

  
 11 August 03

## Observations of fire in the life of Candace Mott of the Reside aged 86 years

From a young boy my grandfather Thomas Mott  
 followed the burning methods of the Aboriginals  
 of this district - patch burning the back country  
 every few years & spent several days on the  
 coastal strip burning for cattle grazing there.  
 My father Candace Mott son of the Reside carried  
 on this practice in conjunction with other  
 graziers who burnt the south country for  
 travelling cattle to & from the coastal areas.  
 With this burning method it kept down the  
 undergrowth & the ewalds such as were kept  
 from growing into useless saplings - A fire  
 every four or five years kept the State forest  
 up as a National Park.

Last night I watched on T.V. the devastating  
 fire of Canberra which may have been avoided  
 if more controlled burning had been carried out.  
 In year<sup>Jan</sup> 1937 a fire travelled four miles in one  
 hour from the Dunmuth bridge to the Reside  
 Home stead. Fortunately we saved all our main  
 farm buildings but destroyed miles of fences on  
 the property & the fire burnt logs in the  
 Deep River ~~to~~ the water level <sup>then</sup> very low  
 stopped them burning any further.

In the same week a fire burnt from V Plain  
 on the 1101 Highway travelled 12 miles south  
 to the Singalwood guest home on the Nap  
 mees & killed <sup>many</sup> Kangaroos adjacent to the

Our family has been saying to condemn  
the ~~quotholds~~ to burn the forest country  
more frequently but to no avail.

During my life the settlers have been  
laid the blame for fires that started by  
lightning strikes. Lightning fires have occurred  
all my life & will continue & now can  
you see where these will start & with  
the condition of the state forest today  
we could a second repetition of the  
fires in the eastern States unless  
we have more staff available to do more  
control burning and save many lives.  
— Andrew Musgrave

U. W. A.