblance of respectability, and by 1933 and 1934 Singer and Willys sales began to affect the figures. In the intervening two years 1931 and 1932 used car sales were the mainstay of the company's meagre income. The depression had other effects. General sales fell drastically, and income from repairs also declined; and, of course, all aspects of the company's business were hit most adversely. Some other firms collapsed under the stress of the time, and Maughan Thiem was fortunate to be able to ride the storm.

Chapter Five

Recovery and Expansion

By the end of 1935 the management of the Maughan Thiem company could find in the firm's profit and loss accounts some hopes that the depression had been weathered, and an increasing profitability in the next few years confirmed these hopes. The firm set about staging its recovery after the depression once again on the recipe for success on which it had based its past achievements. It had in the past sought agencies for vehicles likely to attract good business, and as some had declined or proved unprofitable they had been replaced or supplemented by others. This was done again. By 1931 all the company's eggs were in the Graham-Paige basket so far as new car business was concerned, and in that year only about five new cars were sold. Further agencies were clearly indicated.

The first agency secured at this time was for the Singer car, which made its initial appearance in Maughan Thiem's books during the year ended 30 June 1932. It remained there for the following 25 years, only disappearing when Maughan Thiem took up the Ford franchise. The Singer proved to be a valuable asset to Maughan Thiem as one of a few agencies on which the firm thrived after the depression. For about seven years it was Maughan Thiem's best selling line, while in some other years it did well and in others fell well behind other makes handled by the firm. The late 1940s and early 1950s appear to have been its best years.

Maughan Thiem, of course, did not introduce the Singer to South Australia. At the end of 1925 Maughan Thiem's secretary Mr L.G. Rasch went into partnership with George Mason, and by March 1926 George Mason & Rasch Ltd was advertising as agent for the Singer Company Limited of Coventry and also, later, Birmingham. When later, in 1926, Mason and Rasch dissolved their partnership Rasch Motors Ltd of 69 Waymouth Street retained the Singer agency and continued to operate it until Maughan Thiem accepted it. For a while Rasch also handled the Austin, and in 1931 added the Rugby and the Durant to his business. In December 1933 he put his emphasis on the Continental products which came from an amalgamation of the Continental Engine Co and Durant Motors.¹ He was obviously prepared to let Singer go. During the depression it had fared no better than other new cars, and in 1933 the odd one or two were sold each month. After the depression Maughan Thiem found a

1. *The South Australian Motor*, XXI.8, 15 December 1933, p.5

much readier market for this car, and consequently inherited from the company's former secretary a lucrative agency.

About a year after Singer the Willys agency was added. The franchise had been held by Autocars of Flinders Street, but that firm closed down and Maughan Thiem took over Willys by August 1933.² The Willys, like the Singer, remained with the firm until the Ford franchise and served Maughan Thiem well. In 1933 the Willys 77 came out in three models, the Roadster Tourer selling at £269, the Coupe at £285 and the Family Sedan at £299, and in each of the few months from August 1933 some six new cars were already being sold. As the post-depression recovery accelerated so did the sale of cars, and between 1934 and 1943 Willys headed Maughan Thiem's new car sales and was a good seller in other years. After the war Willys had a further attraction. Surplus army stocks of the famous Willys Jeep became available to Willys distributors and Maughan Thiem was therefore able to reap the benefit, which the company did to good effect. Mr Hugh Payne travelled South Australia with the Jeep, setting up agencies and attending to their orders. Over one hundred of these army vehicles were taken, reconditioned and sold by Maughan Thiem in this way, and when the Jeep became a commercial vehicle the company continued to handle it. From the company records it appears that in all some 580 Jeeps were sold by the company between September 1946 and April 1958. Maughan Thiem staged its recovery from the depression on the Singer and the Willys, and later consolidated this with other very useful business lines.

2. *The South Australian Motor*, XXI.4, 15 August 1933, p.5.

SingerFinishingLine, MaughanThiemAssemblyDivision, OrsmondStreet Hindmarsh.



In addition to these two popular makes of motor car the company did some business in trucks. For a time during the 1930s a few Willys trucks were sold, mainly from about 1934 to 1936. In addition, during 1935 to 1938 the company sold a few trucks produced by Albion Commercial Motors of Glasgow. The Albion company was said to have been in business since 1901, when it produced its first commercial vehicle, and in June or July 1922 N.G. Cleveland & Co of Wakefield Street was appointed South Australian representative.³ The Albion was an expensive unit which was fully imported in chassis form, the body then being built locally. It was an excellent performer, and a few had bus bodies constructed for them; but it was in a price range which limited its market, and although Maughan Thiem exhibited and advertised it in 1938⁴ not a large number was sold.

By 1937 the depression was just a memory, and the company found itself once again in need of additional space. More room was required to assemble the new cars handled by the company in increasing numbers. In 1937 Willys easily topped the list, as it did also in the following few years, but Singer too sold well and the Graham car had made a recovery and sales increased, and the occasional Albion truck was sold. Further, the company's business was by no means limited to new car sales, important as these were rapidly becoming once again. The used car business was blossoming and the repairs and spare parts divisions drew an increasing amount of business, as gross income figures from the company's profit and loss accounts demonstrate.

3. *The Mail*, 1 July 1922, p.21.

4. *The South Australian Motor*, XXVII.3, 15 July 1938, p.15; XXVII.4, 25 August 1938, p. 19.



Willys Jeep Body Mounting Line, Orsmond Street Hindmarsh.



Maughan Thiem Premises, 175 Pulteney Street.

Year Ended	Willys, Singer, Graham Sales	Used Car Sales	Repairs	General Sales
30 June	£	£	£	£
1936	6,475	2,456	2,373	659
1937	12,826	3,502	3,304	919
1938	17,550	3,115	4,796	997

In February 1923 Maughan Thiem had gained tenancy of the premises at 185-9 Pulteney Street, which had become the company's main showroom and registered office. A few doors down, at 175 Pulteney Street, further property now became available. For a while these premises had been occupied by Adelaide Motors, who had the agency for Fiat, Sunbeam and, later, Maudsley lorries. Freeman Motors were there later, until they moved to Grenfell Street in July 1929, and after that various other tenants followed in quick succession until Maughan Thiem was able to gain possession in about 1937. Company records are incomplete and the exact date cannot be ascertained, but in 1938 the South Australian Directory for the first time entered Maughan Thiem's name against this address. Before the company expanded on to this site its workshop and spare parts division had been housed in the Flinders Street premises, and these were now relocated at 175 Pulteney Street. Mr Fred Maughan's office was also moved there. It was conveniently connected with the company's premises at 185-9 Pulteney Street and 134 Flinders Street through Naylor Street, to which all three properties had access from the rear. Over the years 175 Pulteney Street served the company in various ways, later housing other operations such as used car sales, lubrication, body repairs and painting, and so forth.

For assembling its new vehicles Maughan Thiem had for a time taken property at 700 Port Road Beverley, now occupied by the South Australian distributors of Mazda. Within a short time this property became too small for the purpose, and the company consequently bought a site which served it admirably for many years. This was on the corner of Orsmond and Adam Streets Hindmarsh. On 31 August 1937 the company paid £532:19:0 for freehold possession of the block, and a building for assembling vehicles was erected by the contractors Fox Ey and Thomas, to whom the final payment on completion of the work was made on the last day of 1937. The Hindmarsh property immediately came into full use for storing and assembling Willys and Singer cars, and later also Willys Jeeps, Nash cars and International products. In later years it also housed the major repair and service divisions and was used in other ways. Hindmarsh was a useful addition to the company's premises, which by this time consisted of the enlarged Flinders Street premises, the imposing showrooms and registered office at 185-9 Pulteney Street, the workshop and spare parts section at 175 Pulteney Street, and the Hindmarsh property.

The bad days of the depression indeed seemed to have passed, not only for Maughan Thiem but also for the motor trade in general. Sales of new cars and commercial vehicles throughout Australia for the year ended 30 June 1936 increased over the previous year by 49 per cent, and in 1936 South Australia was once again the most motorised State with one vehicle per 8.8 inhabitants, ahead of Western Australia with one per 9.7 and the other States with even lower ratios.⁵ It seemed a good time for optimistic plans for further business expansion.

The new line of business on which Maughan Thiem embarked was the agency for the Nash car, which the company had by July 1938.⁶ Before then other dealers had distributed this make of car. Autocars Limited of Flinders Street had done so in the 1920s then Les Rasch, Maughan Thiem's former secretary, entered the story once again when Rasch Motors took over the Nash agency until Maughan Thiem gained it. The Nash chassis was imported from America and the body was supplied by Richards body works which was later incorporated in the Chrysler works. It is recalled that one prototype Nash body was imported from America, and from this Richards made the templates for local production. Under Commonwealth tariff provisions the imported body could not be sold or used, and it was dumped in the Port River under the supervision of Customs authorities.

Maughan Thiem's debut with the Nash coincided with the war years and sales were sluggish. After 1945 business became more encouraging, and in the 1947-8 financial year Nash was the company's best seller. It sold well in other years but sales did not again match the success of that short time.

5. *The Mail*, 1 August 1936, p.22; 20 June 1936, p. 12.

6. *The South Australian Motor*. XXVII.3, 15 July 1938, p.15.

It remained an important part of Maughan Thiem's business until the Ford franchise was taken in 1958, in all a period of about twenty years.

Maughan Thiem shared with business in general the uncertainties and hardships of the years of the second world war. By and large business declined, and gross sales figures for 1945 were less than half of those for 1939. Due to a combination of circumstances the financial year which ended 30 June 1943 yielded very sound profits; but, apart from that year, company profitability declined steadily during the war. With the exception of Nash, which rose sharply in 1943, sales of new cars steadily declined. Used car sales peaked in 1943 and then dropped sharply, while the sale of parts increased moderately and income from repairs continued at an even level. For a few years some motor vehicles grew an ugly appendage at the rear, and the public gradually became accustomed to the sight of the charcoal-burning gas producers which some motorists bought as petrol rationing took its toll of available fuel. Maughan Thiem had its share of this trade, and from about 1941 to the end of the war the company supplied a gas producer made by Electrolux.

The transition to a peace-time economy in Australia brought its full share of hopes and frustrations. Government controls were gradually eased from manpower, commodities, wages and the money market, and there was in general an optimistic sense of relief that the dark war years were over and better times lay ahead. For a time, however, this optimism was tinged with uncertainty and conflict over what was seen by some as the threat of 'creeping socialism' and government control over banking and finance. The victory of Menzies' Liberal and Country Party in the elections of December 1949 was seen by many as the end to these fears and as a green light to business expansion and prosperity. The new government had promised to put value back into the pound and to minimise government intervention in free enterprise. In February 1950 petrol rationing was removed and there was a scramble for service station sites and an orgy of building on them. The various petrol companies waged a battle with the additives which would improve their products and competition was increased by the appearance of the one-brand service station. A new golden age for the motor industry seemed to have dawned.

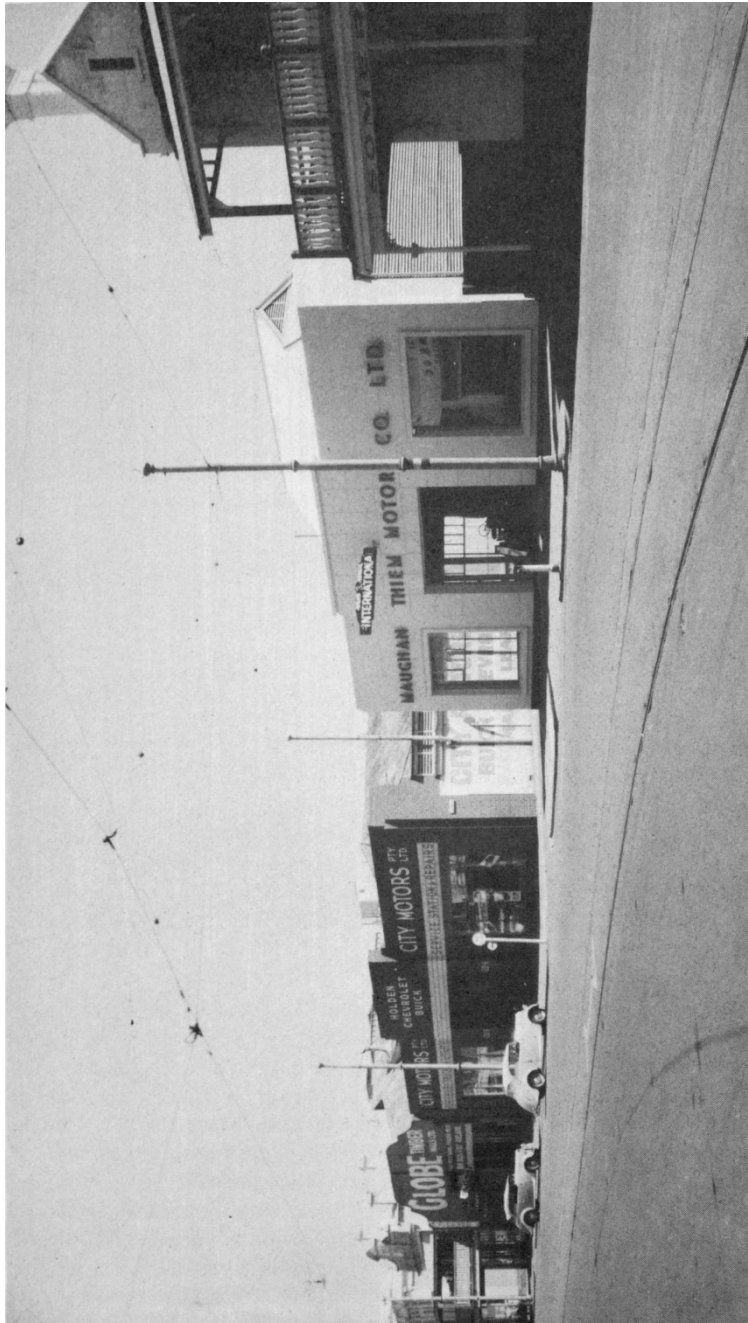
Hindsight has made it more obvious that the lifting of controls would lead to price rises which, in turn, would make it impossible to restore value to the pound. Inflation, with occasional periods of respite, became a constant feature of the economy, and in the March quarter of 1952 it reached the astronomical figure for Australia of 22.5 per cent. Nevertheless it was a period of full employment and rising wages. There was a huge backlog in housing, railways and other capital works and in the provision of peace-time consumer goods. If value was not restored to the pound it seemed nevertheless that there were plenty of additional

pounds to buy what people wanted. In those days of material prosperity a constant flow of immigrants steadily expanded the home market for most consumer goods, including the motor car.

The profit and loss accounts of the Maughan Thiem company closely reflect the ups and downs of those post-war years. Profits for the year 1946 were more than four times those for the previous year, and until 1951 they continued to climb at a very steady rate. Then the effects of what came to be called the government's 'stop-go' economic policy became apparent. This was the government effort to slow the economy down or to speed it up again in response to the need to balance overseas payments and to control inflation. In 1951 Fadden introduced his 'horror budget' which increased income tax by about ten per cent, and in the following years Maughan Thiem's profits fell considerably. The credit squeeze of the ensuing period likewise had its adverse effects on trading and business. A supplementary budget in March 1956 increased taxes on cars and petrol as well as on other items, again to the detriment of the company's trading. For a short time conditions improved and the year which ended 30 June 1960 produced quite substantial profits, but once again measures taken by the federal treasury took their toll. In November 1960 a mini-budget restricted credit and increased sales tax on new cars and station waggons from 30 to 40 per cent. The *Sydney Morning Herald* saw it as a 'panic budget' designed to put private enterprise on its back, at least temporarily, and complained about the government's fits and starts, ups and downs and twists and turns.⁷ Maughan Thiem's annual report announced a loss which could 'be traced back largely to the Government's restriction of credit last November. Trading was buoyant up to that time.' It was, continued the report, unfortunate that the opening of the new showroom and used car lot at Nailsworth coincided with the increase in sales tax and the credit squeeze. The reaction was not confined to Maughan Thiem's directors, and in the election of December 1961 the government's economic policy was rebuked by an electorate which returned the government with a majority of only one seat. As a result, in February 1962, income tax was cut by five per cent and sales tax on motor vehicles was reduced to 22½ per cent. Maughan Thiem's annual report saw this as a turning point which improved operations and once again put trading on a profitable basis, although bad debts from the previous year or two still affected the company's profitability.

In 1945, of course, all of this still lay in the future, and optimistic plans prevailed for a return to normal living. Those who had survived active service returned to civilian occupations, and peaceful reconstruction free from war-time restrictions was the order of the day. The Maughan Thiem company entered into the spirit of the times by securing another important agency. This was for International products.

7. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 November 1960, p.2.



Maughan Thiem International Sales and Service Division, Flinders Street.



Maughan Thiem International Sales and Service Division, Flinders Street.



Interior, Flinders Street International Division.

Company profit and loss accounts first contained the item 'International Sales' in the year which ended 30 June 1944. In that year the modest sum of £794 was entered against this item, but in the following two years the amounts were £3,026 and £6,413, only exceeded by gross income from repairs and used car sales. From 1947 the single International entry in company accounts was replaced by individual entries for International trucks, machinery, repairs and, later, store sales, and for some years the range of International products, and service to them, were very profitable to the company. Indeed, the premises at 134 Flinders Street became Maughan Thiem's International Sales and Service division and carried a display of trucks, tractors, machinery and spare parts. The company also issued from about this time a little annual

publication, 'M.T. A Bulletin for Farmers and Transport Users', prominent in which were advertisements for such International Harvester products as Defender refrigerators, McCormick-Deering mowers, feed-grinders, fertiliser distributors, offset disc harrows, potato planters, Farmall tractors, hay balers, and model KB trucks. As was the case with the Willys Jeep, surplus army stocks of International trucks, mainly D and K series vehicles, also became available for a time to the company for reconditioning and sale as second-hand vehicles. These army supplies were released through the Arrow motor company, complete with the spare parts necessary to recondition them. Mr Hugh Payne recalls that when he was demobilised from the army in 1946 he was put in charge of the spare parts division of the International agency in general, until this was taken over by Mr Ray Hanrahan. Until about 1957 all the company's International business did well, with occasional high and low periods. Truck sales were declining slightly by 1956, machinery sales reached their peak in 1951 and 1952 and dropped off sharply after those years, store sales remained reasonably constant, and the repair department peaked from 1951 to 1954.

A few years after taking up the International agency Maughan Thiem added two further lines of business which were of slighter financial value. The first was the McGrath trailer, in which the company traded from about 1947 to 1955. Two models were offered. The 'Busybody' was a two-wheeled trailer, and the four-wheeled 'Baby Quin' was advertised as suitable for use as a flat platform, a hay rack, a grain box, a stake rack, and a live stock float. Sales of the trailer were best in 1949 and 1950. The second line of business was the Lambretta motor scooter, which was on the company's books from about 1950 to 1953 and sold reasonably well during that time.

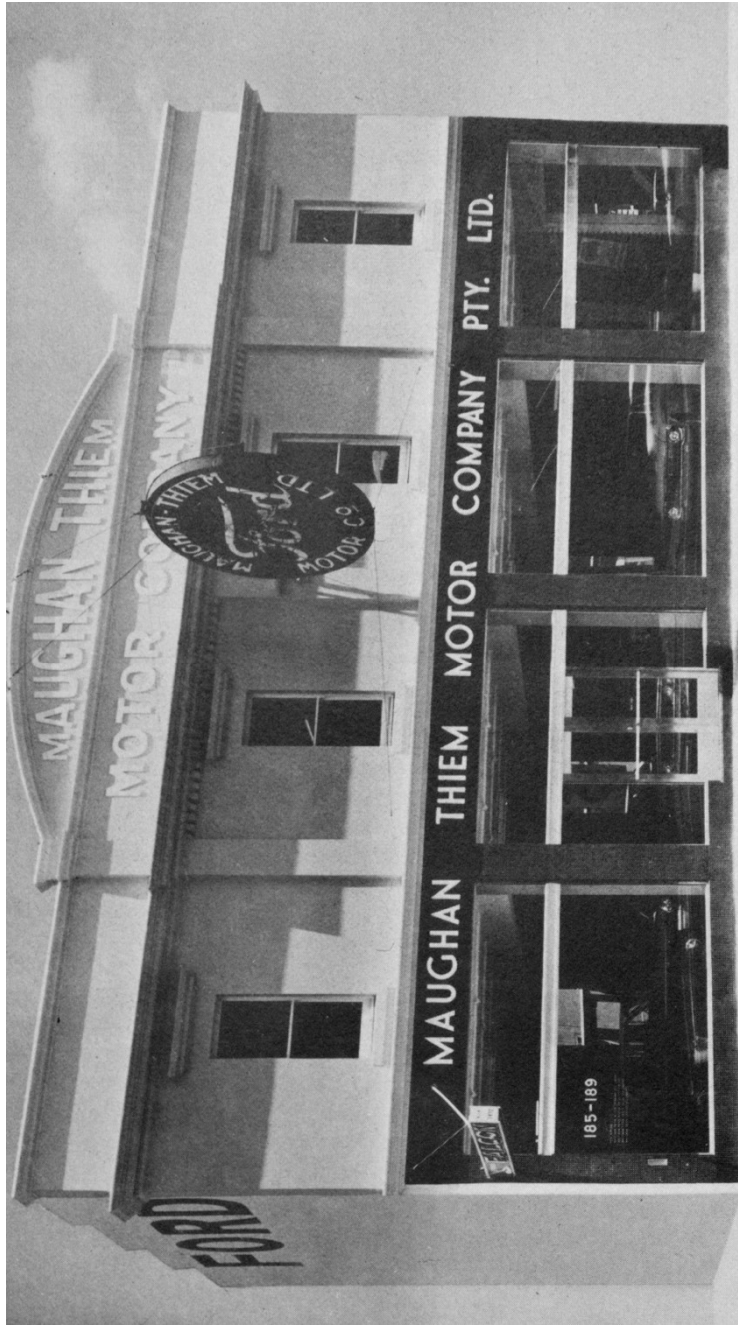
Before all its various agencies were dropped in favour of the Ford franchise, Maughan Thiem moved into a further line of motor vehicle business. In 1954 the company started to sell products of the Rootes group, and in 1957 a Main Dealer Agreement was signed between Rootes (Australia) Limited of Port Melbourne and the Maughan Thiem Motor Company. This entitled the company to retail the Rootes Group range of vehicles and service parts anywhere in Australia and to supply them to other Rootes dealers in the metropolitan area. For a year or two Maughan Thiem found that the Humber, Hillman, Sunbeam and Commer vehicles sold well, but shortly after taking the Rootes franchise the company changed over to Ford and the Rootes dealership was dropped.

In 1937 the company had extended its premises to include 175 Pulteney Street and Orsmond Street Hindmarsh. Since then the depression and war years had not encouraged any further expansion of this sort and the company had to be content with its existing space for some eighteen years. However, by 1955 Maughan Thiem was once again inclined to spread its wings and look for additional territory.

In August 1955 the company paid a deposit on a piece of land in Halifax Street for development as a parking station, and over the following months the balance was paid off and the property was levelled and fenced. It was soon realised that this was an unrealistic project, perhaps undertaken in a moment of euphoria after the many years of depression and war. The parking station was opened late in February 1958, but three months later it was put on the market. The city council eventually bought it for use as a bitumen plant. In June 1958 the company bought another property at 88 Main North Road Prospect for possible development as a showroom and used car lot. This property was also sold shortly afterwards, but only because premises better suited for the purpose were found further out on Main North Road at Nailsworth. The company subsequently operated for many years at Nailsworth, as will appear in the following chapter. The purchase of the block at Prospect in fact became the prelude to substantial extensions undertaken during the boom years of the 1960s.

An internal business reorganisation was also effected by the company in October 1956, basically for auditing and taxation purposes. The Maughan Thiem Motor Company established three fully-owned subsidiary companies. These were Maughan Thiem Motor Sales Limited, Maughan Thiem Truck Sales Limited, and Maughan Thiem Service Limited. This administrative adjustment, of course, had no bearing on the public conduct of the firm's trading and business.

The public was left in no doubt about the company's business. Above the entrance to the main showrooms and registered office at 185-9 Pulteney Street was a large revolving Neon sign, said to be the first of its kind in Adelaide. The names of the company's agencies were illuminated, and prospective buyers were advised in this way that Nash, Willys, Singer, Albion and International vehicles and products were on sale at that address. These were the names on which Maughan Thiem built its recovery after the depression and continued to grow in the post-war years.



Head Office at 185-9 Pulteney Street.

Chapter Six

The Ford Franchise

In 1957 the Managing Director, Mr Bruce Thiem, visited England. This visit became an important event for Maughan Thiem, for it resulted in the discussions with the Ford motor company which were to affect Maughan Thiem's future development.

By 1957 some of the agencies which had done the company good service were beginning to make heavy weather. The Rootes, Nash and Willys lines were losing their appeal to the public, and of the various International products only trucks continued to sell relatively well. The suggestion that the Maughan Thiem company consider applying for the Ford franchise was therefore attractive in a number of ways. Since the 1920s, when the company had eased its way out of its Ford sub-dealership, the situation had undergone important changes. The Ford car was still one of the best-sellers in Australia, but the 'Tin Lizzie' days were over and the Ford no longer attracted the jesting of the Model T days. The Ford was essentially a family car and was not priced beyond the purse of the average middle income family, and it offered a sufficient range of vehicles to interest prospective buyers. Further, the Ford organisation itself seemed a better system within which to operate. In 1924 a delegation from the Ford Motor Company of Canada had visited Australia and concluded that Ford should establish its own subsidiary assembling and body-building factories in Australia. The delegation thought that this would be preferable to the current number of separate agents with small, and sometimes uneconomical, assembly plants. The result was the establishment of the Ford Motor Company of Australia, a direct subsidiary of the Ford Motor Company of Canada, Limited, with an initial capital of five million dollars provided by the parent company. Since those days Ford Australia had grown into a large and complex concern, and the Ford franchise seemed a better package all round. Administratively it seemed simpler to deal in one make of vehicle rather than in several, and Ford was an Australian company with a wide range of products which had an assured market in the State.

Maughan Thiem's directors certainly took this view, and when Mr Bruce Thiem returned from overseas the company entered into negotiations with Ford and successfully applied for the franchise. And so the wheel turned full circle. In its Behrens & Marshall days the firm had built its reputation and success on its special knowledge of the Ford car;

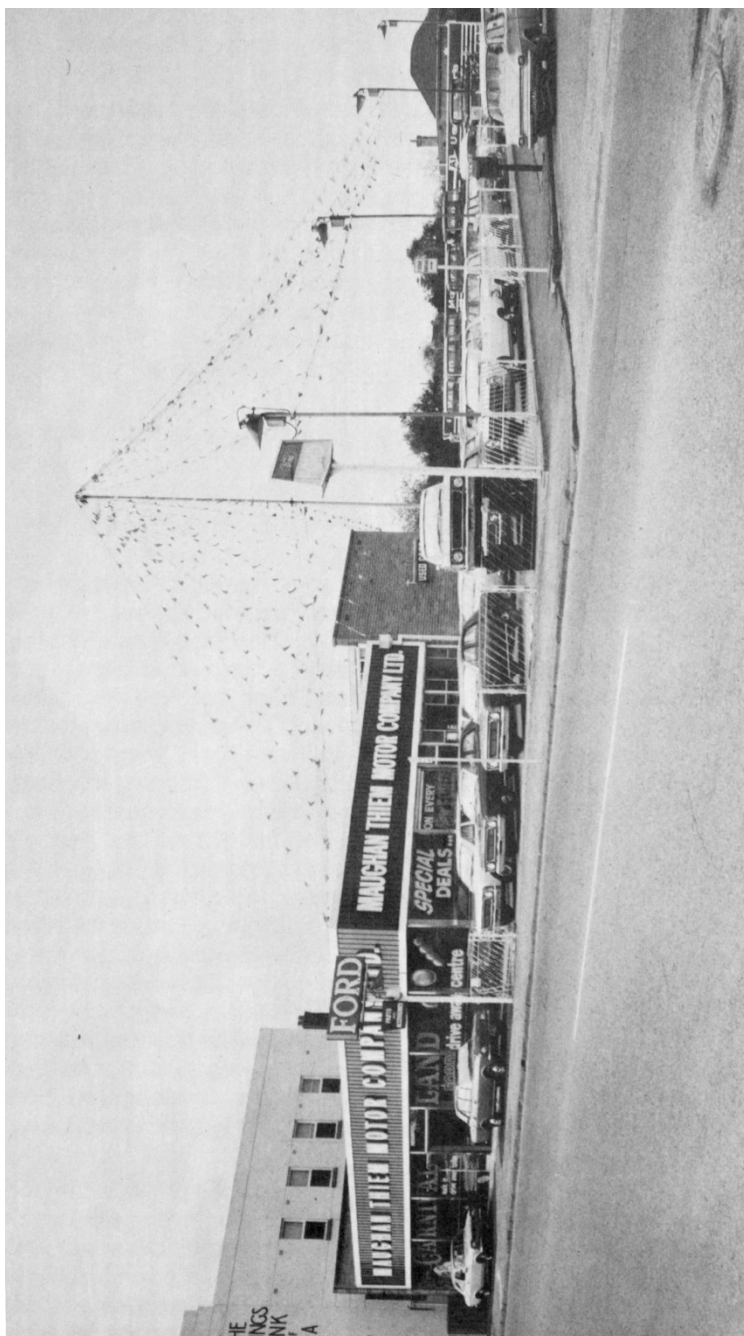
... now, in June 1958, Maughan Thiem became dealers for Ford's Number 2 Franchise in the metropolitan area. Since it was an exclusive franchise the company relinquished its other lines.

The benefits to the company were not immediately apparent. The heavy costs incurred in the changeover had an adverse effect on the first year's trading, and in fact for that year the consolidated operations of the company and its subsidiaries resulted in a loss. Sales of cars, trucks and used cars noticeably increased, but the transition period produced a steep decline in income from the parts and service divisions. However, during the following year the company reaped its reward. The sale of new and used vehicles exceeded that of the previous year by somewhere in the vicinity of 200 units, and business in parts and services improved. The result was a consolidated profit well in excess of the loss of the previous year.

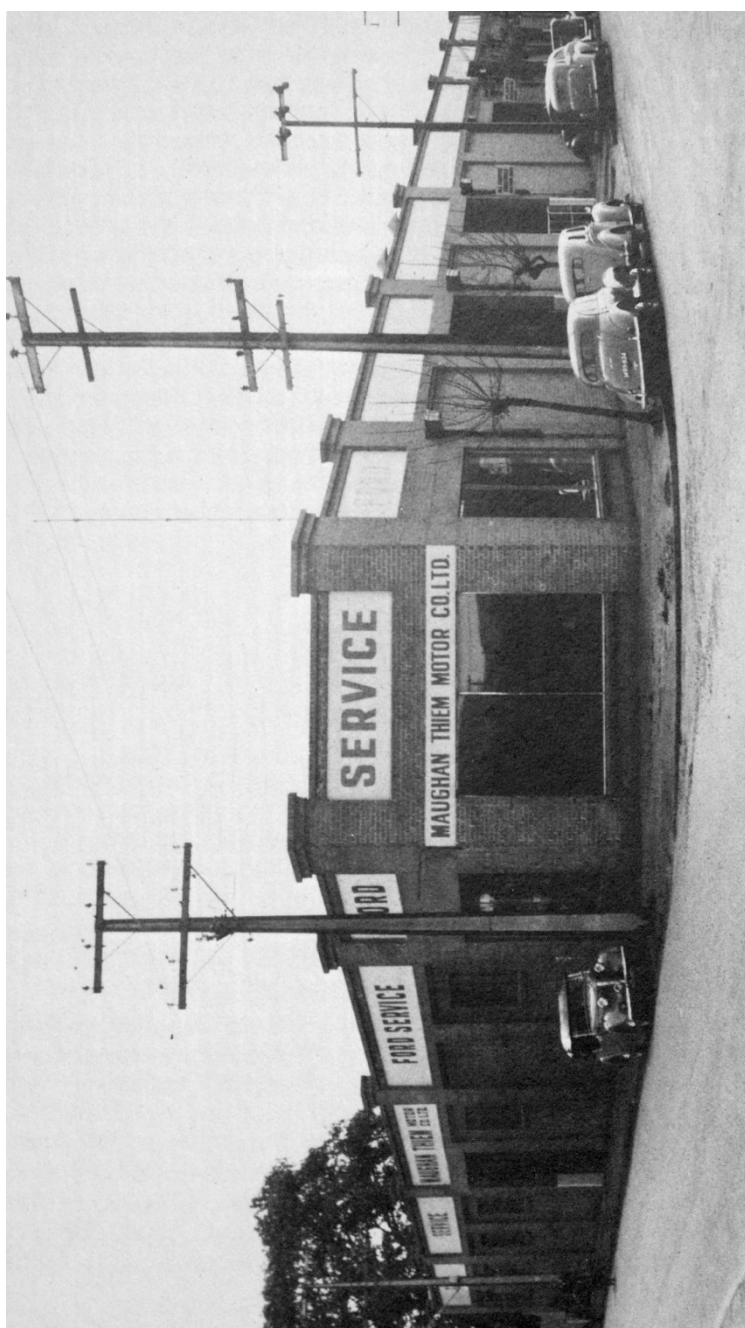
The optimism of the years following the granting of the Ford franchise was reflected in an expansion of the territory on which the company operated. It has been seen that this had already started before the changeover, but it was intensified when the Ford dealership was taken up.

In June 1958 Maughan Thiem had bought property on 88 Main North Road Prospect. By March 1959 the company concluded that it was not suitable for its purposes and sold it to J.W. Taylor and Sons at a satisfactory price. The company, however, remained interested in expanding operations into the northern area, and in December 1958 it acquired property at 159 Main North Road Nailsworth. This was cleared and tenders were invited for the building of a showroom and used car lot. The contract was given to C.P. Hill & Sons and building commenced by July 1960. By the middle of December the building was completed and operations had commenced; in all, the cost of the land and building totalled about £23,777. This was Maughan Thiem's first out-of-town showroom. The modern single-storey building had a frontage on Main North Road, and the property was on the corner of California Street, which was a further convenience for prospective buyers seeking parking off the main road. About six new Ford cars were kept on display behind the large plateglass windows of the main showroom, and the used car area held up to fifty vehicles. In addition there were facilities for setting out the full range of Ford products and a workshop capable of maintaining and servicing up to one hundred cars. Maughan Thiem continued to operate on this spacious and attractive property for about ten years.

At about the same time that building commenced at Nailsworth the company was completing alterations and improvements on its Hindmarsh property. The workshop was updated and a store was built to try to improve sales of spare parts. Amenities such as a new toilet block were added, and the Hindmarsh property was made more serviceable in various other ways. For a time Maughan Thiem believed that it had found



Showroom and Used Car Premises, 159 Main North Road, Nailsworth



The Hindmarsh Premises.

the opportunity to extend its property at Hindmarsh and thereby to cater for a growing operation there. In June 1963 the company made an offer for an adjacent property owned by Radio Electrical Wholesalers. In the event the asked price was higher than expected, and in the meantime Maughan-Thiem started to explore a possible expansion into Port Adelaide. Plans for Hindmarsh were therefore temporarily shelved. However, some ten months later projects for developing at Hindmarsh were again revived and the company bought the block opposite its Hindmarsh property on the corner of Orsmond and Adam Streets. The service division was handling an increased volume of business, and the new block seemed ideal as the site for a service centre since it was close to the spare parts store. Once again, however, the development of Hindmarsh had to be abandoned. The architects took longer than anticipated in preparing plans because their offices were damaged. Then when the plans were eventually submitted and costed the directors decided that in view of other proposed extensions elsewhere the original Hindmarsh plans would have to be scaled down for purposes of economy. A more modest set of plans was obtained, and then the final blow fell. When the builders inspected the site they found that most of the block was filled with plaster and rubble and they concluded that heavy building was out of the question. By this time Maughan Thiem was about to move its parts and service operation to Wakefield Street and extensions at Hindmarsh were not as urgent. In all, the new Hindmarsh block turned out to be an unfortunate choice and the directors were relieved to be able to dispose of it even at a loss. The original Hindmarsh premises were retained and used for the storage of new units and for crash repairs.

While the improvements and land transactions were proceeding at Hindmarsh, the company also extended its operations in the truck and used car division. To this end on 1 June 1963 leasehold possession was taken of property at 163 Main North Road Nailsworth, close to the Nailsworth showrooms. For some four years operations were continued on this site, but by October 1967 the used truck yard was moved to a larger block nearby at 179 Main North Road in the hope of boosting the used truck business. Maughan Thiem continued operations there until 1972.

For the company the years 1964 and 1965 were an important period of expansion. As told above, in April 1964 the block at Hindmarsh was purchased to expand the company's service operations. More importantly, on 18 December 1964 the company celebrated the opening of two showrooms. One of these was the showroom at Pulteney Street, which was re-opened after remodelling and enlargement. It had been increased by 10,000 square feet to a total size of 25,000 square feet and was consequently, according to a press report, South Australia's largest Ford display area.¹ The other showroom opened on 18 December 1964 was a new venture at Malvern.

1. *The Advertiser*, 18 December 1964, p.23.

On 10 April 1964 the directors confirmed action that had been taken in purchasing a property at 311 Unley Road Malvern, on the corner of Winchester Street, for the price of £7,500. Plans for a modern used car showroom were prepared by Caradoc, Ashton, Fisher, Woodhead and Beaumont Smith, and in August the directors accepted a tender from Hatwell Constructions to carry out the work. The building and its surrounds were tastefully conceived to blend in with Malvern's garden atmosphere. The showroom building itself was of modern design surrounded by plate glass on three sides, and this was set in a continental arrangement, said to be the first of its kind in South Australia and to be an imitation of the European street cafe. The outdoor stands were of specially designed lawn, rather than of the more conventional asphalt, and on these some twelve used cars were on display each day. Behind the building another thirty used cars were held in readiness, and it was the company's intention to cater for the tastes of the Malvern populace by selling only good quality late model used cars in this well-designed setting. The Malvern operation was placed under the management of Mr Norman Ahrendt, who until then had been assistant manager of the Pulteney Street used car division.

In addition to these developments, shortly after the new Malvern division was opened Maughan Thiem took up a less fortunate branch dealership at Ashford. This was really in spite of the better judgment of the directors. In February 1965 they were approached by Paramount Motors of 109 Anzac Highway, on the corner of South Road, which found itself in some difficulty and wanted Maughan Thiem to take over the business. At the time Maughan Thiem declined to do so because of the 'complicated position' of the Paramount group of companies. There was little financial incentive to do so. However by June 1965 the Ford Motor Company was able to advise Maughan Thiem's directors that the Ashford premises were available for lease and that the staff there could be taken over with the premises. The directors were still cautious, and it was only after a deal of discussion that they agreed to lease the premises and purchase the stock of spare parts, offer employment to the staff, and operate a branch dealership there. The Ashford premises were consequently leased for twelve months with the right of renewal for a further twelve months, and operations commenced there 2 July 1965. The Annual General Meeting in September 1965 was told that the company hoped to turn it into a profitable addition to the firm's business, but already by then it was clear that such hopes would be difficult to realise. Sales were not up to expectations, and in fact the company was glad to drop the branch dealership after the first twelve months had expired. A loss of some \$20,000 was incurred at Ashford during that year.

Following this period of expansion in 1964 and 1965, during the following year the company began to consolidate its business once again within more restricted boundaries. There were good business reasons for this decision, and it was largely made possible when Dalgety & New Zealand Loan Limited, the oldest surviving Ford dealer, decided to withdraw from the Ford franchise. The premises occupied by Dalgety at 229 Wakefield Street consequently became available for purchase or lease from the Ford company, which approached Maughan Thiem with the suggestion that the company consider taking over the site. On 3 May 1966 the directors decided to lease the premises for ten years with the right of renewal. The lease commenced on 6 June 1966, and on that day the parts and service divisions of the company started operations at the new Wakefield Street location. The decision to operate from Wakefield Street made it easier in turn to relinquish some other projects and scattered operations. In June 1966 the branch dealership at Ashford was abandoned, and at about the same time the block of land at Hindmarsh was sold. Further, by July 1966 the Ford company had agreed to make an offer for the property at Unley Road Malvern. The Malvern operation,

too, was proving to be a burden to the company. Sales were reasonably satisfactory, but the overhead involved in running the division as a separate establishment proved to be excessive. Ford made final settlement on this property on 11 November 1966 and Maughan Thiem withdrew from Malvern. For the moment the company found it more economical to work from its new Wakefield Street headquarters and fewer outlying sites, and it saw no reason at that time to retract its boundaries any further. The company still kept its new and used car showroom at 159 Main North Road Nailsworth and the truck yard at 163 Main North Road. It retained Hindmarsh for predelivery, storage of new vehicles, and panel repairs, and it also kept the re-modelled showroom at 185-9 Pulteney Street and the used car showroom at 175 Pulteney Street and the truck showroom at Flinders Street.

Maughan Thiem Truck Yard.





Maughan Thiem Showroom, 185-9 Pulteney Street

By this time the Maughan Thiem Motor Company, which together with its three wholly-owned subsidiaries had converted to a proprietary company on 18 October 1963, was well established in the Ford business. In June 1961 it was given the full Ford franchise to handle all Ford lines. This meant that it could distribute the Falcon and Fairlane as well as the English range of vehicles, and the annual report for 1962 observed that the new model Falcon had greatly improved trading during the previous year. Indeed, the twelve months to 30 September 1963 set new records for the company. Maughan Thiem won every dealer competition run by the Ford Motor Company, and for ten of the twelve months topped the Ford sales figures for the metropolitan area. It was not only the new and used vehicle business that prospered. In 1961 and the later 1960s the company did well in the parts and service divisions, and 1970 was a record year. In June 1968 it was the opinion of the company's auditors that Maughan Thiem was firmly entrenched as the largest Ford dealer in the State.

From 1 April 1969 Maughan Thiem extended its Ford dealership even further when the company was appointed as one of the two heavy truck specialists for the Adelaide metropolitan area. Nevertheless the truck business was not one of the company's success stories in this period. In 1967 the used truck yard had been moved from 163 to the larger 179 Main North Road Nailsworth in an attempt to improve the trade, but this hope was not fully realised. Moreover the Ford range of commercial vehicles and trucks found a disappointingly meagre market and Maughan-Thiem found it very difficult to promote it. In May 1971 the company's directors considered a request from the Ford company to become the South Australian truck distributors, but by then it was already evident that the company might not continue much longer in truck sales and the request was declined. The necessary financial outlay would not have been warranted, it was decided. The following year the lease on the Nailsworth truck yard was in fact allowed to expire.

It was not only in the truck and commercial vehicle business that the motor trade was becoming increasingly competitive. Japanese vehicles penetrated the market to a greater extent, and Ford also faced determined rivalry from the other popular locally-produced cars. The millionth Holden car, for example, was produced 25 October 1962, and for many years the Chrysler Valiant was a firm competitor. To be sure, the appearance of a new model from time to time helped Ford dealers to take from their rivals a larger slice of the market. The XR Falcon in 1966, a new Cortina in August 1967 and the XT Falcon in 1968 boosted Maughan Thiem's sales, and the year ended 30th June 1970 saw a record of 2,926 vehicle sales by the company. In other years, however, the competition was harder to meet and, further, the increasing cost of selling and of administration offset the profits arising from any increase in vehicle turnover. In this respect 1971 to 1973 were hard years. In one year gross profit rose by 9.4 per cent but expenses, mainly salaries and wages, rose by 13.5 per cent.

Directors-reports drew attention to the drain on the company's profitability caused by the increased costs of advertising, salaries, and maintenance and guarantee of used cars. In 1972 the country's economy worsened and the sale of vehicles actually dropped.

For a while the company sought to attract more business by changing the location of some of the sites on which it operated. In 1969 a property was purchased at 256-258 Wakefield Street to provide parking near the service division at 229 Wakefield Street and as a possible site for later expansion. In the same year the purchase of a further used car outlet was decided. This was at 59-67 Port Road Southwark, a large property with a frontage of 300 feet on Port Road. Operations commenced in May 1970, although the office building was not completed until October of that year. At about the same time the company decided to withdraw from its Nailsworth site. In April 1970, after discussing the profitability and prospects of the branch at 159 Main North Road Nailsworth, the directors decided to sell it if a satisfactory price could be obtained, and during the following year the premises were sold at an acceptable capital gain. The leased premises at 179 Main North Road were vacated in May 1972. Maughan Thiem had terminated its agreement with Ford for the distribution of heavy trucks in July 1971, and the Nailsworth truck yard was no longer required. The remaining stock of used trucks was moved to Port Road Southwark.

While this partial relocation was taking place the directors recognised that, in the prevailing economic climate, a bolder and more direct reorganisation at the centre of their business might be desirable. Despite the slight consolidation in 1966 the company was still dissipating its resources over too wide an area and entailing increased overhead and other expenses to do so. Further, if the company were to be consolidated under one roof then a suburban site rather than one in the city had obvious economic attractions. Such thoughts might have remained matters for occasional discussion at directors' meetings, however, had the chance not come in 1972 to put them into practice.

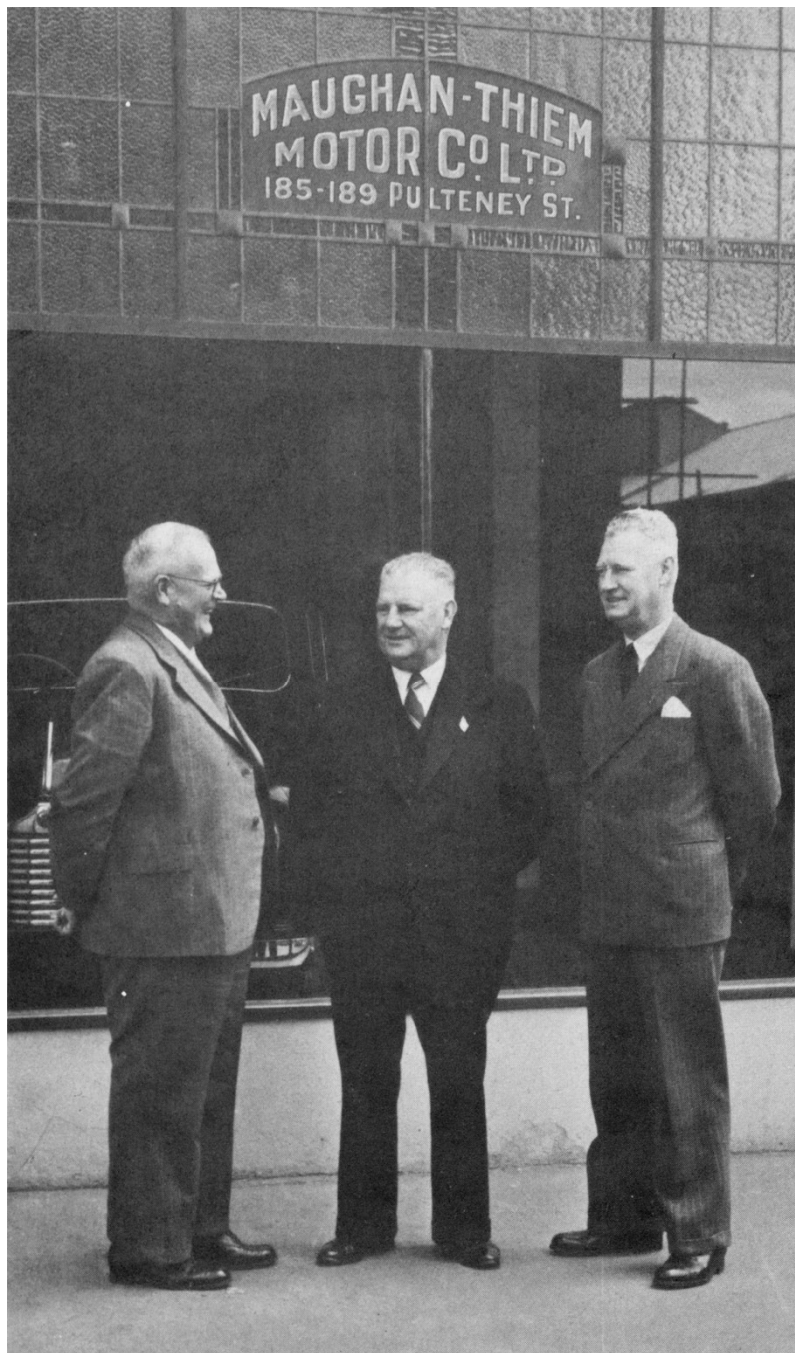
This came about when Bowden Ford changed its premises. That company sought permission from Ford to transfer its dealership to the Paramotors site at West Terrace, and at the same time it wanted a city location to complement its proposed relocation to West Terrace. Ford had been made aware of Maughan Thiem's thinking about a suburban consolidation and consequently approached the company about relinquishing its Wakefield Street tenancy to accommodate Bowden Ford. A special meeting of Maughan Thiem's directors on 28 August 1972 considered the details of a proposition put up by Ford. This was that Maughan Thiem vacate Wakefield Street and relocate its entire operation at 1013 Port Road Cheltenham. The directors saw this as the opportunity they had been looking for. They could see the possibility that business could be lost during the move and re-establishment on the new site, but they believed nevertheless that such a move would be

more economical in the long run and that any lost ground would be recovered. They therefore accepted Ford's proposal, and in September 1972 the company moved to its present premises at 1013 Port Road Cheltenham.

With the business consolidated on Port Road the company was able to dispose of its other properties. The leased premises in Flinders Street and Pulteney Street were vacated. By November 1972 the parking lot at 256-8 Wakefield Street had been sold, and on 15 December 1972 the sale of the Southwark used car lot was completed. The premises at Hindmarsh, which had served the company since 1937, were also sold. The company had in fact considered getting rid of this earlier when the proposed Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study (M.A.T.S.) plan was under discussion and it had seemed likely that the Highways Department would require it for an interchange at Hindmarsh. At the time the company had eventually seen advantages in retaining the property until it was compulsorily acquired; but now the time to dispose of it was seen to have come, and by August 1974 sale of this property to the Highways Department was finalised. Accommodation was now required for the company's crash repair, predelivery and used car operations, as well as for the storage of new cars, and the new site on Port Road was consequently extended by the purchase of four blocks at the rear of the premises in Fourth Avenue Cheltenham.

As was foreseen, the move to Cheltenham had an adverse effect on all departments of the company's business during the first year on the new site, but the following year's trading returned an all-time record net profit. Since then the company has shared the general Australian experience of inflation and a stringent economy. In 1980 the total new car market in South Australia dropped by 10.1 per cent, and Maughan Thiem had its fifth successive year of declining new vehicle sales. However, the company has always known that there is more to the motor trade than the sale of new vehicles, and as this aspect of the business has temporarily declined the parts, service and used car divisions have restored buoyancy to the company's trading.

Maughan Thiem has still occasionally found it desirable to lease additional sites for the display and sale of used vehicles. A small used car lot was taken for a while from 18 February 1974 at 590 Port Road Allenby Gardens, and from March 1976 to March 1979 property was taken in Regency Road Kilkenny for the sale of used cars and caravans. Apart from such minor excursions, however, the entire business has remained on the one site, and it has continued to prosper there as it has done over the seventy years of its history.



F.M. Maughan, A.R. Thiem, B.M. Thiem in 1951.

Chapter Seven

Port Road Cheltenham

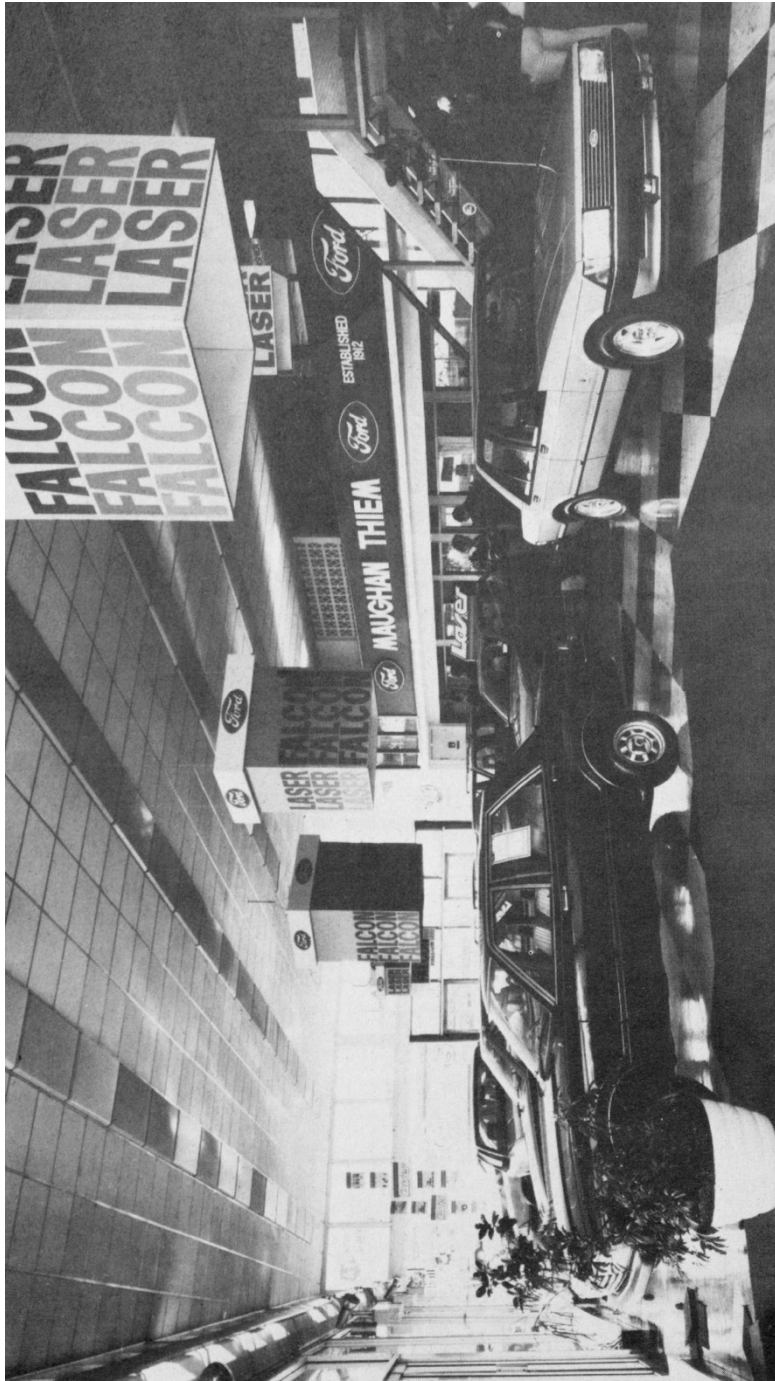
At the end of its seventieth year Maughan Thiem Motor Company is the oldest surviving Ford dealer in Adelaide. The first eleven years of the company's history were closely associated with the Model T Ford car, and the company has held the Ford franchise for the past twenty-four years. In all, the company has spent half of its long life under the Ford emblem.

Despite its venerable antiquity the company presents a vigorous and modern image to those who visit its premises on Port Road Cheltenham, and this historical account concludes with a brief description of the company's operations on that site at the end of its first threescore years and ten.

The market for new cars today is highly competitive, and the proportion of company profits earned by new car sales has fluctuated considerably over the years and will doubtless continue to do so. In the company's seventieth year this was a little under twenty per cent. Maughan Thiem carries a range of models, comprising the Falcon, Fairlane and L.T.D. in the large range, the Cortina and its successor from late 1981 in the medium range, and in the small car range the Laser, which was released in March 1981 as Ford's first entry into the east-west front-wheel-drive engine range of vehicles. The company also handles several light to medium truck models. The new car sales department is managed by Mr Bruce McFarlane, and it operates from a large modern showroom with ample storage areas at the rear of the premises to hold new stock. A considerable proportion of new sales is to fleet owners, and Mr Ken Evans manages the fleet department. Mrs Gloria Cubitt gives specialist advice to customers in matters of finance and insurance.

The used car sales department is managed by Mr John Lahiff. The company maintains the quality of its reputation by carefully selecting the trade-in vehicles which it displays on its small retail used car yard on Port Road. Many of the vehicles which customers trade in are wholesaled to other used car dealers. The company's used car business is not confined to Ford vehicles but accommodates whatever make a buyer may have to trade.

The parts sales department, always an important part of Maughan Thiem's operations, earns in recent years approximately one half of the company's profits. It is managed by Mr Ray Hanrahan, who is assisted by Mr Bob Carter. The company has earned a reputation for carrying stocks of



Showroom, Port Road Cheltenham, 1981

parts not usually available from other dealers, in particular those for older model cars. Over the years the company has gained a large and valued country clientele which includes other Ford dealers.

The service department operates in a large drive-through workshop and a panel shop. It is managed by Mr Tony Goode, assisted by Mr George Murray in the panel shop. The company's mechanics, who have received extensive Ford training, carry out all types of service work, from the simple lubrication and oil change to specialist repairs which may be beyond the capabilities of the small suburban garage. As a service to customers the company runs a daily courtesy car service between Cheltenham and the city.

Above the new car showroom is located the bright modern office block which accommodates the company's administrative functions, from the settlement of accounts and the company payroll through to meetings of the board of directors. This is under the direction of the managing director Mr Ion Ullett, the secretary and accountant Mr Murray Forbes, and the credit manager Mr Bruce Chambers. All company transactions are punched by key-punch operators through a computer terminal for transmission to the Ford Company in Melbourne, which in turn produces computerised financial reports, debtors' statements, and other such information for the Maughan Thiem company. Other activities, such as the parts department stock control, are now also computerised.

It is a far cry from the modern operation at Cheltenham back to those early days in July 1912 when the founding partners and a staff of two first commenced in a little iron building in Flinders Street. The story of the intervening seventy years is an important chapter in the history of the motor trade in South Australia. Moreover, during those years Maughan Thiem Motor Company has established an enviable public reputation and has been adaptable and versatile in response to crisis and opportunity. The company has good reason to face the future with confidence.

Maughan Thiem Motor Company Pty Limited

Partners and Directors Since the Inception of the Firm

In the order in which they were admitted as Partners or Directors

Hubert Andrew BEHRENS	Founding Partner 1 July 1912. Retired from firm September 1920.
Eric Myles MARSHALL	Founding Partner 1 July 1912. Retired from firm November 1917.
Alfred Ross THIEM	Partner 21 April 1913. Joint Managing Director with F.M. Maughan when firm incorporated 1 August 1928. Chairman of Directors from February 1946 to September 1971; for many years Chairman of Directors and Managing Director. Died 4 September 1971.
Frederick Milton MAUGHAN	Partner 1 January 1914. Joint Managing Director with A.R. Thiem when firm incorporated 1 August 1928. Retained this position until his death. Died 7 April 1956.
Bruce Mayoh THIEM	Partner 1 April 1926. Director when firm incorporated 1 August 1928. Joint Managing Director 1955, Managing Director from 1956 until September 1971.
Ernest George EY	Company Secretary from 1939 until 1957. Chairman of Directors from September 1971.
John Walker FOX	Director when firm incorporated 1 August 1928. First Chairman of Directors, from August 1928 until September 1939. Died 12 September 1939.
Maurice THIEM	Director when firm incorporated 1 August 1928. Chairman of Directors from September 1939 until February 1946. Died 27 February 1946.
Ion Gordon ULLETT	Director 10 April 1964. Associate Director of subsidiary companies 3 April 1968.
Graham Milton MAUGHAN	Director 10 April 1964. Associate Director of subsidiary companies 3 April 1968. General Manager 24 November 1966. Managing Director September 1971.
Basil John PETHERICK	Associate Director of subsidiary companies 10 April 1964. Director 15 October 1968. Company Secretary from 1957 until July 1980.
	Associate Director of subsidiary company 1 April 1969. Director 30 October 1975. Died 29 June 1977

Raymond Edward HANRAHAN Associate	Director of subsidiary company 1 April 1969. Director 30 October 1975. Spare Parts Manager.
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Bruce Fulton McFARLANE	Associate Director of subsidiary company 29 June 1979. Director 21 November 1980. General Sales Manager.
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Associate Directors of Subsidiary Companies Formed in October 1956

Keith William CAMPBELL	Works Director. Joined the company 1922. Died 31 March 1968.
Thomas Clarence READE	Sales Director. Joined the company 1932. Retired April 1966.
Robert Michael SHARMAN	Sales Manager. Retired August 1971.

Some Former Long-Serving Members of Staff

The following is a list of past members of staff who served the company for ten years or longer.

Aunger, M.F.	about 1945 to 1958	Sales
Baldock, T.H.	1914 to 1928	Spare Parts
Bradley, C.	about 1917 to 1945	Assembly
Brecht, S.H.	1960 to 1972	Predelivery
Brown, R.J.	about 1945 to 1958	Assembly
Burdon, H.G.	1926 to 1938	Secretary
Burns, J.J.	1966 to 1981	Service
Campbell, K.W.	1922 to 1968	Works Manager, Director
Chizmesya, N.	1959 to 1976	Mechanic
Clipstone, D.	1966 to 1980	Service
Copeland, Miss M.	about 1918 to 1960	Private Secretary
De Boo, R.L.	1961 to 1980	Spare Parts
Gardener, F.W.J.	1959 to 1978	Mechanic
Hersey, J.A.	about 1916 to 1952	Workshop Foreman Cleaner
Herzenjak, K.	1965 to 1978	Clerical
Humphries, Miss P. Jones, A.J.	about 1945 to 1956	Spare Parts
Knapman, R.T.	1957 to 1979	Sales
Leonard, K.F.	about 1947 to 1957	Mechanic
Lombardi, R.	1966 to 1977	Service
Maughan, G.M.	1966 to 1977	Secretary, Director Clerical
McLeod, B.J.	1955 to 1980	Spare Parts
Miller, S.A.	1966 to 1978	Accountant
Mitchell, R.M.G.	1962 to 1977	Service
Norman, L.R.	1963 to 1975	Mechanic
Ottoway, W.J.	1966 to 1980	Assembly, Sales
Payne, H.	about 1942 to 1957	Service Manager, Director
Petherick, B.J.	1933 to 1980	Panelbeating Foreman
Petherick, KA	1936 to 1977	Service Manager
Pitcher, J. L.	1947 to 1979	Sales
Reade, C.V.	1953 to 1979	Sales Manager
Reade, T.C.	1957 to 1971	Spare Parts
Rinaldi, J.	1932 to 1966	Mechanic
Rundle, M.J.	1963 to 1979	Sales
Russell, F.T.	1963 to 1979	Sales
Sanders, I.M.	1961 to 1978	Mechanic
Scorgie, C.E.	1961 to 1971	Mechanic
Scrase, J.	1965 to 1979	Parts Storeman
Spender, L.F.	1966 to 1979	Service Manager Mechanic
Tough, A.E.	1969 to 1981	Clerical
Tough, G.	1969 to 1980	Panelbeating
Underwood, E.W.	1927 to 1971	Spare Parts Manager
Vaughton, T.W.	1926 to 1945	Mechanic
Wade, D.M.	1950 to 1972	
Wade, W.B.	1945 to 1979	
	about 1933 to 1960	
	1945 to 1968	

The Present Staff of Maughan Thiem Motor Company Pty Limited

In the order in which they joined the company

NAME	DATE COMMENCED	NAME	DATE COMMENCED
G. Schahinger	April 1938	G. Gray	May 1976
K. Saunders	September 1941	G.A.C. Hall	May 1976
R. Hanrahan	October 1943	K. Mazey	June 1976
A.B. Chambers	August 1957	J. D. Lahiff	September 1976
G. Cubitt	February 1960	A R. Merchant	May 1977
W.R.M. Carter	September 1960	J. M. Zammit	May 1977
G. Murray	March 1961	R. Klassman	June 1977
M.D. Kerber	July 1962	M. Hanrahan	August 1977
I.G. Ullett	November 1962	S.W. Bailey	January 1978
G. Nelson	December 1964	M. Townsend	January 1978
P. Brunoli	January 1965	S. Nuske	March 1978
D. Clements	March 1965	P. Lia	April 1978
J. Andreassen	April 1965	N. Kotrotsos	January 1979
D. Bradbrook	June 1966	T. Reynolds	January 1979
M. Grove	June 1966	M.J. Perry	February 1979
L. Jones	June 1966	J. Roupas	February 1979
M. Pfeiffer	June 1966	A.S.W. Goode	July 1979
C. Arthur	September 1967	S. Hawke	July 1979
A. Norman	June 1968	S. R. Ramsay	November 1979
K. Evans	October 1968	D. Farquhar	December 1979
A.J. Gollin	April 1969	D. R. Carter	January 1980
M. Brooks	September 1969	C. Graham	January 1980
D.J. Baird	February 1970	L. Coulter	February 1980
J. Cristarella	January 1971	R. Zauch	April 1980
D. Graham	July 1971	K.H. Hicks	May 1980
J. Rice	August 1971	C. Gray	July 1980
T. Biasci	February 1973	A.J. Kohler	July 1980
I.M. Forbes	September 1973	D. Poletto	July 1980
R. Phillips	October 1973	S. Thompson	August 1980
P. Minervini	January 1974	A.F. Buttfield	September 1980
R. Mazey	February 1974	K. L. Brogan	December 1980
P.J. Thomas	February 1974	P. Aleksander	January 1981
A. Bailey	April 1974	J. Andermahr	February 1981
I. Amato	May 1974	M. Hehir	March 1981
J. McDonald	July 1974	L.C. Brassington	March 1981
B.R. Green	September 1974	P.S. Willson	March 1981
B.F. McFarlane	December 1975	S.J. Sparre	April 1981
J.P. Mullen	January 1975	A.F. Polain	May 1981
S.J. Andreassen	January 1976	P. Aubert	August 1981
M.I. Salotti	January 1976	C. Panayotidis	September 1981
G.P. Woodards	January 1976	G.D. Cook	November 1981
G. Koutlakis	March 1976	C. Albanese	December 1981
P.A. Pace	April 1976	P. Mucciante	December 1981
		A.E. Bookes	January 1982

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