

Ernest (Ernie) Sherman

1876 - 1953

- **Born a farm boy in England. Sailed to Australia alone in 1891 with a half sovereign sewn in his pocket**
- **Landed in Adelaide, first job picking grapes then spent 4 years in WA goldfields but not successful. Contracted typhoid fever**
- **Returned east to Broken Hill to work as a barman**
- **1896, nearby White Cliffs was booming. Ernie started mining opal as a tributer then had his claim. Also buying unsaleable parcels, snipping off potch, as established buyers only bought full colour stones**
- **1907 - First overseas trip to England**
- **1908 - With decline of White Cliffs field, Ernie moved to Lightning Ridge. He continued to mine at first but soon stopped to concentrate on buying, cutting and developing local and overseas markets**

- **1911 - Ernie in Europe for 12 months. Sold opal at good prices in Germany, France, England, India & Ceylon**
- **Became a principal buyer in Lightning Ridge**
- **1919 - Was the first opal buyer to visit Stuart Range Opal Field**
- **1932 - Bought 2.5 cwt (127 kg) of opal in Coober Pedy during the depression when the opal market had collapsed**
- **Was the first opal buyer at Andamooka in the early 1930's**
- **1946 - Bought the top parcel of first 8 mile opal from Charlie and Tottie Bryant, paying £2,500 (roughly \$5,000)**
- **1953 - While visiting England, tragedy struck when Ernie was hit by a car and killed**

Ernie Sherman began the “dynasty” of an opal family that survives to the third generation

Sources: Sherman Archive online,