

EDITOR'S EPIGRAM

The great rock band *THE WHO* comprised of a weird assortment of personalities comprising the singer, dentist Roger Daltrey; drummer, Pharmacist Keith Moon; bassist, seaman John Entwistle; guitarist, and furniture critic Pete Townsend. Amid their personal and group turmoil they produced some raw, evocative and exhilarating rock music.

Maybe you too, have songs that haunt you, or re-occur like echoes? On an occasion one such song was "Who Are You?" (THE WHO), and it continues to reverberate in my head because frequently I am encountering genealogy queries or services, TV shows, and ovals, saying "Who? Who?"

The words "Who are you?" call my enquiring mind to the influence and heritage from our forebears. The things we do and say, the attitudes we have, and our perceptions of life are moulded in us by our parents and their parents before them.

A managerial friend at National level picked up a comment that SA people have great ideas and think out issues in creative and constructive ways, because SA was settled by free folk, unencumbered by class prejudices.

I add further, that the "City of Churches" was a colonial tag of this colony's religious tolerance, with an active policy of encouraging whole congregations to emigrate to SA for freedom of worship and to provide the social support for the struggling pioneers and 'natives' in the fledgling colony.

We can look into history and sometimes see reflections of ourselves, perhaps unsure if it is the glint in our great great grandfather's eye; but an astute historian may, from the past, follow the traits and qualities in them to reveal who we are today, and that excites me. It thrusts history right into our family. Colonial and national habits are a living history, an almost unbroken chain of influences telling us who we are.

Trusting you have absorbed that, I direct you to the Book Commentary in this Newsletter where it treats another example of the past making its presence felt in the present. ■