Michael Patrick Fahy, Pioneer Settler of Moorak, Mt Gambier

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Great Grandfather Michael Patrick Fahy was a proud Irish Catholic and founder at Moorak, Mt Gambier. He was key in establishing the first school building (as secretary of the School Committee) and first public hall at Moorak, one of the first dairy farmers in the region and president and secretary of the Mt Gambier Agricultural Bureau. He set up an annual community picnic and the first tennis and football clubs at Moorak. There wasn't much that happened in Moorak without M.P. Fahy having a hand in it. He was an energetic leader and organiser and determined to get his way in terms of what he thought was best for the local community. Throughout his life he was a miner, dairy farmer, confectioner and fruiterer with his own shop, and hawker. Perhaps his greatest achievements were those he made in Moorak as a pioneer settler. He was a family man and community minded, described as a 'live wire' and was a showman who had acted in comedy and had a love of singing and performing recitations in front of an audience. He also loved sport and was very competitive.

Michael Patrick Fahy, known as Mick Fahy, was born at Templers, South Australia. His father Edmund Fahy had arrived in South Australia in 1857 from County Tipperary, Ireland, after the potato famine, with his sisters Mary, 20 years old and Bridget, aged 10. Edmund Fahy was 24 years old when he arrived and married Margaret O'Leary from County Kilkenny, Ireland, in St Patrick's Church, Grote Street, Adelaide in 1860.

The Fahy family lived at Templers which is half-way between Gawler and Kapunda. Edmund Fahy was a Labourer bonded to the copper mining town of Kapunda. A few of the children of Edmund and Margaret Fahy were baptised at St Peter & Paul's Gawler Town, including Michael Patrick Fahy, on the 18th January 1870. There were five children, with Michael being the fourth child: he was the namesake of baby Michael who had died in 1866 in Adelaide, after only 16 days. Any local illnesses at the time may have been treated locally by an unregistered 'Dr' - Dr William Carmichael who served in Kapunda and Freeling.[1] Other children included Alice May, Edward John (Ted) and James Joseph Dominic (Jim). The fortunes of Edmund Fahy improved, and he went from being a Labourer to a Farmer at Kapunda. The family lived on Hill Street, Kapunda.

As an 11-year-old, Michael Fahey [sic] from Kapunda was admitted to the Royal Adelaide Hospital due to 'strumous glands' (a tuberculous swelling of the lymph glands) and discharged 19th September 1881. His parents would have been extremely worried as at the time tuberculosis was the main cause of death for adolescents and young people.[2] However, he survived and thrived, was active in sport, and played football for Kapunda in their first match in 1893.

Initially, Michael Fahy worked on the copper mines at Kapunda. When he was 24 years of age, he was charged by police for 'riotous behaviour' at Hamilton, 23km north of Kapunda, and attended the Magistrates Court at Kapunda. He pleaded guilty, saying that he was sorry that he had broken the law, but that he was provoked. As it was his first offence, he was fined 1 pound. Hamilton was a stop for mining carts going from Adelaide to Kapunda and back, so the riotous behaviour was likely in relation to work.

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[1] Jennings, R. (1998). The Medical Profession and the State 1836-1975, Department of Public Health, University of Adelaide.

[2] https://www.healthmuseumsa.org.au/menu/1991-tuberculosis-control-in-south-australia/

On October 31st, 1896, Michael's first partner Agnes Geier had a son, Harold Edward Fahy at St Leonards (Glenelg). There is no record of their marriage or of the deaths of Agnes and Harold, although both may have died in childbirth.[3]

In 1899, M. P. Fahy plays a minor part in a 'farcical comedy' by the Celtic Dramatic Club, called 'Turned Up.' Its season at the Bijou Theatre is advertised in *The Advertiser.* The review of the play was favourable, with the reviewer saying that

> *'Turned Up,' a sprightly little comedy, was staged at the Bijou Theatre by the Celtic Dramatic Club on Saturday evening. The members of the company had already acquitted themselves well as amateurs, and in this piece…again created a favourable impression…the minor characters were well sustained by Messrs. W. Higgins, M.P. Fahy and J. Brown and Master A. Sheridan.*
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> *South Australian Register, 13th November 1899*

Michael met Helena Marie Schulz, known as 'Lena' some time at the end of the 1890s or early 1900s. Helena was from the Tanunda in the Barossa Valley, the granddaughter of the famous pioneer winemaker and farmer, Johann Gramp who had established the first commercial winery at Jacob's Creek, Rowland Flat (of Gramps, Orlando and Jacob's Creek fame). Johann Gramp was a hardworking and self-made pioneer, and perhaps a role model for Michael Patrick Fahy.

Michael and Helena travelled to Western Australia, where Michael was a miner at Boulder City, Kalgoorlie on the gold mines. They may have stowed away there in the year 1900, without being married,[4] when he was 30 and she was 23 years of age. However in 1901 there is also an entrepreneurial M. P. Fahy who establishes a stand at the corner of Wakefield and Pulteney Streets for the Royal Visit, selling tickets at 3s per seat (as this was advertised in the *Kapunda Herald*, it does appear to be Michael Patrick Fahy).

In 1903, Helena's grandfather Johann Gramp died, and the following year of 1904, Michael, aged 34 years, married Lutheran Helena Marie Schulz in Guildford, Western Australia. This marriage between catholic and protestant would make Helena a 'black sheep' in the family, although she continued to regularly visit the Barossa Valley throughout her life.

There is a photograph of the couple with their baby Dorothea (born the same year that they married, 1904) that says on the back 'from the real Boulder City' (see photograph below). By 1907 Michael and Helena were back in the Barossa Valley, South Australia where their son Edmund Wilfred Fahy was born at Tanunda. At one stage they also lived at Kangarilla, with Helena's sister's family (Brookman family).

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[3] This could have been Bridget Agnes Geier who was born in Kapunda in 1874 (whose mother was also Bridget and born in County Clare, Ireland). She later married Arthur Staples and adopted a child in 1900.

[4] A record of a Fahy and Schulz travelling on the Pilbarra, arriving 4 August 1900 at Fremantle. National Archives of Australia passenger records.

Helena Schulz, Michael Fahy and baby Dorothy 'From the Real Boulder City' Kalgoorlie, W.A. 1905
Source: Samantha Battams (author collection)

Michael Fahy was variously listed in the Sands and MacDougall directories as a Contractor, Fruiterer and Confectioner, Canvasser, and Carrier. At the time of his youngest daughter Iris' birth in 1909, the Fahy residence was Myers Street, Grey Ward, Adelaide.

Michael's mother Margaret died in January 1910. He likely received an inheritance, as the same year he purchased land at Moorak, Mount Gambier. There he would become a founding pioneer dairy farmer, one of the first two people to set up a farm there, along with his friend Graney. Land at Moorak (section 906, which costs 30 shillings) was allotted to him in 1911 by the Land Board, and the Fahy family would stay there until 1921. In many ways this period appears to be the peak of his career and life in a local community.

In Moorak Michael was president and secretary of the Mt Gambier Agricultural Bureau. He also grew kale, potatoes and flax, among other things. He was often proposing new farming strategies and facilities for the district, as well as business strategies. He gave a paper on raising dairy cows at the Agricultural Bureau, which was well written and printed in the local newspaper, *Border Watch*.

Michael also supervised the building of the first public hall at Moorak, with some dispute over where it would be built in the process. There had originally been a plan to build a hall at Moorak, but then a decision was made to amalgamate with the O.B. Flat district to build the hall, a decision that was rescinded as the O.B. Flat residents wanted the hall built on the former O.B. Flat cattle station – further away from Moorak. As Mr Glynn said at a meeting

> *At first it was decided to build a hall on Moorak. Now you want to build the Moorak hall on O.B. Flat. (Laughter).*
>
> *Border Watch, 5th November 1913*

A proposal was made that the public hall be built at the cross roads, where it now stands, but a decision could not be arrived at – many Moorak settlers were unwilling for it to be built there. The Chairman and committee members all resigned, and it was decided that the money and books could be handed to a responsible party to take up the question of where the hall would be built. Finally, Michael Patrick Fahy took charge and got the Moorak residents on board with the hall being built at the cross roads. He then supervised the actual building of the hall.

Eldest daughter Dorothea Fahy described the beauty of Moorak and also the harsh conditions for farmers when in 1915 she wrote to 'Aunt Dorothy' of *The Chronicle* newspaper:

> *Dear Aunt Dorothy*
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> *I haven't written to you before. Please will you accept me as a new niece? I go to the Moorak school and I am in the second class. My teacher's name is Mr. Michell. The school is a nice new building. The children have a little garden each. I walk to school about a mile. My age is 10 years and 5 months. Moorak is four miles from Mount Gambier. When we drive to Mount Gambier, we pass the Blue Lake and the other three lakes, the Valley, the Leg of Mutton and Brown's Lake. They are very pretty lakes. The season is very dry, the paddocks are very bare, and a lot of stock is dying. I am sending 3d in stamps for Minda. I hope the little children a Minda are well. With love to you and Uncle George – I remain, your loving niece,*
>
> *Dorothea Fahy*
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> *The Chronicle, 22nd May 1915*

In 1916, there was a very active day at the Moorak school, where the school committee and parents and friends were involved in digging and planting a hedge and a range of trees. This was 'the work that the government had placed in their hands.'

> *Cypress plants were put in for a hedge on the windward side, and flowering gums and pines were also planted on the other side of the ground. The children also planted some shrubs. The ladies kindly attended to the creature comforts of all present…An excellent tea was served around indoors, after which the children were treated to lollies…Mr. W. H. Taylor, Chairman of the Committee, read an interesting address..(and) thanked all present…Mr. Mitchell, on behalf of the children, thanking the Committee and friends for their assistance and sympathy. The children then saluted the flag and brought the proceedings to a close by singing the National Anthem.*
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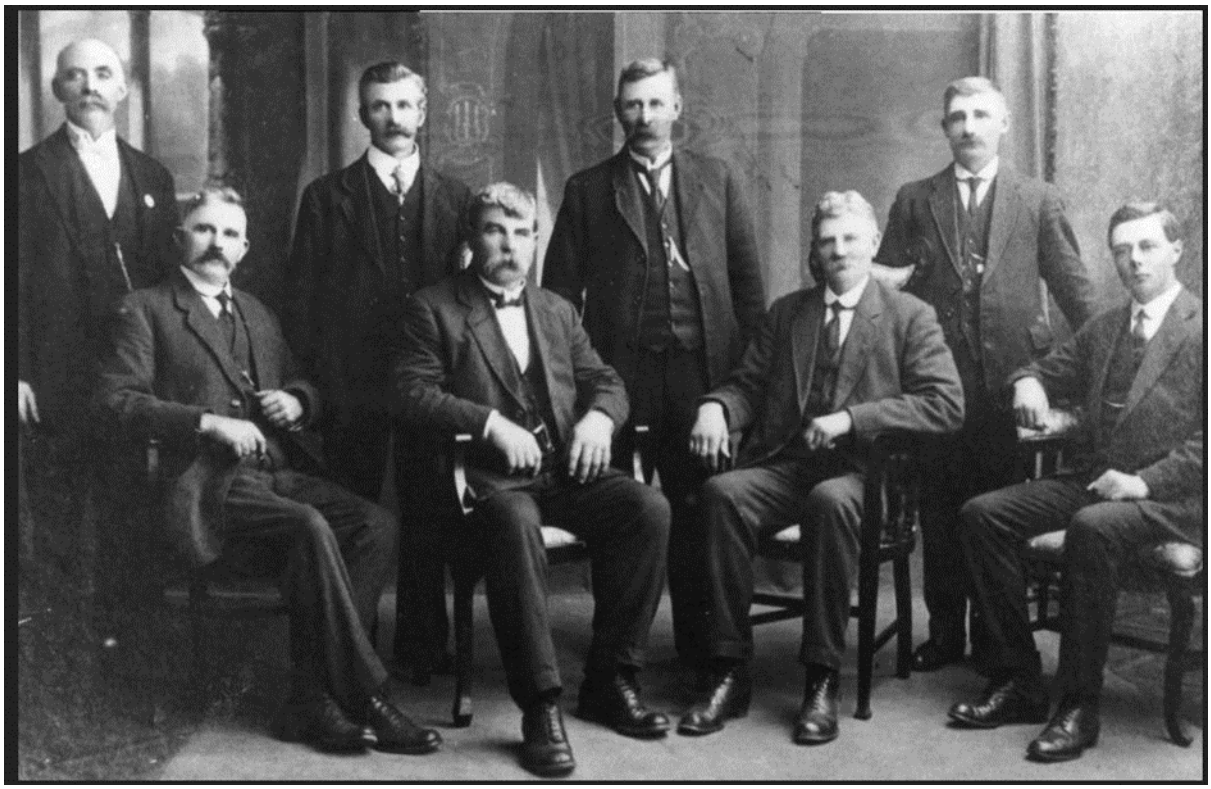
> *Border Watch, 26th July 1916*

At the time, Michael was secretary of the School Committee, with a picture[5] of the committee from 1916 showing him seated, just left of the centre (below).

[5] Moorak School Committee photo from Les Hill Photographic Collection, Mount Gambier Public Library.



Being a pioneer at Moorak was not all hard work. In 1915 a Red Cross concert was organized in Moorak, held at the shelter room at the school house.

> *A Red Cross concert took place last Friday evening, and despite the adverse weather conditions it was a pronounced success. The enthusiasm of the residents was proof against rough weather, for the large shelter-room of the school house…was filled. The room was appropriately decorated with red, white and blue streamers, and with British and Australian flags. A large red cross was conspicuous between a Union Jack and Southern Cross at the back of the stage. …Mrs. R. Telford kindly lent her piano for the occasion, and Mrs. Meller played the various accompaniments. Songs were rendered…recitations were given…Little Miss Elvie Meller executed a Scotch dance to a mouth-organ accompaniment, played by Master Lennie Stafford. The same boy treated the audience to the popular tune 'Tipperary' on a mouth-organ. Both children were heartily applauded for their contributions…A half hour farce entitled 'Our Aunt from California' comprised the second half of the programme...The singing of the National Anthem brought the concert to a close.*
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> *Border Watch, 3rd Jul 1915*

Michael Patrick Fahy was chief among the singers and deliverer of recitations that evening. He was described as a 'live wire' and 'lively' member of the community, and you can just imagine his spirited partaking in such events.

Michael was also involved in coursing races, which involved hunting using hound dogs, following on horses around a 'course' with jumps. There always appeared to be a few falls from horses. The coursing race went through the Fahy property, among others.

> *The Hounds at Moorak*
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> *Residents of Moorak are looking forward to the hunt on Wednesday, June 14. They are taking a lively interest, and have erected some fine jumps. The public will be able to see each jump*

from Yell's road, and the Moorak ladies will provide afternoon tea at the Moorak Cheese Factory…..Much interest is taken in the coming event, and the local young men are trying their steeds.

Border Watch, 10th June 1919

At the invitation of the Moorak residents the usual weekly run with the Mount Gambier hounds took place in the vicinity of the Moorak Cheese and Butter Company's factory on Wednesday last. …As the day was fine there was a large crowd to witness the sport. The onlookers fairly took possession of Yell's road, which was lined from end to end with vehicles of very description, including many motor cars and drags. The school was closed at 2.30pm and the children had a great time. Spectators who arrived on foot took possession of every vantage point, all the straw and hay stacks being well occupied…Never before had such excitement been witnessed at Moorak….Eleven horses took part to the check, and 12 from the check to finish….The only local rider was Mr. A. Stafford. He was mounted on a pony (Stiff Luck), and the Moorak people rejoiced that he never left it from start to finish. They cheered at each jump. It is only a pony, and is driven in a dray each day. The public were surprised to see it go the course. Mr. Stafford's mount caused a lot of merriment, and was the chief Moorak attraction….

The Moorak ladies were known far and wide for their energetic work. They had shown that day their kind hospitality by providing afternoon tea to such a large gathering, and it was very much appreciated…

Mr. M. P. Fahy was pleased to see the hounds at Moorak, and was sure the gathering that day proved that the residents were pleased also. Hunting ought, in his opinion, to be encouraged, as it was the means of bringing out many a good horse, who afterwards won classic events. One thing that marred that day's outing was that he was unable to don the red coat himself and follow (laughter), but he had a boy coming on, and perhaps in the near future he would join the gentlemen in the red coats. He thanked them for their kind remarks on behalf of the ladies. (Applause)…

Mr. F. J. Butler said that although he was not a privileged landowner he would like to make a few remarks…It must be a great honor to present day huntsmen to ride over the same country as the famous Adam Lindsay Gordon had ridden over. There was a certain amount of risk in the sport, but it made them brave and fearless.

Border Watch, 5th July 2020

Michael Fahy was a popular member of the community, organizing the annual picnic as secretary of the Moorak Picnic Committee. His children, especially youngest daughter Iris, were often winning running races at the picnic, although Helena had won the married women's race, and Michael also won the 'committee men's race'. In 1917 Michael Fahy won the 'Milk-cart horse race' in the first division, with his horse 'Daily Bread.' Michael Fahy regularly did recitations and singing at community events, taking every opportunity to sing, with many examples at farewell events. His wife Helena would regularly cater for social events in their home and orchard.

The Moorak Picnic was a huge affair, in 1919 there were around 1000 attendees, and donations of money and cordial received from the local Bellum Bellum Hotel, and four pipers attending. Ten women were in charge of the luncheon and refreshments for the day, with Helena Fahy at the lead.

The annual picnic organized by the Moorak people was brought off successfully on Wednesday last. The picnic is usually held near the school house, but this year the ground for the gathering was under crop, and as no suitable ground was available the committee

approached Mr. T. C. Ellis, who readily consented to the settlers having the use of the homestead paddock. It proved an ideal spot for the gathering, and as the day was beautifully fine a large concourse assembled to see the sports and partake of the settlers' hospitality. Long before noon on Wednesday the picnickers began to arrive, and by the time luncheon was announced several hundreds were present. In the afternoon the crows must have increased to quite a thousand….

Mr. M. P. Fahy made an efficient and courteous hon. Secretary. It was due to the energy and good management of the committees, both ladies and gentlemen, that the gathering proved such a success.

Border Watch, 9th November, 1919

After the festivities took place, the Moorak Picnic Committee honoured its secretary, M.P. Fahy.

Mr. F. J. Butler, the hon. Treasurer, presented a balance sheet, which showed that when all accounts were paid there remained a credit balance of 10/10/ It was resolved to hand that to the school committee, who will easily find a good use for it. Mr. Taylor then, on behalf of a large number of appreciative residents, handed to M. P. Fahy (who had been hon. Secretary of the picnic committee for several years, and to whose energy and zeal in the performance of his duties much of the success of the picnics had been due) a handsome gold Elgin hunting watch and an Onoto fountain pen, in recognition of his work in connection with the picnics over a series of years. Messrs. Butler and C. Kennedy supported the remarks of Mr. Taylor in the heartiest of terms, and soke of the pleasure they had in being associated with Mr. Fahy, who put his whole heart into anything he undertook. Mr Fahy made a suitable reply.

Border Watch, 18th November, 1919

By 1919, in the above report of the Moorak Picnic, Dorothea Fahy had already left school as she partakes in the 'old scholars' race; she was only 15. By 1921 the Moorak reunion and picnic had grown to such an extent that they established a separate children's picnic and sporting event. Celebration of St Patrick's Day annual was also a big event, with a St Patrick's day Carnival held in Mount Gambier.

Michael Fahy also became chair and founding member of the first football club and founding member of the tennis club at Moorak.

In March 1919, M. P. Fahy got involved in a meeting deciding upon how the Moorak community would welcome returned soldiers to the district – presentations of certificates were suggested, but M.P. Fahy proposed welcome home socials for every returned soldier, with leftover funds raised being used to build a memorial, and a committee being established to plan the welcome home socials. As some opposed this, he reported on the meeting to the local newspaper, to the horror of some meeting attendees. He then wrote a letter to the editor stating that he was a press correspondent when he reported on the undertakings of the Red Cross meeting, which was denied. A Welcome Home social was organized by the Red Cross in May 1919 for three returned soldiers.

Dairy farming had begun in Moorak in 1917, with the encouragement of the government. Michael Patrick Fahy played a central role in its development:

Dairy Bull for Moorak. – At a meeting of men interested in dairy farming at Moorak, it was decided to get the number of guarantors required for the leasing of a bull, and write to the dairy expert (Mr P. H. Souter) for the bull. So far 18 cows have been guaranteed at 11/6 per cow. Mr M.P. Fahy will look after the animal for six months for the sum of 7 10/. It was also decided that the bull should be here and ready for service by June 1.

South Eastern Times, 16th March 1917

The bull was provided, but it did not sire, and the Moorak group returned the bull back to the government.

In September of 1919, there was a large Farmers Congress in South Australia, reported on in *The Chronicle*. It was evident that the dairy industry was struggling, and a Dairy Expert, Mr Souter stated that it was 'urgently necessary that greater stimulus be given to production in this industry.' Michael Patrick Fahy moved that:

> *'In view of the limited area available for grassing at Moorak Closer Settlement, and the consequent slaughter of young calves which would otherwise grow into valuable stock, we request that the Government alot some suitable space as commonage.' This was carried. Mr. Fahy also moved – 'That in the opinion of this congress it is desirable that the Government should provide suitable, efficient, and proved dairy bulls to be loaned to various dairying districts.' After discussion the motion was rejected.*

The Chronicle, 20th September 1919

In 1919, farming conditions were challenging, and the local newspaper reported on the sale of some local farms.

> *Moorak is very dry, and grass is going off. An inch of rain would do a power of good. The farmers are cutting their grass hay. The crops are on the light side. The milk supply is going off fast, and hand feeding will soon have to be sorted to. The summer fodder is holding its own, but sadly needs moisture. There are several large plots of summer fodder growing, and the dairymen are realizing that they must keep the green food up to the cows to get milk. The early potatoes look well considering the dry spell, and the farmers are busy planting the late varieties.*

Border Watch, 25th November, 1919

In December of 1919, there was an annual tour of the Mount Gambier Branch of the Agricultural Bureau – it was fixed for that date to be able to meet with the experts from the government's agricultural Department. They inspected the Moorak, O.B. Flat and Mount Gambier East parts of the district. When they toured through Moorak, it was reported that:

> *After they entered on that road [McIntosh's or Palamountain's Road] there was a fine display of farming and dairy effort. Fine crops of miscellaneous sorts were observed – chow-mollier [kale], oats, peas, barley, maize, onions & c. The potatoes, which were in every stage of growth, appeared vigorous, but were it was feared, living on their capital – the seed – and would be benefited by heavy and immediate rain. Hay was lying in stocks or heaps on many fields and stack-building was actively going on. The stock – mostly dairy cattle – were in fine sleek condition. The grass everywhere was quite dry, and some paddocks that had been apparently over-grassed seemed absolutely bereft of herbage. The question how people were going to feed their cows in summer and autumn was a problem which was discussed. Of course, people are growing a large quantity of hay, and growing chow-mollier, Lucerne and other green fodder, but if the season continues rainless some of the dairy people may find their provision run alarmingly short. The barley crops looked good, but both they and the oats were on the short side as far as the straw goes.*
>
> - *Mr R. W. Graney's Ensilage –*
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> *Mr. Fahy piloted the party through Moorak, and from MacIntosh's road he directed them along Yell's road to Mr. Graney's ensilage, which was in a far corner of his property. Mr.*

Graney has no silo, and merely heaps up his green stuff in the form of a stack, and places a quantity of heavy timber on it to press it down. In appearance the heap seemed like a low grass hay stack, with logs on it. Alongside there was a big heap of black stuff that looked like an old uncovered stack on which the rains of many winters had fallen. That was an experiment in ensilage making that Mr. Graney made a season or two previously.

Professor Perkins pointed out how wasteful and ineffective such a system really was. In the case of the newer heap he considered the stuff had been cut too late in the season to make ensilage of. He pointed out the advantages of a silo, which saved trouble, made the best ensilage, and absolutely without waste.

Mr. Fahy remarked that even with the rough and ready system Mr. Graney adopted they got three times the amount of feed from it than they got if it were made into hay. Mr. Graney had 25 cows feeding on his block, and they received a good deal of this sort of ensilage. In this case he had the grass given to him.

Border Watch, 5th December 1919

The Professor insisted on the need for silos and said that under the 'Loans to Producers' Act' the government would advance the money for the silos. They continued along the tour until they came to Michael Fahy's property:

After the inspection of the ensilage…they proceeded along Yell's road, the Port MacDonnell road, and a narrow road running west, to Mr. Fahy's 30-acre block, every square foot of which is put to some profitable use. On the way they passed some fine potato fields…and some small Lucerne plots which were in a fine state considered that they had not been irrigated. Mr. Fahy said he kept 15 cows, 2 horses and a bull, besides calves on his block, and they were all in good fettle. On the block he had some 5 acres of chow-mollier growing strongly, some of it nearly ready for plucking, and 6 acres of potatoes, besides some fallow ground. The potatoes are Carmens, and they looked well. Having inspected Mr. C. Janeway's, in whose barn it was arranged they should have luncheon. In the absence of a public hall this is the hall in which most of the dances and other functions are held at Moorak…After luncheon the visitors had a short look through the cheese and butter factory. The hands were busily cutting up curd in the vats by machinery. It was said that the daily intake of milk at present was about 1,900 gallons.

Border Watch, 5th December 1919

The family left Moorak in April 1921 to go to Torrensville. A turning point appeared to be Michael Patrick Fahy not being elected to the Board of Directors of the Moorak Co-operative Dairy and Produce Co Ltd at the end of February 1921. He was elected to nominate for the Board as a Director, and there were two positions available, with J. W. Barry getting 43 votes, J. H. Buck 47 votes and M. P. Fahy 22 votes. Being Irish and Catholic may have had something to do with these results, and MP Fahy was not in any 'lodges' which were aligned to the Protestant faith. But Michael did not make himself popular sometimes when pursuing what he believed was best for the community. He would have been disappointed as he had pushed for a community co-operative.

Upon Michael Fahy deciding to resign from the Mt Gambier Agricultural Bureau and leave the District, the Bureau report stated that:

The President spoke with regret at Mr. Fahy, the hon. Secretary, tendering his resignation and leaving the district. As president he knew the value of Mr. Fahy's services to the branch. He had brought the branch to what it is. He was full of energy, and his departure would be a great loss to the branch and the district also. Personally, he was very sorry he was leaving,

and accepted his resignation with regret. Mr. W. A. Palamountain supported the president's remarks, and assured Mr. Fahy that it was with sincere regret they had accepted his resignation. He said the secretary was a tower of strength to the branch. In different matters from time to time Mr. Fahy and shown his ability and energy. As ex-president he knew the value of Mr. Fahy's services to the branch. Mr. J.F. Nicholls supported. The secretary, he said, had carried out his duties in a business-like manner. He was always to the fore and up to date, and what he did take on he made a success. He wished Mr. Fahy good luck and prosperity in his new sphere of life, and trusted they would be able to meet him again before leaving the district. Mr. T. Barry said he was very sorry Mr. Fahy was leaving the district, but he could rest assured he had the good wishes of the Moorak branch of the Agricultural Bureau. He hoped before Mr. Fahy left the district they would have the pleasure of meeting him again. Mr. H. S. Tarrant supported the remarks of the previous speakers. The secretary was the live wire of the branch, and he carried out the secretarial duties with credit to himself and the branch. Moorak would lose one of its best and most industrious settlers. While Mr. Fahy was secretary of the school committee, he proved himself industrious. The Moorak Union picnic grew to such an extent through Mr. Fahy's influence that the committee decided to have two picnics a year – one for children and the other for settlers. The school grounds would stand as a district monument to Mr. Fahy's energy. He moved that a record be placed on the minutes of Mr. Fahy's valuable work to the Moorak branch of the Bureau. Mr. J. Mahoney seconded, and the motion was carried.

Mr. Fahy thanked the members for their kind expressions and appreciative remarks. He had done what he thought was the best for the branch and district.

The president then asked the secretary to retire for a few minutes, and when he was recalled the president asked him to meet the members of the branch in the Cave gardens in town at 3.30pm on Saturday afternoon, March 26, when he would receive a presentation from them.

Border Watch, 5 April 1921

There was a big farewell party upon the Fahy family leaving the district. On reading his farewell presentation, it talks of his energy and good management. One gets a picture of a very sociable characterful and a stalwart of the community.

On Wednesday evening last, a large number of friends (about 50) of Mr. and Mrs. M. P. Fahy met at their residence in the form of a surprise party to pay a tribute to the respected settlers and to make a presentation. Councillor J. T. Kerin presided. Singing, card playing and dancing was indulged in until the early hours of the morning. Songs were rendered…and a humorous recitation by Messrs. M. P. Fahy and J. F. Boardman. Music for dancing was suppled by Messrs. A. Leggett and A. J. Janeway (accordion) and J. Jones (violin). Mr. T. Jones acted as M.C. During an interval in the proceedings the Chairman referred to Mr. and Mrs. M. P. Fahy as most popular residents, and Mr. Fahy had been a lively man on the settlement. Mr. H. Tarrant, in supporting, said that as secretary of the Moorak School Committee and the recently appointed secretary of the Agricultural Bureau, he could bear out the speakers' remarks. His work in connection with the School Committee would stand as a memorial to his energy for years to come. The Reunion picnic, under Mr. Fahy's influence as secretary, had also grown to a large extent. Mr. Fahy's good work in connection with the Agricultural Bureau, fighting on the commonage question and various other important matters, would always be remembered, and Mr. Fahy was to be congratulated on the present position of the Bureau. The speaker thought it a difficult matter to replace such a man, but as he had been elected to the position, he would do his utmost to keep up the already good reputation of the branch. He wished Mr. and Mrs. Fahy and family happiness and prosperity for the future. The sentiments of all present were expressed by acclamation. Mr. J. F.

Boardman then presented Mr. Fahy with a silver-mounted shaving outfit, on behalf of the residents of Moorak, and Mrs. Fahy with a marble-mounted clock. Miss H. Stafford presented to Miss D. Fahy a silver candle stick from her girl friends. Mr. Fahy in responding said he was leaving Moorak without an enemy. During his stay on the settlement he had met with much help from the people which he appreciated. As a settler he had tried to do his best in the interests of the place, and felt that evening that he had been amply rewarded by their kind and generous gifts, which they would always treasure. 'For they are jolly good fellows' was sung, and supper concluded a most pleasant evening.

Border Watch, 12th April 1921

In 1926, M.P. Fahy, Fruitier and Confectioner, lived at 189 Henley Beach Rd, New Mile End (later Torrensville). He traded in a shop at the East End Market for 7 years. In 1926 Michael and Helena Fahy travelled back to Mount Gambier for the 'Back to Mount Gambier' festivities. It was a greatly anticipated and large event, reported on in *The Register* newspaper (along with everyone who had purchased a ticket to travel back for the festival).

When Michael Fahy sold his shop in 1927, employees of the firm A.E. Pitt and Son at the East End market, recognised him by paying a visit to his shop and giving him a presentation in which the firm acknowledged the high esteem he was held in. Mr Ryan made the presentation, and his remarks were supported by Mr Dunkley and Mr Percy Miller.

In 1927, the family moved from Torrensville to Marion Road, Plympton (more than a year after Iris Fahy had given birth to Jack Fahy, who was my father). In 1928 he obtained a Hawker's licence when he was living at Marion Road, Plympton Park. In 1930, M.P. Fahy is listed as a 'Carrier' (transporter of goods) and in 1933 he is listed as a 'Canvasser' (seller) in the Sands and MacDougall Directories. In 1930, during the Great Depression, the house at Marion Rd, Plympton was forced to be sold. This must have been a crushing blow to such an enterprising character. Fortunately, the family was able to live on in the same house.

M.P. Fahy is last listed in the Sands and MacDougall directories 1934. He died on the 15th July 1934, at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, aged only 64, and is buried in the catholic section of the West Terrace cemetery, along with his wife and daughters. There is an obituary to him in the Border Watch newspaper, telling of him being a founding pioneer of Moorak, and of the great energy and organisation he had:

Original Moorak Settler

Death of Mr M. P. Fahy

Played Leading Part in Early Progress of Settlement

The death of Mr M. P. Fahy at the Adelaide Hospital, on July 15, at the age of 64, removes one of the original no 2 Moorak settlers. It will be remembered by many older residents that when Moorak Settlement was allotted some 28 years ago, the late Mr Fahy, with Mr. P. E. Graney, was living in a tent on the site of the present Moorak Hall, and many a pleasant evening was spent at that camp until his house was erected on the block now held by Mr. F. Greve. The untiring efforts of the late Mr Fahy as the original honorary secretary to the Moorak School Committee will also be long remembered. Assisted by an energetic committee, the pioneering work at the school as carried out with much hard work, involving horses, drays and wheelbarrows. A very large portion of the low-lying ground was filled by working bees under his supervision, and the response was always a tribute to his good management. When the first Moorak settlers picnic at which horse events were introduced, was held in Messrs Ferguson Brothers' property opposite the school, many will recall the thrilling

incident that occurred in the Moorak Hack Race for horses caring milk to the Moorak Factory. The late Mr Fahy, riding Daily Bread, the old grey, who was handicapped on the limit mark, kept front position until the straight was entered. When Mr A. Cambers, on Blue Gum, challenged the leader, he was much surprised to be met with the continual flash of a long buggy whip in front of his horse's face, which kept him back until the willing post was reached, and cheers were forthcoming from the crowd for Mr Fahy's popular win. A protest was survived, and Mr Fahy was awarded his first race at Moorak.

When a critical vote was taken as to whether the site of the Public Hall should be on the present position, or amalgamated with the O. B. Flat district, it was through his able guidance that the matter was settled. There was an even vote of 46 each way, and the Chairman of the Picnic Committee (the late Mr W. H. Taylor) wisely withheld his casting vote. It was not long before the first load of stone was placed on the ground where the present hall stands.

After disposing of his Moorak property, Mr Fahy, with his wife and family, went to Adelaide, where a mixed business was taken over at Torrensville. After spending a few years in business, Mr Fahy lived practically a retired life. Mr Fahy paid a few visits to Moorak to renew old acquaintances, and always received a hearty welcome.

Border Watch, 19 July 1934