“Was it worthwhile?”
An historical analysis of five women missionaries and their encounters with the Nyungar people of south-west Australia.

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B.Ed
B.D(Hons)
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This thesis is presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Murdoch University, 2005.
I declare that this thesis is my own account of my research and contains as its main content work which has not been previously submitted for a degree at any tertiary education institution.

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Alison Longworth
Abstract

Was it worthwhile? The thesis asks this question of the life and work of female faith missionaries who served in Western Australia with the Australian Aborigines’ Mission and/or the United Aborigines’ Mission, during the twentieth century.

In 1902, the New South Wales Aborigines’ Mission adopted faith mission principles based on those of the China Inland Mission founded in 1865. The mission expanded into Western Australia in 1908 and changed its name to the Australian Aborigines’ Mission. From 1929, it was known as the United Aborigines’ Mission. The research began with a historiography of the China Inland Mission and the United Aborigines’ Mission and its antecedents. The analysis of the principles of these two missions identified that some characteristics of a faith mission were present in the New South Wales Aborigines’ Mission from the beginning and others were never adopted. It established that from 1902, the New South Wales Aborigines’ Mission upheld the faith principles of trusting God to provide physical needs, not soliciting for funds and not entering into debt. Because most faith missionaries were female, the historiography proceeded to examine texts on women missionaries, including recent work by Australian writers. This recognised that issues of gender, race and class were present within both mission cultures.

Five case studies were chosen to cover a period from 1912 when Bertha Telfer arrived in Western Australia until the retirement of Mary Jones in 1971. Using written and oral source material from Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspectives, the research studied the work of five female faith missionaries in south-west Australia: Bertha Telfer/Alcorn, Ethel Hamer/Fryer, Hope Malcolm/Wright, Mary Jones and Melvina Langley/Rowley, with a focus on issues of Evangelicalism, race, gender and class. Preliminary investigation of the
women recognized that while only one had professional training and two received missionary training, membership of the interdenominational Christian Endeavour youth movement was a formative influence on all these female missionaries. An investigation into the principles of that organisation, founded in North America in 1881, established it was influenced by the 1858-59 Revival within Evangelicalism in England and North America and it placed a strong emphasis on personal conversion and a commitment to mission. Christian Endeavour spread to Australia by 1883 and was found to have provided limited leadership opportunities to women.

The research tracked the experience of the female faith missionaries over six decades of living by faith among the Nyungar people and discovered a lack of identification with Indigenous culture that had its roots in a widely held belief in the superiority of western culture. Associated with this was the Evangelical belief in personal conversion that did not address cross-cultural issues. The UAM identification with the rise of fundamentalism from the 1920s coincided with diminished leadership opportunities for women at a time when women were gaining more choices in the wider Australian community.

The thesis concludes that the role of faith missionary was costly to women in terms of their health and wellbeing. In the context of oppressive government policies towards Indigenous Australians, the poverty and marginalisation experienced by the women, when combined with compassion, created solidarity with Nyungar people. In some cases, this reduced the barriers of race and gender and resulted in the conversion of some Nyungar people, contributing to the formation of an Indigenous and Evangelical church. These findings are significant because they point to new understanding of mission, conversion and Aboriginal-missionary relations and cultures and of the role played by female faith
missionaries in the shared mission history of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Western Australians.
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### Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAM</td>
<td>Australian Aborigines’ Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AEF</td>
<td>Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIM</td>
<td>Aborigines’ Inland Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIM</td>
<td>Australian Inland Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APA</td>
<td>Aborigines Protection Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APB</td>
<td>Aborigines Protection Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CE</td>
<td>Christian Endeavour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIM</td>
<td>China Inland Mission</td>
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<tr>
<td>DGO</td>
<td>Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GMAA</td>
<td>Gospel Mission to the Australian Aborigines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KJV</td>
<td>King James Version</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMS</td>
<td>London Missionary Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBI</td>
<td>Melbourne Bible Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSWAM</td>
<td>New South Wales Aborigines’ Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RBMU</td>
<td>Regions Beyond Missionary Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBI</td>
<td>Perth Bible Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SROWA</td>
<td>Sate Records Office of Western Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UAM</td>
<td>United Aborigines’ Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCTU</td>
<td>Woman’s Christian Temperance Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WACEU</td>
<td>Western Australian Christian Endeavour Union</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Measurements

Decimal currency was introduced into Australia on 14 February 1966.¹

Currency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 pence</th>
<th>=</th>
<th>1 cent (approximate measurement)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 pence/1 shilling</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>10 cents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 shillings</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>1 dollar ($1.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 pound (£1)</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>2 dollars ($2.00)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Australia’s “Imperial” system of weights and measures was part of its British heritage. The Metric Conversion Act 1970 enabled the progressive introduction of the metric system of measurement.²

Distance

| 1 mile       | = | 1.61 kilometres |

Area

| 1 acre       | = | 0.405 hectares |

Acknowledgements

In the difficult final weeks of writing this thesis, a friend asked me: “Was it worthwhile?”

Like the missionary women who asked this question, I have often reflected on whether it was worthwhile to disrupt my life to undertake this project. Many people have supported me as I went on this journey to uncover a neglected history and in the process I have learned not only about female faith missionaries in Western Australian, but also about my place on land cared for since time immemorial by the Nyungar people. The learning gained and support received has certainly made it personally worthwhile. What my family and readers will answer is a different matter entirely.

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  Joyce Spicer – Christian Endeavour Archivist, Western Australia.
  Sheena Hesse, Archivist, Uniting Church of Australia, Western Australian Synod
  and Barbara Drummond and Thelma Trotter.
  Rev Dr Ian Breward, Archivist, Uniting Church of Australia, Synod of Victoria.
  Daryl Lightfoot, Librarian/Archivist, Uniting Church Records and Historical Society,
  New South Wales.
  Ron Todd, Secretary, Newcastle Baptist Tabernacle Church Council.

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  Rhonda Jamieson, Jenny Carter and staff at the Battye Library, Perth.
  Staff at Mortlock Library, the State Library of South Australia,
  especially my former student, Anthony Laube.
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Robin, who is not only partner, companion and friend, but also proof reader and map
drawer while literally building a house around me as I wrote. Ebenezer.
Introduction

Family history first engaged my research of women missionaries who served with the United Aborigines’ Mission (UAM) during the twentieth century, when I investigated the forgotten history of my Great Aunt Mary Belshaw. In December 1940, Belshaw recalled a time of loneliness early in her career when she doubted her call and was tempted with the question “Is it worth while to leave home, friends, and all you love to live in this lonely place that these people might have the Gospel?” At that time, Belshaw lived in the “lonely place” of Badjaling in the south-west of Western Australia, among the Nyungar people. Further investigation revealed that a significant number of missionaries lived and worked among the Nyungar people and most were female. Belshaw’s rhetorical question suggested there was a personal cost to missionary service that prompted periods of doubt and discouragement about the lifestyle and task.

Failure was a common element of early missionary effort in Australia and noted by historians. In his comprehensive mission history, John Harris recorded that fifty years after European colonisation began in 1788, it was widely recognised even by missionaries that their efforts to convert the Indigenous people had failed. Hilary Carey agreed that while missionary societies ignored the negative connection between colonialism and missionary expansion, missionaries themselves lived with that reality. Ian Breward emphasised the failure when he contrasted it with the large numbers of

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1 Appendix One provides a synopsis of the various names of this organisation.
3 The United Aborigines’ Messenger, (Melbourne: United Aborigines’ Mission), December 1940, 11.
4 Appendix Three is a map showing the country traditionally inhabited by the people who called themselves Nyungar and shows fourteen linguistic groups within that area.
5 Appendix Four is a map of the south-west of Western Australia illustrating the location of UAM mission stations and major towns.
6 John W. Harris, One Blood: 200 Years of Aboriginal Encounter with Christianity: A Story of Hope, 2nd ed. (Sutherland, NSW: Albatross Books, 1994), 23.
Polynesians who responded to the Christian message. Rowan Strong attributed the failure to the ethnocentric attitude of missionaries, combined with the hostility of colonial society and lack of interest by institutional churches. This was verified by Anne O’Brien who wrote of the negative response, including outright opposition, endured by women who offered for missionary service among Aboriginal people. In view of past failures, Harris suggested “One of the most historically important missionary movements in Australia in the first half of the twentieth century was the rise of the so-called non-denominational missions.” He was referring to the United Aborigines’ Mission and the Aborigines’ Inland Mission. Stewart Pigg suggested that “the dedication and heroism of these faith missions, however, were not always matched by their wisdom, and their Gospel did little to liberate Aboriginal people from lives of inferiority and self-deprecation.”

Historians such as these echoed Belshaw’s question: “Was it worthwhile”? When that question is asked by an historian it calls for an analysis of the mission culture that addresses the outcomes for the Nyungar people as well as the effect on female missionaries. This research will contribute to new knowledge of mission history in Western Australia by investigating the spread of Christianity, as understood by the UAM and its antecedents, among some Nyungar communities. It will document the significant, though neglected, role of missionary women in that process by drawing on themes of Evangelicalism, gender and cross-cultural relationships. The investigation will focus on the years from 1912 when Bertha Telfer arrived at the Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage in Victoria Park, a suburb of Perth, until 1971, when Mary Jones retired.

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11 Harris, *One Blood*, 551.
from her independent mission at Brookton. The methodology will centre on five case studies, using the technique applied by Howard and Geraldine Taylor in their two volume work on the life of Hudson Taylor in which they explored the spiritual profile of Taylor and his development of the China Inland Mission. \(^{13}\) These case studies will not be complete life stories, but will explore the spiritual formation of the women and their missionary vocation. To avoid the danger of hagiography, the process will apply a critical approach to both oral and written sources and will include Indigenous\(^{14}\) and non-Indigenous perspectives. While the writer acknowledges her position as a non-Indigenous Christian, the historical narrative that forms the thesis will strive for a balanced and honest perspective. It will always be the analysis of the writer and may not agree with the interpretation of those who shared their memories and photographs.

Some clarification is needed regarding the spelling of the word “Nyungar.” Anthropologist Norman Tindale’s study of the Aboriginal people of Australia published in 1974, although dated, remains useful for its recognition of linguistic groups within the south-west region.\(^{15}\) Appendix Three is a map of the south-west of Western Australia based on Tindale’s map and shows fourteen linguistic groups within that area. In his word list for the Ballardong dialect, published in 1996, Nyungar Elder Ralph Winmar included the word Nyungar, meaning “Aboriginal”, as the first entry in his foundation word list.\(^{16}\) In a year 2000 publication, Irene Stainton described “Noongar” land as the fertile triangle of the south-west of Western Australia, extending from


\(^{14}\) Word usage is always changing and although the word “indigenous” is an adjective and in a generic sense refers to original inhabitants, in keeping with changing practice, when the word is used to refer to the original inhabitants of Australia it will be capitalised, as a mark of respect.


Nyungar/Noongar has become the generic name used to describe the Indigenous people from the south-west of the Western Australia, although Nyungar people may also identify with a specific linguistic group. In addition, it showed that as a spoken language reduced to writing after British settlement of the Swan River Colony in 1829, there came to be various interpretations of appropriate spelling.

The difficulty of writing oral languages using the English alphabet when Nyungar sounds do not necessarily correspond with English sounds added to that dilemma. Linguist and former UAM missionary, Wilfred Douglas, explained that in some dialects from the south-west of Western Australia the first sound of the word “Nyungar” is made with the tongue between the teeth and has no equivalent in English, hence the variations including “Nyungar”, “Noongar”, and “Noongah”. “Noongar” is the form of spelling used by Elders from the Great Southern and Wheat-belt regions of Western Australia in the year 2000 publication Ngulak Ngark Nidja Boodja, including Elders from Brookton, Kellerberrin, Gnowangerup and Badjaling, all significant centres within the scope of this research. On the other hand, “Nyungar” is the spelling used by Douglas, the Kulbardi Aboriginal Centre at Murdoch University, by the Southern Aboriginal Corporation in their Nyungar Dictionary published in 1996 and by Len Collard in his 1996 thesis “An Analysis of Nyungar Influence in South West Western Australia”. This suggested that difference in spelling could also be related to difference of dialect and therefore out of respect for specific writers or informants this

17 Sally Morgan and Mia Tjalaminu, Ngulak Ngark Nidja Boodja: Our Mother, This Land (Perth, WA: The Centre for Indigenous History and the Arts, 2000), 1.
19 Morgan and Tjalaminu, Ngulak Ngark Nidja Boodja, Our Mother, This Land.
research will adopt the spelling according to the usual practice of that writer or informant; otherwise the form “Nyungar” will be used.

Likewise, the concept of mission needs definition, as it is central to the thesis. The UAM and its antecedents understood mission as the conversion to Christianity of the heathen or “half-civilised” Aboriginal people. This was apparent in the first edition of the monthly mission publication *The New South Wales Aborigines’ Advocate* where it was stated “The New South Wales Aborigines’ Mission has for its supreme object the carrying of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Aborigines scattered throughout New South Wales.”21 By 1908, this vision had grown to include the Aboriginal people throughout Australia. The concept of conversion was part of Evangelical Christianity from its beginnings in Britain in the eighteenth century and referred to a turning away from a past sinful life, towards a renewed life through faith in Jesus Christ.22 The process of conversion to Christianity will be explored in the thesis, as it related to the identity of the women missionaries, and in its application within a cross-cultural context. The thesis will explore the meaning of conversion within UAM mission culture, and investigate how this meaning was conveyed to Nyungar people. It will establish that the conversion of Indigenous Australians required the adoption of cultural changes by converts. Analysis will show that the failure of the women missionaries to identify with Indigenous culture had its roots in a racial prejudice that was prevalent within the majority western culture of Australian society. This will be shown in the way the women equated western culture with Christianity. Their collusion with government authorities in the implementation of oppressive policies compromised the primary goal of conversion of the Nyungar people to Christianity.

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In Australia, there was another use of the word mission, in that government reserves for Indigenous people were sometimes described as missions. Jimmy Barker was of Muruwari ancestry and lived at Brewarrina in New South Wales. He referred to Brewarrina as “the Mission” even though he knew it was a government reserve and he suggested this practice was applied widely by Aboriginal people in colloquial language. He explained that it might have been because of visiting preachers that reserves became known as a mission.23 Similarly, in this thesis the locations where missionaries worked, either on a government reserve or UAM property, may be referred to as “the mission.”

David Bosch drew attention to a paradigm shift in the understanding of mission in the second half of the twentieth century. He described contributing factors such as the advance of science and technology, the secularisation of the west, the end of western colonialism, and the increasing global divide between rich and poor which all led to a crisis in Christian mission.24 Chronologically this research straddles the end of a period of missionary expansion and the beginning of Bosch’s “new paradigm” in mission. Therefore, this investigation into the role of specific women faith missionaries will address these changes, particularly changes within Evangelicalism in the Australian context. Through the case studies, the thesis will demonstrate that the modernist/fundamentalist debates within Evangelicalism in the 1920s contributed to division within the faith mission and the subsequent formation in 1929 of the United Aborigines’ Mission. The domination by theologically conservative men will be shown to have resulted in reduced leadership opportunities for women missionaries, even though women in Australia were more visible in the workplace following the Second World War. The emergence of Indigenous Christian leaders from the 1960s will be seen to coincide with the end of the assimilations era in Australian society and also reflects

the world wide pattern of decline in western missions and the emergence of non-western churches.

The research will include analysis of oral interviews. Before conducting interviews an ethical process was carefully followed that began by requesting written consent from Nyungar Elders and interviewees before proceeding. Although the primary Indigenous focus has been on the Nyungar people, one interview with a Wongutha Elder from the western desert region and now living in Perth will also be cited because of her involvement at the UAM Mount Margaret Mission. These and additional interviews and correspondence with family members and acquaintances of the case studies, and with one former missionary, have confirmed that memory is subjective whether written or spoken, which has to be taken into consideration.

Additional primary sources included archival files from the State Records Office of Western Australia, records held in the Battye Library, Perth and the UAM archives in Melbourne. Within the UAM archives, no records were found of the Australian Aborigines’ Mission (AAM) period in Western Australia, although records of the UAM era were available. Some material was accessed within the archives of the Aborigines’ Inland Mission (AIM) held in the Mitchell Library in Sydney, and the New South Wales Christian Endeavour Union Archives, also located in Sydney. In the absence of extensive AAM archives, periodicals published monthly by the various mission organisations and the Christian Endeavour movement were a major source.

Since faith missions trace their principles to the China Inland Mission (CIM) founded by Hudson and Maria Taylor in 1865, Chapter One will examine the historiography of faith missions, beginning with texts on the CIM. This will be followed by an investigation into the Australian context and specifically the historiography of the UAM and its antecedents. This historiography will establish that there was an inconsistency in the perception of the faith principles of the CIM and those of the
AAM/UAM. In addition, the historiography will analyse texts focused on women missionaries, including an emphasis on recent work by Australian writers. This will demonstrate that issues of gender, race and class were present within the mission culture. The outcome of their impact within the AAM/UAM culture will be addressed in the research.

Chapter Two will narrate the steps from an initial gathering by members of the Christian Endeavour at La Perouse in 1893, through the foundation of the New South Wales Aborigines’ Mission (NSWAM) in 1899, to 1902 when the NSWAM made the decision to adopt the principles of the China Inland Mission (CIM). It will then investigate the principles of the CIM and analyse the extent to which these were adopted by the NSWAM. It will show that although the NSWAM stated it was adopting the principles of the CIM, some aspects had been in place from 1893, while other features of the CIM were never introduced. The distinguishing feature will be established as that of the faith principle, trusting God for physical needs, not soliciting for funds and not entering into debt.

Chapter Three will continue the story of the NSWAM until 1908, when the mission established work in Western Australia and changed the name to the more appropriate Australian Aborigines’ Mission (AAM). The introduction to the five case studies will demonstrate that the Christian Endeavour movement played a significant role in their formation. Recognising that Christian Endeavour (CE) members were also engaged in the foundation of the NSWAM, an analysis of the history of CE in Australia will establish that through both CE and the CIM, the faith mission had its roots in Evangelicalism, and was specifically influenced by the 1858-59 Revival in England and North America. It will also show that issues of gender, race and class were intrinsic to its culture, as they were for the CIM.
The first case study, Bertha Telfer, will be the subject of Chapter Four. The chapter will begin with the establishment of the AAM in Western Australia from May 1908, until the arrival of Telfer in 1912. It will examine Telfer’s formation and early period of missionary service in New South Wales from December 1908, followed by her work in Western Australia from 1912 until 1917, when she ended her missionary service due to ill health. It will become apparent that Telfer’s relationship to the AAM and the Indigenous people was interwoven with issues of culture, gender and class. The analysis will focus on Telfer’s Evangelical theology and understanding of faith mission principles and their application. It will demonstrate that Telfer remained committed to her goal of the conversion of the Indigenous people to Christianity, but her experience as a faith missionary created a dichotomy in that she was involved in the care of children separated from their families and yet questioned the justice of that practice.

Chapter Five will analyse the work of Ethel Fryer who joined the NSWAM as “Miss Hamer” in October 1907.\textsuperscript{25} It will investigate Hamer’s family background and formation and will show two distinct phases to her work; firstly as a single woman and then following her marriage to William Fryer in 1911, as a married woman. Each phase will be analysed with a focus on Evangelicalism, culture and gender and will demonstrate the importance of Christian Endeavour to her work. The chapter will establish that her service as a married woman, particularly in Western Australia at Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage and the Carrolup Native Settlement, came at great cost to Fryer’s health and wellbeing. In addition, it will identify that Ethel and William Fryer’s period as Matron and Manager of Carrolup was a traumatic experience for Nyungar people.

Chapter Six will continue the history of the AAM from the resignation of Ethel and William Fryer in 1918 until the arrival of Hope Malcolm in 1920. It will study Malcolm’s early life and formation leading to her joining the AAM in 1916, followed

\textsuperscript{25} NSW Aborigines' Advocate, October 1907, 3.
by an analysis of her service as a single woman in New South Wales and Western Australia. Through an investigation of an intermediate stage from 1922 until 1925, when Malcolm was in Melbourne on extended sick leave, it will be shown that contemporary Evangelical debates over modernism and fundamentalism were prominent within the Evangelical scene in Melbourne during that period and had repercussions for Malcolm and the AAM. Malcolm entered a new phase of her life when she married Hedley Wright in 1926 and returned with her husband to commence the Gnowangerup Mission. The chapter will analyse the single and married phases of Malcolm’s life with an emphasis on the themes of Evangelicalism, gender and culture. The subjective nature of memory and the invisibility of women missionaries will both become apparent in recollections of the mission era which overlooked the contribution of Hope, to concentrate on the role of her husband. The work will prove that faith mission service was costly for Hope Wright in that she endured ill-health, few material comforts and antagonism from government officials and non-Indigenous people in Gnowangerup. It will establish that Hope Malcolm/Wright learned about Nyungar culture and language and in an era when Indigenous children were being separated from their families, she endeavoured to keep Nyungar families together.

Chapter Seven will focus on Mary Jones who joined the newly formed UAM in 1930 and served at Mount Margaret Mission until 1943. Following several years of transition, Jones emerged as an independent faith missionary with the Nyungar people from 1945 in Northam and from 1949 until her retirement in 1971, at Brookton. The chapter will analyse her formation and then use a thematic approach to investigate Evangelicalism, cultural revision and the role of women. It will show that Jones continued to struggle with these issues, but was respected by the Nyungar people as part of their community.
Melvina Langley will be the last case study. Langley joined the UAM in 1941 and worked with the Nyungar people at Kellerberrin and Gnowangerup until 1950, when she transferred to the north of the state. Langley married Nelson Rowley in 1956 and they continued their missionary service until 1971, when they returned to secular life in Kellerberrin and later, in Perth. This chapter will focus on her period as a single woman working with the Nyungar people and address themes of gender, culture and Evangelicalism, particularly its focus on conversion. It will conclude that leadership opportunities for women were diminished with the rise of fundamentalism within the UAM. The chapter will demonstrate the inadequate support given by the UAM to female missionaries and it will recognise that Langley did not challenge this position. Although the missionary was reluctant to acknowledge UAM complicity in the forced removal of children from their families, the case study will show that she gained the respect of Nyungar converts and contributed to the emergence of an Indigenous Evangelical church.

Using specific examples from the case studies, the thesis will demonstrate that although the UAM and its antecedents empowered single female missionaries to be independent, and both single and married women to accept the role of evangelist, within the narrow theological confines of the mission they were role models of women submitting to patriarchy. It will be shown that the contribution of single and married women was often invisible in mission reports and over time women had reduced authority within the UAM council, while the triumphant message of the mission periodicals hid the personal cost to women in terms of health and well-being.

The case studies will clarify that these missionaries were like most Australians in their perception of Aboriginal people as culturally inferior to Europeans. During this era when government policy caused Aboriginal children to be removed from their families, it will be evident that the UAM and its antecedents were involved in
implementing this practice. Of the five case studies, only Hope Malcolm/Wright and Mary Jones were remembered for their efforts to keep families together. The case studies will demonstrate the women had no understanding that the process of conversion was connected to their western Evangelical theology. In spite of these deficiencies, the research will establish that in the second half of the twentieth century the adaptation of Nyungar culture to western influence and a gradual recognition by the UAM of the importance of culture and language contributed to some conversions.

In addressing the question: Was it worthwhile? the thesis will illustrate that the five female faith missionaries personally considered their work of evangelism among the Aboriginal people was worthwhile, even though it came at personal cost. It will be argued that their lack of education and professional qualifications resulted in missionaries who were predominantly from the working class and attracted to rising fundamentalism. Many dispossessed Nyungar people learned about western culture and fundamentalist Christianity through the AAM/UAM. Using evidence from a Nyungar perspective the thesis will demonstrate that the Nyungar people chose for themselves what they would accept, just as they chose what to reveal to the missionaries about their own culture and language. In spite of Nyungar ambivalence towards the experience of western colonisation, the thesis will argue that for some women, the poverty, illness and marginalisation of their experience as faith missionaries, when combined with compassion and Evangelical commitment, created solidarity with the Nyungar people. It will conclude that the encounters of the women with the Nyungar people were worthwhile. Their efforts had the potential to decrease racial and gender barriers and contributed to the conversion of some Nyungar people, leading to the emergence of an Indigenous Evangelical church.
Chapter One  Historiography

Alongside denominational missions, a significant number of Protestant missionary societies described as faith missions contributed to the cross-cultural spread of Christianity since the second half of the nineteenth century. These included evangelistic efforts within Australia that were directed towards Aboriginal Australians. The term faith missions referred to only one of their characteristics; that of exercising faith in God to supply their material needs, but the name endured. This chapter will review the historical texts concerning the origins of the faith mission phenomenon. A review of the Australian faith mission context will follow, specifically the New South Wales Aborigines’ Mission (NSWAM), which formed in 1899, from 1908 was known as the Australian Aborigines’ Mission (AAM) and from 1929 reformed as the United Aborigines’ Mission (UAM). As this research concerns women missionaries who worked in Western Australia with the AAM and/or the UAM, the review will then examine texts that focus on women missionaries, concluding with recent work from Australian writers.

The New South Wales Aborigines’ Mission traced its beginnings to 1893, at La Perouse on Botany Bay in New South Wales.¹ The work expanded within that state until in November 1902 the monthly publication known as The New South Wales Aborigines’ Advocate reported that the Committee of the NSWAM had decided to operate in future under “faith lines” as practised by Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission (CIM).² Because Hudson Taylor (1832-1905) and the CIM were a model for the NSWAM the historiography will begin with a review of historical literature concerning the CIM, with a specific focus on the principles. The earliest historical works on the CIM were published by the mission itself. They were not of a critical nature and yet they remain

² NSW Aborigines’ Advocate, November 1902, 2.
useful for their early statements concerning the principles of this significant faith mission.

In 1915 Marshall Broomhall, a nephew of Maria and Hudson Taylor, published a history to commemorate the jubilee year of the CIM and he outlined the principles of the CIM. Broomhall wrote that the CIM was to be evangelistic and interdenominational, meaning that members would be drawn from across the Protestant denominations, providing they were of an Evangelical perspective. Because the need for Christian conversion in China was perceived to be so great, people of moderate education and ability were welcome to join the CIM, as well as those more qualified. Broomhall did not specifically mention women missionaries in this outline although one chapter was exclusively focused on the work of women in the CIM. In order to overcome the barrier of the Chinese perception of Christianity as a foreign religion, members of the CIM were expected to learn the language and customs of the Chinese and to wear Chinese dress. The CIM was to have a specific geographic focus on inland China with Taylor acting as the director of all the operations in China. In addition, there was to be no solicitation for funds although the needs of the mission could be presented to potential supporters. Members would trust God to provide their needs. A later characteristic of the CIM emerged when Broomhall wrote that by the jubilee year of 1915 the mission had become international, with eleven associate missions from European countries all working alongside the CIM in China and accepting the principles. This 1915 partisan history was clearly of a celebratory nature with the aim

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5 Ibid, 39.
7 Ibid, 357.
of challenging Christian readers to complete the unfinished task of evangelisation amongst China’s millions.⁸

Taylor’s son and daughter-in-law, Howard and Geraldine Taylor, published a two volume history in 1911 and 1918. The first volume explored the spiritual growth of Hudson Taylor.⁹ The second volume covered the growth of the China Inland Mission.¹⁰ This history suggested Hudson Taylor had written little about the principles because they were so simple. It was not surprising that the key principles they described were similar to those written by Broomhall, but with more detail. The authors wrote that the CIM was interdenominational and welcomed Evangelical Christians who were able to work with people from other denominations. The CIM was to be directed by Taylor from China, ensuring the work would be directed by the leader on location and with first-hand knowledge of the situation of inland China. The CIM did not solicit funds, but trusted God for the provision of needs and refused to be in debt. Membership was available to men and women of faith who were prepared to live in poverty and perhaps suffer if necessary. This reference to possible poverty and suffering suggested that life for CIM personnel was not always victorious. Taylor’s adoption of Chinese dress was recorded, but no further emphasis was given to the principle of identification with the local culture or language.¹¹ The biography recognised that the CIM was formed following the 1858-59 Revival when growth in individual faith as well as lay organizations where both men and women exercised Christian leadership was recognised as a sign of fulfilment of prophecy.¹²

As a historian without personal ties to the CIM but who had worked in China with the Student Volunteer Movement from 1910-1912, Kenneth Scott Latourette wrote

⁸ Ibid, viii.
⁹ Taylor and Taylor, *Hudson Taylor in Early Years*.
¹¹ Ibid, 41-47.
¹² Ibid, 48-49.
from his theological perspective as an Evangelical with a commitment to ecumenism.  

In *A History of Christian Missions in China* published in 1929 Latourette described Hudson Taylor as “one of the greatest missionaries of all time” if this was judged on the movement he founded. Latourette recognised that unmarried women served as missionaries from the beginning. He neglected to record the significant role of Taylor’s wife, even though Maria Dyer was a missionary in China before her marriage to Taylor and had worked alongside her husband during the formative years of the CIM. Latourette’s analysis of the principles of the CIM were summarised into seven aspects. Firstly, the CIM was un-denominational. This meant that members were accepted from Protestant denominations. Latourette wrote that the CIM remained theologically conservative when liberal theology emerged and, although no dates were given, he was probably referring to the fundamentalist/modernist controversies of the 1920s. The conservative theological position of the CIM would have excluded some Protestants from membership and placed limits on the un-denominational aspect of the CIM. Secondly, Latourette listed the international aspect of the CIM whereby support of personnel and finance was received from countries where Protestantism was strong. Thirdly, members of the CIM were to have faith in God for the provision of needs which included not going into debt. A fourth aspect was closely related and required that there was no solicitation for funds. Fifthly, missionaries were to conform to Chinese social and living conditions and dress. The sixth principle was that the mission was directed locally from China. Although members were to live by faith, the CIM developed an efficient administration in order to make the most of available resources.

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15 Ibid, 390.
16 Ibid, 385-386.
17 Ibid, 386.
For nearly forty years, the direction of the CIM was in China and by Taylor himself, although in time senior missionaries constituted an advisory council. Finally, Latourette listed the proclamation of the Gospel as the main purpose of the mission. From his list of principles, Latourette omitted the acceptance of women missionaries although he was aware that women were among the first CIM missionaries to travel to China.\(^{18}\) Latourette referred several times to missionaries and native helpers, which suggested that Chinese were not accepted as fully accredited missionaries but as helpers. The previously hidden issue of racial prejudice had emerged.\(^{19}\)

Latourette continued to write extensively on mission history from 1929 until his death in 1968, including the seven volume series *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, published between 1938 and 1947. Volumes four to six covered the nineteenth century, clearly indicating the importance the writer gave to that period when Protestant Christianity spread with European migration to many parts of the earth. The writer made an important analysis of the era. He observed that rapid industrial and scientific changes resulted in a questioning of traditional religious values and beliefs leading to decline within Christianity while simultaneously there were also pockets of revival which resulted in expansion throughout the western colonial empires, notably the British Empire.\(^{20}\) In this later publication, Latourette suggested that the revivals in Britain during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries resulted in thousands of people across the various Protestant denominations sharing a similar Evangelical theology to Taylor and this could partly explain the success of the CIM.\(^{21}\) In reality, Evangelical theology covered a broad spectrum of belief and a more detailed analysis of Taylor’s theology was needed. Although Latourette referred to the CIM as un-denominational,

\(^{18}\) Ibid, 387.

\(^{19}\) Ibid, 389.


\(^{21}\) Ibid, 326-331.
this required clarification, because individual members belonged to various Protestant denominations and where possible were placed accordingly. Interdenominational would be a more appropriate term of description. In this later description of the CIM Latourette again ignored the contribution of women.

When he published *The Second Evangelical Awakening in Britain* in 1949 J. Edwin Orr located the rise of the interdenominational faith mission movement more specifically than Latourette, in the British Revival of 1858 to 1859. Orr claimed that revival was the beginning of fifty years of expansion through evangelism and included the work of Moody and Sankey, Torrey, and Chapman and Alexander. This revival led to a surge of interest in missionary service. Orr showed how the revival had a significant impact on Hudson Taylor who was in London from 1860 to 1866. Orr stated that many other interdenominational faith missions were established over time and suggested that although they did not always copy all the principles of the CIM they certainly owed some of their characteristics to that defining model. With his primary focus on revival, Orr did not list what these shared characteristics were nor did he describe the principles of the CIM, apart from the fact that they were interdenominational.

In 1962, J. C. Pollock took a different approach when he rewrote the story of Hudson and Maria Taylor as an epic love story. His description of Hudson Taylor as the founder of the CIM who could not have achieved so much without the support of Maria still revealed the male prejudice which could not acknowledge Maria as a co-founder. Later he did write that in China Maria was the backbone of the mission and was left in charge of the CIM whenever her husband was absent. Pollock demonstrated how the decision to wear Chinese dress created negative responses from

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23 Ibid, 9.
25 Ibid, 10.
26 Ibid, 177.
other Europeans in China and even from some within the CIM although Taylor himself remained firm in his belief that Christianity should not be associated with western culture. Pollock described Taylor’s theology as Evangelical and made the connection that lack of formal education meant that missionary candidates were from the working class. He suggested that without denominational backing the structure of the mission was on a more personal basis like a family, although he failed to see the powerful position Taylor assumed in retaining control of the CIM.

Wring in 1969, Olive Anderson did not investigate the CIM, but is included in the historiography because her article “Women Preachers in Mid-Victorian Britain: Some Reflexions on Feminism, Popular Religion and Social Change” addressed the role of women within the 1858-59 Revival. The emergence of Evangelical women preachers during this era demonstrated a social change that enabled women to be both evangelists and missionaries. The article represents a new approach to history with its themes of feminism, popular religion and social change. This trend towards a thematic approach will be investigated further in the historiography.

Hudson Taylor visited Australia in 1890 and from that time Australians and New Zealanders were involved in the CIM, both as missionaries and within their home countries. With that early exposure and involvement, it was to be expected that Australian historians would conduct research into faith missions. Anglican Bishop, later Archbishop, Marcus Loane wrote The Story of the CIM in Australia and New Zealand 1890-1964 at the request of the CIM/Overseas Missionary Fellowship and it was published in 1965, the centenary of the formation of the CIM. Loane pointed to a

27 Ibid, 164.
28 Ibid, 129.
growing interest in overseas mission in Australia in the 1880s. He did not specifically address the principles of the CIM although in his first chapter Loane referred to the goal of evangelism, the geographical focus of inland China, the role of women including single women and the cultural identification through dress and language. Loane wrote of Taylor’s great faith in his vision of the CIM and yet did not describe the principle of trusting God to provide physical needs although he alluded to it when he quoted Taylor’s belief that even if missionaries died of starvation, if there was even one convert it would be worth it. Neither did Loane write of the mission being interdenominational although this was apparent throughout the book from the names of supporters from the various Protestant denominations.

In his 1982 thesis “Fundamentalism and Conservative Protestantism in Australia 1920-1980”, David Parker wrote of faith missions in the context of Australian fundamentalism. Parker recognised the foundational role of Hudson Taylor in the development of faith missions and Taylor’s context within the 1858-59 Revival. His analysis focussed primarily on the principle whereby the CIM trusted God to provide material needs. Parker made no reference to Maria Taylor or the role of women missionaries in the CIM, but he recognised that no special training or qualifications were required of missionaries apart from a sound Evangelical faith. He also acknowledged the importance Taylor gave to his own central leadership from China, identification with the local people and his concentration on evangelism. According to Parker’s analysis, the independent pioneer characteristic of faith missions was what made them distinctive because initially they were similar doctrinally to other Protestant missions although they grew further apart following the fundamentalist/modernist

31 Ibid, 5.
32 Ibid, 3-7.
34 Ibid, 351-354.
debates of the 1920s and 1930s.\textsuperscript{35} Parker made the connection between faith missions, missionary training colleges known as Bible Institutes and the holiness based Keswick Convention movement, which all emerged in the aftermath of the 1858-59 Revival and shared a similar theology and emphasis on evangelism.\textsuperscript{36} His interpretation that faith missions in Australia were operating from a narrower base as the twentieth century advanced reflected their response to the earlier fundamentalist versus modernist debates.\textsuperscript{37}

Daniel W. Bacon based his 1984 doctoral thesis on Taylor’s influence on the faith mission movement.\textsuperscript{38} Bacon’s analysis described six distinctive characteristics of the CIM. These were: targeting people who had not been exposed to the Christian Gospel, non-solicitation of funds and not being financially indebted, identifying with the Chinese people to break down cultural barriers, an interdenominational and international membership, the employment of women as well as men and leadership from the mission field rather than the home base. These included all the characteristics identified by Latourette and in addition acknowledged Taylor’s inclusion of women missionaries. Bacon verified with a direct quote from Taylor that as early as 1865 Taylor recognised the importance of establishing a Chinese church led by Chinese and using Chinese language.\textsuperscript{39}

Bacon suggested that Taylor set a precedent by his encouragement of young single women to become missionaries.\textsuperscript{40} This was not strictly accurate. Rosemary Fitzgerald recorded that within the main denominational missionary societies women, both married and single, were already present and active on the mission field in the first

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid, 355.  
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid, 358.  
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid, 366.  
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid, 44.  
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid, 62.
half of the nineteenth century as wives, daughters and sisters, and by the 1860s in India single women were engaging in mission work among the secluded women of the zenana houses. It would be more accurate to suggest that both the denominational and the interdenominational faith missions were recruiting women missionaries in the second half of the nineteenth century. Bacon also wrote that some of the innovative opportunities given to CIM women were because of a shortage of men. The work Taylor envisaged for the women missionaries appeared to be directed towards women and children, as was the case with the work among the women from the zenana houses of India. Such emphasis specifically required female missionaries and in that case their recruitment was not due to a shortage of men.

Contrary to Orr and Latourette, in 1994 Karla Poewe located the rise of faith missions in early missionary movements in Europe following the Reformation. Poewe named Johannes Gossner (1773-1858), a former Catholic who became a Lutheran pietist and who based his work on faith rather than the solicitation of funds. She pointed to Jesuit scientist P. Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) who adopted Chinese dress and culture and the Halle Pietist Karl Friedrich Gützlaff (1803-1851) who influenced Taylor in his adoption of Chinese customs. Poewe attributed to Ricci an acceptance of syncretism; if so, with Taylor’s revivalist beliefs and priority for Christian evangelism it is doubtful whether his adoption of Chinese dress and customs would have extended to syncretism of Christian beliefs with Chinese spirituality. In addition, while these missionary movements had elements of the later faith missions, and Gützlaff certainly had influenced Taylor, their position within either the Lutheran or the Roman Catholic

44 Karla O. Poewe, ed., Charismatic Christianity as a Global Culture (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1994), 7.
Churches brought into question the proposal that they represent the beginnings of the interdenominational faith mission movement. The interdenominational aspect was a distinctive feature of Protestant Evangelical faith missions.

Klaus Fiedler is a former missionary in Tanzania and a mission historian who concentrated his 1994 publication on faith missions in Africa.45 His investigation into the rise of faith missions is the most comprehensive treatment of the topic to date. In agreement with Orr and Bacon, Fiedler defined faith missions historically, as missions whose principles of operation were based on the principles of the CIM founded by Hudson and Maria Taylor in 1865.46 Like Poewe he acknowledged earlier influences such as the independent faith missionary Karl Gützlaff, however Fiedler supported Orr when he suggested that the more immediate antecedents of greater direct importance in the development of faith missions were the Revivals of 1858 in America and in Britain in 1859.47 Fiedler argued that every revival brought its own theological emphases which spread across denominations and empowered different groups of people. He proposed that the Brethren Movement,48 the Holiness Movement49 and the Prophetic Movement50 all contributed to the 1858-59 Revival and contributed to the thinking of Hudson Taylor. American evangelist D. L. Moody and his musician Sankey were not at the height of their success until 1873, but Fielder placed them as a later phase of the 1858-59 Revival because their campaigns led many people to join the faith missions.

46 Ibid, 11.
48 The Brethren Movement developed in Britain from about 1830 with a strong emphasis on Christian unity, regardless of denomination. Ordination was not recognised; elders were considered ordained by God when this was verified in their ministry. Ibid, 169-172.
49 The Holiness Movement was based on Wesley’s perception of sanctification which he saw as a specific second experience of divine grace that could follow conversion and lead to a deeper spiritual life. Ibid, 212-214.
50 The Prophetic Movement was linked to the Brethren Movement and placed a strong emphasis on mission. It taught a premillennial theology which anticipated the imminent return of Christ would follow the preaching of the Christian gospel to the whole world. Ibid, 272-275.
Fiedler presented the following list of fifteen principles of the CIM. He argued that the CIM was interdenominational; church order was secondary to evangelism; and missionaries were not employees, but members of the mission. In addition, missionaries received no salary, but trusted God for their needs; missionaries with any training were welcome; no distinction was made between lay and ordained members; wives were full missionaries; single women had the same possibilities as men and could work on their own as pioneer evangelists. Taylor required that missionaries identified with the culture; were to accept sacrifice and suffering; evangelism always took precedence over institutional work; and since there was a priority to reach everyone with the gospel, itinerant work was important; converts joined into local congregations and also engaged in evangelism. The CIM later became international, but from the beginning, leadership was centralistic and field directed. When Fiedler suggested that the interdenominational nature of faith missions was very significant he used the example of Taylor who was born a Methodist, joined a Brethren assembly and later became a Baptist. Fiedler emphasised the way in which faith missions affirmed the equality of ordained and lay missionaries and accepted women as well as men. He suggested that in the early decades of the faith mission movement the involvement of women in mission was part of the first wave of feminism in western society and was a further development of an earlier Evangelical feminism in the era of John Wesley when women preachers received some support. The issue of women’s liberation and individual sexual freedom that was characteristic of the women’s movement beginning in the 1960s were challenges of a later era and should not be confused with the feminism of those earlier times which centred more on women’s welfare.

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31 Ibid, 33.
32 Ibid, 172-177.
33 Ibid, 395.
Although Fiedler did not include race in his principles he referred to Europe being a white continent when the CIM was established. He then proceeded to outline the racial prejudice of subsequent faith missions which prevented Afro-Americans from being accepted as missionaries by faith missions working in Africa, apparently because of the preference of the particular mission itself to remain segregated. By inference, he revealed as did Latourette before him, that racial prejudice was a hidden issue within the CIM and within faith mission historiography.

This review has shown that the CIM has been recognized by the majority of historians to be the foundational faith mission in Protestant Evangelicalism. Therefore, this research will follow the definition of Fiedler.

A faith mission is a mission which traces its origin or (more often) the origin of its principles directly or indirectly back to the China Inland Mission (CIM), which was founded by Hudson Taylor and his wife Maria in 1865 – not simply as one new mission among others, but as the first mission of what turned out to be a completely new missionary movement.54

The historiography has also established that historians have moved from partisan history to a more critical and thematic approach. The principles of the CIM were analysed in terms that range from Orr’s interdenominational principle located in the 1858-59 Revival to Fiedler’s detailed list of fifteen principles. Not all writers focused on the CIM as their main purpose and their interpretation of the mission was coloured by the relationship of the CIM with their area of particular concern. For example, Orr wrote on the Second Evangelical Awakening in Britain, Loane was concerned with the CIM links with Australia and New Zealand, Parker addressed fundamentalism in Australia between the years 1920 to 1980 while Poewe researched charismatic Christianity. Histories of the CIM such as those by Broomhall and Howard and Geraldine Taylor presented a triumphant success story and revealed their family bias. While Broomhall

54 Ibid, 11.
and Pollock each acknowledged the theological base of Evangelicalism, Taylor and Taylor, Orr, Parker and Fiedler more specifically recognised that the CIM arose out of the 1858-59 Revival in England. Clearly, the CIM historiography revealed diverse descriptions of the principles and these were related to the bias of the writer and the context of their writing. Therefore, the following chapter will return to the writing of Hudson Taylor himself to analyse the principles he set down for the CIM. Because the thesis will focus on a specific Australian faith mission a comparison of the principles of the CIM with the principles of the New South Wales Aborigines’ Mission will be an essential basis for the project. The theology and influence of the 1858-59 Revival in the formation of the CIM and the Australian faith missions will also be investigated within the framework of the thesis.

Meanwhile, the review will turn to the historiography of faith missions in the Australian context, specifically dealing with the United Aborigines’ Mission (UAM) and its antecedents, with a focus on the principles of that mission. The first history of the UAM was written by E. J. Telfer and published in instalments in the UAM monthly publication known as The United Aborigines’ Messenger, beginning in November 1931. It was published in book form in 1939. Telfer wrote at the request of the Federal Council of the UAM and it is evident that a considerable portion of this history related to his own experiences as a missionary. He acknowledged that his history was incomplete and expressed his hope that it would increase support for the UAM. With this as the aim, it was perhaps inevitable that Telfer provided no critical evaluation and glossed over conflicts such as the period of division during 1928-29. Telfer traced the beginnings of the UAM from 1889 when a Christian Endeavourer began visiting the Aboriginal Settlement at La Perouse, on Botany Bay. Telfer suggested that the

55 The United Aborigines’ Messenger, November 1931, 6-7.
56 Telfer, Amongst Australian Aborigines.
57 Ibid, 6.
interdenominational aspect of the evangelistic work at La Perouse was the significant factor which prompted the New South Wales Christian Endeavour Union to give their full support. When he wrote of the first missionary Jeannie Watson, appointed by the Aborigines’ Protection Association in 1893 and financially supported by them until their funds were depleted after one year, it was evident that women were accepted without specific educational requirements apart from an Evangelical faith. Hudson Taylor’s principle of trusting God to provide the funds was not applied at the beginning of the work at La Perouse. Telfer wrote of the subsequent growth of the New South Wales Aborigines’ Mission after 1902 and interpreted this to be a result of the decision to adopt the principles of a faith mission from that year.

In the introductory chapter to Volume 5 of *A History of the Expansion of Christianity* Latourette claimed that within that volume he had included the first comprehensive history of the growth of Christianity in Australia. He was referring to one chapter of forty-seven pages. His comment confirmed the scarcity of church and mission history being written in Australia in 1947. In his section on mission in Australia Latourette allocated one paragraph to Florence Young and her commencement of the Queensland Kanaka Mission. Latourette wrote that the general principles of this mission followed those of the CIM in that it was un-denominational and did not appeal for funds. In just one sentence, he named the United Aborigines’ Mission and the Aborigines’ Inland Mission stating simply that they operated in Australia and were un-denominational. Latourette regarded the denominational mission activity with Indigenous Australians as more significant than the activity of the faith missions.

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58 Ibid, 15.
59 Ibid, 22.
61 Ibid, 258.
62 Ibid, 165.
Tony Swain and Deborah Bird Rose published their edited work *Aboriginal Australians and Christian Missions* in 1988, the bicentennial year of European settlement. The editors began with two basic assumptions; first, that Christians missions had affected the lives of Aboriginal people and secondly that Aboriginal people had exercised their personal choice by either accepting or rejecting their message. In their chapter in this work Jacobs, Laurence and Thomas wrote of the Colebrook Home in South Australia in which UAM women missionaries initiated a home for Aboriginal “half caste” children from South Australia and the Northern Territory. The chapter began with a background into government policy followed by a history of the home. It recognised the UAM as a faith mission and understood this to mean its membership was from Nonconformist denominations and the goal was to evangelise and civilise Aboriginal Australians, focusing primarily on children.

John E. Stanton’s chapter entitled “Mt Margaret. Missionaries and the Aftermath” comprised a discussion of the UAM work at Mount Margaret in Western Australia from its beginnings with missionary Rod Schenk in 1921 until the 1970s when a Christian revival movement within the Aboriginal communities provided evidence of Aboriginal Christians evangelising their own people. Stanton did not address the principles of a faith mission but rather focused on the UAM as an agent of social change and the Aboriginal residents as people who made choices about their response to both government and mission authority.

Within the same volume, Peggy Brock also addressed the issue of social change in “The Missionary Factor in Adnyamathanha History”. Brock drew attention to the

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63 Tony Swain and Deborah Bird Rose, eds., *Aboriginal Australians and Christian Missions: Ethnographic and Historical Studies* (Bedford Park: Australian Association for the Study of Religions at the South Australian College of Advanced Education: Sturt Campus, 1988).
fact that in this case the missionaries were not the first European contact. The Adnyamathanha accepted some of the changes introduced by the UAM missionaries. Brock found that that decision to accept change contributed to the ability of the community to retain their cultural identity.

Also published in 1988 was Anna Haebich’s *For Their Own Good* which examined the social changes affecting the Nyungar people from South-West Australia from 1900 to 1936. AAM/UAM missionaries were active in the area during this period and although they were not her primary focus, Haebich understood the interdenominational aspect of their organisation. Her analysis of the faith principle was that missionaries relied on public donations and attempted to make the Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage productive through industrial work.

John Harris published *One Blood: 200 Years of Aboriginal Encounter with Christianity: A Story of Hope* in 1990. In this comprehensive Australian mission history, Harris covered the period from European settlement until 1990. When Harris recognised the historical importance in the rise of the non-denominational missions in the early twentieth century, he was referring to the UAM and the AIM who specifically worked to evangelise the dispossessed rural and urban Aborigines. Harris acknowledged similarities between the two faith missions and he treated them together. When he described the qualities of a faith mission Harris suggested that this meant that individual missionaries were responsible for organizing their own support rather than the society revealing an inadequate understanding of the faith principle. He failed to recognise the spiritual importance of this definitive concept of faith missions by which missionaries exercised implicit faith in God to provide their material needs. Harris argued that the

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67 Anna Haebich, *For Their Own Good: Aborigines and Government in the Southwest of Western Australia, 1900-1940* (Nedlands, WA: University of Western Australia Press, 1988).
69 Harris, *One Blood*, 551-568.
claim to be interdenominational was true in the sense that they had no particular denominational support, but misleading in the sense that their strict Evangelical doctrine excluded some denominations from their support base. Harris identified both women and men who served as missionaries, although he did not refer specifically to the particular role of women within the faith missions. The writer understood that the reality of cultural breakdown contributed to the failure of missionaries to identify with the Indigenous culture, although he also wrote that the missionaries tended to identify Christianity with their own western culture and this limited their cultural awareness. Harris was critical of the AIM and the UAM for their negative attitude towards Indigenous cultures and languages and for the way they became involved in the implementation of oppressive government policies such as the removal of Aboriginal children from their families.70

In 1994, to mark the centenary of the formation of the UAM, a largely pictorial history was published *Challenging the Almighty: 100 years of trusting God in the United Aborigines Mission*.71 The publication depicted a victorious missionary enterprise and included no critical analysis and no input from Indigenous people. The numerous photographs named missionaries, but rarely named Aboriginal people although the contribution of Aboriginal Christians working alongside the missionaries was acknowledged.72 The primary aim of conversion was clearly stated.73 Since the first missionary was noted as “Miss J. Watson” and numerous other women were included throughout the history the importance of women missionaries was obvious.74 The history recognised the role of the Christian Endeavour movement in the foundation of

70 Ibid, 568.
72 Ibid, 7.
73 Ibid, 1-2.
74 Ibid, 4.
the work at La Perouse.\footnote{Ibid, 3.} Language work was not commenced until the 1950s and 1960s, mostly in the Kimberley and Western Desert regions of Western Australia.\footnote{Ibid, 43-44.} The interdenominational nature of the mission was shown to consist of the Protestant denominations. Strangely, no reference was made to the decision made in 1902 to adopt the faith principles as used by Hudson Taylor and the CIM, although it was clear that the missionaries trusted God to provide their needs.\footnote{Ibid, 21.}

Stuart Piggin’s \textit{Evangelical Christianity in Australia} was published in 1996.\footnote{Piggin, \textit{Evangelical Christianity in Australia: Spirit, Word and World}.} Piggin expanded on Loane’s awareness of a growing interest in mission amongst Australian Evangelicals by placing that in historical context. He showed how the years from 1870 to 1913 were a time when Evangelicals were influenced by emerging influences overseas such as the revivals of Moody and Sankey, the Holiness Movement which led to the formation of the Keswick-type conventions, and the formation of the CIM and other organizations.\footnote{Ibid, 57.} While these trends were influencing Australian Evangelicals, including the faith missions, Piggin also noted the lack of prestige of mission work among Aboriginal people and that women missionaries outnumbered men.

In 1997, the \textit{United Aborigines’ Mission Messenger} began printing articles from a work in progress by Stewart Gill on the history of the UAM.\footnote{Ibid, 57.} A number of short edited articles appeared over several years. Gill did not discuss the principles of the UAM but focused on the children’s home at Quorn in SA, Annie Lock and E. J. Telfer, particularly his tour of North America during 1939-40. This resulted in financial and personnel support coming from fundamentalist churches such as the People’s Church,\footnote{Stewart Gill, ”The Beginnings,” \textit{United Aborigines' Messenger}: April-June 1997, 10-11.}
Toronto, and fundamentalist Bible Colleges such as the Prairie Bible Institute.\textsuperscript{81} At the
time of writing, the work has still not been completed.

The AAM/UAM historiography reveals an inadequate understanding of the
principles of the CIM with a consequentially inconclusive analysis of the principles of
the AAM/UAM. In addition to an examination of written material by Hudson Traylor,
the following chapter will investigate source material of the NSWAM in order to
determine the extent that the Australian faith mission incorporated the CIM principles.
Alongside the religious basis of this research there is a particular focus on women
missionaries and therefore the historiography will proceed to examine texts related to
women missionaries, first from a global perspective and then specifically from the
Australian context.

In the closing decades of the twentieth century, historians approached mission
history through the lens of social change. The following writers fall into this category
and their work related particularly to women missionaries. From an American
perspective came a publication in 1985 by Patricia R. Hill, which noted that historians
up to that time had recognised the nineteenth century as an era of great missionary
expansion, however there was a distinct omission of the growth of the women’s
missionary movement within the home churches during that era.\textsuperscript{82} The aim of the book
was to recover that history and to examine the role it played within the cultural
imperialism of the western world during the period 1870 to 1920. Hill progressed from
the romance of missions that attracted so many women to reflect on the nature of
women and their separate sphere in the home, which resulted in the perceived need for
women missionaries to evangelise women. She suggested that involvement on mission
committees broadened the lives of women at home in America without challenging their

\textsuperscript{81} Stewart Gill, "Background of U.A.M. Missionaries," in \textit{United Aborigines' Messenger} (Sydney), July-
September 1999, 5-8.

\textsuperscript{82} Patricia R. Hill, \textit{The World Their Household : The American Woman's Foreign Mission Movement and
traditional roles. Hill outlined the gradual growth in professionalism during that period and with it, a contradiction between the earlier view that women were needed to evangelise women, and a later desire for women to be equal to men within the mission organisation. She concluded that this in fact led to the loss of the specific identity of women’s concerns within the mission context. In the period following the First World War, Hill recognised a decline in interest in mission work by younger women for whom secular opportunities were increasingly available.

In applying these issues to the UAM and its antecedents, it must be remembered that although founded by a woman and with women missionaries always in the majority, the UAM was not solely a women’s mission. Mission councils, support committees and periodicals were never solely directed towards women as Hill described in the American context, however the membership of those councils and committees and their role in managing the AAM/UAM has been overlooked by historians. Similarly the publication of periodicals of the mission itself and those of likeminded bodies such as the Christian Endeavour movement had a role in the recruitment of missionaries and therefore will be consulted in the analysis of the faith mission. In the absence of AAM archives for Western Australia, the monthly reports of the Council within the periodicals will provide a useful resource to explore these issues. The issue of professionalism as discussed by Hill will also form part of the gender analysis within this research.

Leslie A. Flemming edited *Women’s Work for Women: Missionaries and Social Change in Asia* in 1989. Flemming described how these chapters together revealed the emerging tension in missions between evangelisation and civilisation. She was referring to the process in which some missionaries saw themselves as change agents, ushering in what they perceived to be the superior western culture. Ruth Compton Brouwer

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considered why women took on that civilising role to such an extent and focused specifically on the Canadian Presbyterian Mission in Central India, 1877-1914. As role models, female missionaries were found to be most effective when they had children in care over a long period of time however even then the missionaries were aware of the problems inherent in changing cultural patterns. The lack of converts was a matter of concern to them. With its primary role of evangelism, the AAM/UAM did not set out to establish institutions although this did occur in Western Australia. The issue of social training versus evangelism, and what type of role model the women were for children in their care will be of significance in this research.

Flemming herself wrote on women missionaries and social change in North India, from 1870 to 1910. She challenged the view that women missionaries contributed significantly to social change for woman, arguing that they either modelled roles which were already present for Indian women, or were completely unattainable. She suggested that women missionaries had accepted the ideology of separate spheres for men and women, and therefore they could achieve little change in attitudes towards women. Flemming recognised the contradiction of a lack of equality for women within a missionary organisation when the mission continued to draw attention to the degradation of Indian women. No positive perceptions were given by the missionaries of the Hindu or Moslem religions and they did not appear to have learned to appreciate other cultures. Flemming found no evidence of missionary women acting in solidarity with Indian women over their mutual concerns, rather there was a sense of western superiority.

Similarly, Marjorie King examined the attempt by American women missionaries in China to use education as a means to instigate social change for Chinese

women. King concluded that missionary women set out to transform Chinese women into ideal women according to their own western culture, but this actually reinforced the traditional position of women within a patriarchal society. These issues will be addressed within the AAM/UAM, including the level of appreciation of Aboriginal culture by the missionaries and evidence of missionary women in solidarity with Aboriginal women over mutual concerns.

*Women and Missions: Past and Present: Anthropological and Historical Perceptions* was an edited volume by Fiona Bowie, Deborah Kirkwood and Shirley Ardener and aimed to recover women’s history within the Christian missionary context, in the time frame of late eighteenth century to the time of publication in 1993. The work was in two sections. The following articles from Part One focused on women missionaries. In her essay entitled “Protestant Missionary Women: Wives and Spinsters” Deborah Kirkwood wrote of Protestant missions in South Central Africa during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Her method was first to examine the position of missionary wives, noting their invisibility and that this created a problem for research. She then turned to single women, for by the second half of the nineteenth century new opportunities were emerging for women to serve as missionaries particularly in the area of female education. Kirkwood concluded that married women became invisible, submerged into their husband’s role and agreed with Hill that single women achieved a new model of professional, independent women which in turn presented an alternative model to the young women they taught. Kirkwood emphasised that women missionaries were sustained in the knowledge that they were furthering God’s purpose for women as well as men and she implied a consciousness on the part of

women missionaries of the struggle for women’s empowerment, for themselves and for the women to whom they ministered.

Several issues have become apparent here which relate to research in the AAM/UAM context. Firstly was the acceptance of women. A second issue that emerged was that women, particularly married women, have been invisible to historians. Kirkwood found that women missionaries were consciously working for women’s empowerment, their own and the women they ministered to. They achieved a level of independence and yet remained within a patriarchal church and society. The thesis will investigate the position of single and married women within the AAM/UAM where married women did not give up their status as missionaries on marriage and so were role models for women of western culture in an era when most married women with children stayed within the home sphere. Whether this was seen as empowering for Indigenous women will be the subject of further research.

In the same publication, Peter Williams wrote “‘The Missing Link’: The Recruitment of Women Missionaries in some English Evangelical Missionary Societies in the Nineteenth Century.” His stated purpose was to discover the reasons for the escalating growth in the numbers of women missionaries and to investigate how the mission societies adapted to this change in terms of training and oversight. Williams found that the acceptance of women was greatest outside the denominational missions, reaching back to Wesley’s time within the revivalist and holiness traditions from which Hudson Taylor and the CIM had emerged. Williams discerned a difference within the CIM that revealed greater empowerment of women in the faith mission compared to the traditional societies.

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89 Peter Williams, “‘The Missing Link’: The Recruitment of Women Missionaries in some English Evangelical Missionary Societies in the Nineteenth Century.” Ibid, 43-69.
Cecillie Swaisland addressed the issue of recruitment of single women missionaries in Protestant missions in South Africa in the nineteenth century. She tackled the question of why it was difficult to recruit women when there was a lack of employment opportunities for middle class single women in Britain, and so many women were active church members. She found that the attitudes in their home country concerning women, and their limited opportunities for education and employment affected the numbers who offered for service overseas and in addition, many who did offer were found to be unsuitable. From the examples she provided, the role for married women on the mission field was either supporting a missionary husband or other male family member or teaching or nursing. Swaisland also recognised that evangelism, which took primary importance for both women and men in the CIM, appeared to take a secondary role for women missionaries within other Protestant missionary societies.

Using specific examples of missionary women in the 1840s Valentine Cunningham explored the great personal cost to missionaries, particularly women and their children. She also wrote of the courage that was rarely acknowledged within the mission publications. What was published for supporters at home were triumphant stories of spiritual progress while complaints of withheld mail and reports of chronic health problems and stress were censored. The article reinforced Kirkwood’s analysis of the invisibility of missionary wives and the male domination of the London Missionary Society. Her pursuit of women within the records enabled Cunningham to draw out evidence of women’s indispensable contribution in the field of education. The personal cost to both single and married women in terms of health and stress will be investigated in the AAM/UAM context where health problems or stress levels were directly related to the isolation, loneliness and lack of facilities that were part of missionary life.

91 Valerie Cunningham, “‘God and Nature Intended You for a Missionary’s Wife’: Mary Hill, Jane Eyre and Other Missionary Women in the 1840s,” ibid, 85-105.
Part Two of this edited work on women and missions focused on mission impact on women. Adrian Hastings recognised that the situation of women had been overlooked in both the male-dominated missionary church and the male-dominated African culture.92 His article complemented Kirkwood in the sense that it began with an analysis of women missionaries as role models in which he recognised a freedom on the mission field that was not available to women in their home country. His suggestion that women missionaries were equal to their male colleagues failed to take into account the invisibility of women missionaries, as described earlier by Bowie. Hastings referred to the fact that despite the predominance of women among early converts, the rise of male clergy within the African church and the authority of the church leadership actually restricted women within marriage and education as the African church moved into its second generation. From this, it would appear that the role model provided by women missionaries was one of women still subject to male authority. Within the third generation of Christian women, he saw women to be the African church’s greatest asset, which may be so, but his suggestion that the nineteenth century male missionaries’ attitude of feminist liberation was instrumental in this was unlikely and unsubstantiated.

Modupe Labode wrote concerning ways African women were a particular focus for women missionaries from 1850-1900.93 Looking at the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, the writer recognised that many of the missionaries were single, upper to middle class women and their work concentrated on women in the fields of teaching, nursing, caring for orphans and mothers and children. They upheld the ideology of the appropriate separate sphere for women being within the home. The role of women in establishing Christianity was seen as vital by the missionary society who brought a western model to their work and sought to impose that on the African

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92 Adrian Hastings, “Were Women a Special Case?,” ibid, 109-125.
people without learning about what it meant to be a woman within African culture. Labode recognised that women missionaries were involved in attempting to form the identity of African women according to their perception of European issues of class and gender.

Fiona Bowie used case studies from Cameroon to argue that the insistence on monogamous marriages has been a hindrance to the spread of Christianity in Africa.94 A clash of cultural values became evident between the chiefs and the mission authorities over marriage and childrearing customs. Bowie suggested that missionaries linked their western culture with Christian faith. She concluded that within Africa the contextualisation of the Christian faith was only beginning. For women she detected a double colonisation of European models of Christianity imposed together with a dominant male culture.

Continuing the theme of mission impact on women, Tabitha Kanogo wrote within the context of colonial Kenya, linking the introduction of Christianity with colonialism.95 Missionaries and administrators were seen to represent the colonial power, with a lack of respect for African culture that resulted in a hostile reception. It was discernable from Kanoga and the other writers in this section that the lack of respect of local culture emerged as an issue for writers who had received the missionaries into their culture, and that colonialism brought further male domination to African women. Recognising and including the Aboriginal experience will be given priority within this research into the AAM/UAM history.

Aparna Basu turned to the impact of missionary women in the context of India and took the position that Indian women had benefited from the colonial English, specifically women missionaries, through the opportunities they provided for education

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and the attention they gave to the low social position of women. Basu recognised the link between colonial power and Christian missions and yet gave a very positive critique of the contribution of women missionaries. With its more positive attitude than the previous articles, Baru drew attention to the reality that the variety of location and circumstance provided a range of experience and this diversity needed to be heard. Nyungar culture is also influenced by the particular location and experience of individual groups and the interpretation will consider this.

Dana Lee Robert’s social history of American women in mission was published in 1996. Robert began from the assumption that women had participated in the creation of specifically American mission theories and that gender had affected the outcomes. Of particular relevance to this research was her chapter entitled “Women and Independent Evangelical Mission.” Robert described faith missions as a new stage in mission theory because within a faith mission women were sent out specifically to be evangelists. Robert drew attention to the faith principle. She recognised a fine balance between not soliciting for funds and reporting needs. Like Orr and Fiedler she agreed that the faith missions had been influenced by the Holiness Movement and this combined with the premillennial belief in the imminent second coming of Christ created a sense of urgency to reach every person with the Christian gospel. A concern for those who were thought to be at risk of eternal damnation was the primary motivating force of faith missions and overshadowed any motive of improving the situation of women. Robert described a typical woman faith missionary from the Africa Inland Mission as single, of limited education and from a rural background. In addition, she would have had a deep personal religious experience, have been spiritually formed through nondenominational, premillennial dispensational Bible study and intended to be an

Robert’s description of the typical woman faith missionary has a resemblance to the AAM women where the issues of gender and equality were also evident and will require further analysis in the Australian context.

In her 1996 article, Lydia Hoyle discussed the motivation behind single women missionaries in the nineteenth century. Hoyle examined American Protestant missions and found that the common desire of women missionaries was to engage in something that was seen to be useful. In addition, Hoyle found that missionary service provided females with a vocational identity and, perhaps more significantly, arose out of a renewed faith experience and sense of call from God. Concern for the spiritual welfare of the people amongst whom they served was recognized by Hoyle as a third key reason for missionary service.

Rosemary Seton wrote in 1996 on the issue of recruitment of women missionaries when she researched the recruitment policy of the London Missionary Society and examined the motivation, education and social and employment background of female applicants between the years 1875 and 1914. She referred to the importance of the 1859 revival in Britain and the fact that the CIM was formed at the time when there was a growth of interest in mission which occurred through that revival. Seton described how most women traced their sense of call to be missionaries to their childhood and the influence of their family or minister. Like Kirkwood and Swaisland, Seton recognised the significance of class and she drew attention to the process by which applicants to the London Missionary Society were assessed by a women’s committee who rejected many applicants as unsuitable according to their criteria of class, education, age, health and practical experience of philanthropic work.

98 Ibid, 216.
The contrasting approach of Hudson Taylor and the CIM required candidates to have Evangelical qualities but gender, class or education provided no barrier to acceptance and this enabled easier recruitment opportunities for women within the CIM. Since the AAM modelled itself on the CIM, similarities can be drawn in Seton’s comparison of the CIM and other missions with the recruitment of AAM missionaries.

In the same volume was Rosemary Fitzgerald’s article on the call of women medical missionaries to India in the late nineteenth century. She concluded that the duel aim of healing patients and making converts through medical missions for women was not achieved as had been hoped. Medical work took precedence although this created disquiet amongst those members of the mission who saw evangelism to be the primary task. The call to medical mission service and the need for training was a catalyst in creating opportunities for western women to enter the mission field and the medical professions. The issues of call and training will be investigated in the case studies for they will influence the experience of the women in their mission encounters.

Brian Stanley wrote in 1996 of the process of writing a mission history at the end of the twentieth century. Stanley drew attention to the reality of fragile records, not always kept in secure storage, and of political and cultural issues that can lead to the loss of this heritage. Mission archives were also the subject of Deborah Gaitskell’s article arising out of her experience of researching the education of women in South Africa. She concluded that mission archives really were not sufficiently comprehensive and needed to be supplemented by government sources which covered different aspects of the history. In addition, mission printed periodicals were invaluable for the insights they gave of mission personnel. Finally, Gaitskell recognised the value

101 Rosemary Fitzgerald, "A 'Peculiar and Exceptional Measure': The Call for Medical Missionaries for India in the Late Nineteenth Century," Ibid, 174-196.
in using oral histories and emerging written accounts by former Indigenous students which enabled a cross-cultural interpretation. The process of conducting this research was also hampered by inadequate mission records since AAM archives for Western Australia were not available. Government and other sources, including interviews with Aboriginal people, will be used to augment mission records.

Writing in 1998, Jane Haggis followed the journey of female missionaries towards professionalism, through the records of the London Missionary Society from 1875 to 1900. The tendency of feminist historians of the 1990s to avoid women missionaries because they were not outspokenly feminist was seen as an omission which overlooked the fact that women missionaries served as a precursor of the shift of women from the confines of the home to work within the wider context. Haggis, wrote of the connection between class, gender, race and nationalism as well as religious discourse that suggested there was an influence of the women’s movement upon the women’s missionary movement. Within the UAM and its antecedents, there was limited rhetoric that linked women missionaries with the women’s movement. Although the women were independent, they did not have professional qualifications. They did possess a sense of vocation that was practised with an air of professionalism and integrity. This issue is worthy of further exploration. This research will facilitate the exploration of changes and continuities of gender roles within the UAM organisation.

*Gendered Missions: Women and Men in Missionary Discourse and Practice* was a 1999 publication edited by Mary Taylor Huber and Nancy C. Lutkehaus in which the discussion on women and mission in the colonial context was furthered developed to include the challenge to gender roles. They concluded that their multidisciplinary

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104 Jane Haggis, ""A heart that has felt the love of God and longs for others to know it": conventions of gender, tensions of self and constructions of difference in offering to be a lady missionary," *Women's History Review* Vol 7 No 2 (1998).

approach unearthed ambiguities and contradictions within mission thinking about gender issues, but that these points of tension created opportunities for change.

In her 2002 edited work *Gospel Bearers, Gender Barriers*, which researched missionary women in the twentieth century, Dana L. Robert aimed to highlight the contribution of women alongside the difficulties they faced.\(^{106}\) Robert acknowledged that her earlier work *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice* was limited in its treatment of twentieth century issues for women.\(^{107}\) In this later work, Robert recognised that the rise of fundamentalism within Evangelicalism saw an increasing emphasis on the subordination of women which had repercussions for women missionaries. She concluded that while women comprised the majority of missionaries and members of the Christian church they continue to meet gender barriers that deny opportunities for recognition and ministry.

Gender analysis was again the focus for Rhonda Semple in her 2003 publication *Missionary Women: Gender, Professionalism and the Victorian Idea of Christian Mission*.\(^{108}\) Semple’s research covered the time-frame from the formation of the China Inland Mission in 1865 to 1910 when the Edinburgh Missionary Conference set down guidelines for the recruitment and training of women missionaries. Her work examined the experience and writing of specific women missionaries in order to analyse both personal and broader issues in the mission context. With her recognition of the importance of the individual to mission encounters, Semple provided validation for the methodology in this study in its use of case studies of individual missionaries to explore issues of Evangelicalism, gender and culture. These writers confirm the relevance of the gender issues which will form a substantial theme in this project.


The issue of gender has received wide attention from mission historians in recent research. It is impossible to cover every publication. Since this project is specifically located within the Australian context not all publications are relevant to the themes of this research. Therefore, the historiography will now focus on Australian historians working in the field of women’s history.

In her 1991 thesis on the work of AAM/UAM missionary Annie Lock, Catherine Bishop researched Lock’s thoughts and actions alongside the perceptions of the non-Aboriginal society, as well as the Aboriginal responses to Lock, and her interpretation of those responses. Bishop was aware that the UAM antecedent, the NSWAM, became a faith mission in 1902 and associated that with the principle of not soliciting funds and trusting God to provide for physical needs of the missions. She recognized that the AAM/UAM was interdenominational and accepted female as well as male missionaries. Bishop observed that Lock judged Aboriginal culture according to its compatibility with Christianity which she identified with western civilisation and she showed minimal interest in learning the local Indigenous language. Bishop concluded that her research revealed some difference between perceptions and reality concerning women missionaries which centred on the role of women in society and the role of a missionary. For example, Bishop found that late twentieth-century feminists saw women missionaries as neither victims nor feminists and so did not bother to research them. Bishop concluded that while Lock was notoriously independent this was not because of feminist ideology, but her Christian commitment to evangelism. Had she investigated further the principles of the AAM/UAM and the position of women in Evangelical churches in Australia, she would have seen that in their role of evangelism

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111 Ibid, 74, 86.
112 Ibid, 3.
women missionaries were empowered to operate outside their traditional role within the home. Bishop suggested that when women missionaries are ignored by feminist historians they continue to remain hidden.\textsuperscript{113} Her work contributed to the reversal of that reality.

In 1994 Patricia Grimshaw, Marilyn Lake, Ann McGrath and Marian Quartly, all feminist historians, worked together to produce \textit{Creating a Nation}, an attempt to challenge the patriarchal view of history by revealing the role of women in the emerging nation of Australia.\textsuperscript{114} This new approach understood that identity was not shaped by gender alone but also by race, culture, class and sexual preference. Three chapters were devoted to Aboriginal experience within the developing nation. From the index, it appeared that missionaries were mentioned on only three pages of the book.\textsuperscript{115} This suggested that Bishop and Haggis were correct that feminist historians have neglected women missionaries. Alongside the acknowledgement that missions did provide basic education to Indigenous people it was noted that missionaries interfered with traditional customs, particularly that of marriage. While attention was given to the role of the established church in maintaining women’s place in the home, the writers ignored the group of Australian women who worked among Indigenous Australians as faith missionaries.\textsuperscript{116}

Hilary Carey reduced the neglect by historians of women missionaries with her 1995 article “Companions in the Wilderness? Missionary Wives in Colonial Australia, 1788-1900.”\textsuperscript{117} Carey argued that many missionary wives were more than companions to their husbands for they were actively engaged in the mission enterprise. Although she found them to be implicated in the destruction of Aboriginal culture and the separation

\textsuperscript{113} Ibid, 140.
\textsuperscript{114} Patricia Grimshaw et al., \textit{Creating a Nation} (Ringwood, Victoria: McPhee Gribble, 1994).
\textsuperscript{115} Ibid, 135, 141-2.
\textsuperscript{116} Ibid, 202-203.
of Aboriginal children from their families, Carey acknowledged missionary wives alleviated some of the cost of European colonisation. Carey differentiated between missionary wives whose role diminished after 1900, and women missionaries who were numerous and successful from 1900 to 1945. This is an important difference. In the UAM and its antecedents, wives of missionaries were both missionaries and wives. The case studies in this project will be analysed to determine visibility levels in mission records and leadership opportunities in relation to marital position.

In *Getting Equal* which was published in 1999, Marilyn Lake looked at the often forgotten story of feminism in Australian history. One complete chapter focused on feminist women who campaigned for Aboriginal rights and Mary Bennett featured prominently in this chapter. Bennett was on the staff at the United Aborigines’ Mission at Mount Margaret from 1932 to 1942, but neither the UAM nor Lake, acknowledged her as a missionary. Women missionaries particularly from the faith missions were again invisible to feminist writers, confirming Lock’s analysis that women missionaries were not feminist enough and so were neglected by historians.

Following the 1997 completion of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission Inquiry into the separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families, *Broken Circles* was published by Anna Haebich in 2000 to further document the appalling history of fragmented Aboriginal families due to the forced removal of Aboriginal children. Her chapter on Western Australia placed this policy within the broader context of Aboriginal administration and included government and mission institutions which provided care for Aboriginal children between 1840 until the 1960s. While not a text on women missionaries, Haebich demonstrated missionaries

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were certainly part of this shared history, including the UAM missionaries who cared for children at various institutions around the nation. The focus of this research on the neglected history of women missionaries will include a critical appraisal of missionary involvement in the separation of children from their families.

Peggy Brock took a comparative approach to colonial missions in the year 2000, when she wrote “Mission Encounters in the Colonial World: British Columbia and South-West Australia,” and reported similar responses by Indigenous people in both locations. Brock found that UAM missionaries in both South Australia and Western Australia did not consult with Aboriginal people before establishing their work although Aboriginal people chose to remain at a mission if it was to their advantage, such as providing the only opportunity of education for their children. She referred to the fact that prior to the Second World War Aboriginal Australians only received education within mission contexts and as an example, she cited the untrained UAM teachers in the Flinders Ranges during the 1930s. Brock drew attention to the way missionaries connected the Christian faith with western culture and were judgmental of Aboriginal culture. She also discerned that most people of Aboriginal descent in southern Australia have direct connections to a mission community. Conversion to Christianity was recognised as an informed choice that was made from a range of experiences within a cross-cultural context.

Also in 2000, Margaret Allen explored South Australian women missionaries in India and asked why they chose India rather than Aboriginal Australia in which to serve. Allen recognised the support given by South Australian Baptist minister Rev Silas Mead, but noted he supported the Indian work rather than interest people in mission work among Indigenous Australians. She clearly did not fully research the life

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of Mead for in 1908 Mead was vice-president of the inaugural committee of the AAM in Western Australia, evidence of his interest in Aboriginal mission. Allen suggested in choosing missionary work in India, Australian women continued the gender and race hierarchies inherent within the British Empire. Although this research is focused on women missionaries to Aboriginal Australians, gender and race have been identified as issues to investigate.

*Mission Girls* by Christine Choo was published in Western Australia in 2001. Choo examined the effects of colonisation on Aboriginal women of the Kimberley region in the north-west of Western Australia between 1900 and 1950. She focussed on Catholic Missions and addressed issues of gender and class, but gave special attention to injustices based on race. Choo acknowledged that Aboriginal women themselves chose to stand in solidarity with Aboriginal men on this issue rather than take up gender oppression. She took the approach that Aboriginal women were not always victims, but made choices and her goal was to record this using both archival and oral sources. Her thematic approach and focus on a specific location and culture attempted to bring the Aboriginal women’s stories from the margins into the centre and in the process she produced new insights for non-Aboriginal Australians. The chosen period was the era of western colonisation of the Kimberley, a time of enormous change including repressive legislation imposed on Aboriginal people. Choo concluded that at Catholic Missions the Aboriginal women learned necessary skills to adapt to the changed world around them and by the 1950s they continued to resist the forces that oppressed them and were journeying towards self-determination. Choo referred to the way colonists constructed an identity for Indigenous Australians and this will be explored in the AAM context.

where Aborigines’ were seen as sinners and racially inferior, people without culture or religion.

Shurlee Swain explored the redefinition of gender roles of women preachers from the revivalist tradition in late nineteenth-century Australia in her article published in 2002.124 Her critical reading of contemporary church reports of the role of these women evangelists argued that their almost invisible presence in church newspapers was in contrast to the effort to discount the challenge created by the female preachers to traditional gender expectations. This is relevant to the current research in that the antecedents of the UAM were also from this reviver stream of theology arising from the 1858-59 Revival. The article confirms that the rise of women within Evangelicalism and the contrasting effort to control them will be cause for ongoing reflection.

Religious belief in the lives of twentieth century Evangelical women missionaries and deaconesses was the subject of an article published in 2002 by Anne O’Brien.125 O’Brien recognised there are many ways of approaching women’s history and suggested that alongside issues of gender, class and race, the spirituality of women was not only shaped by these issues, but influenced the way women exercised autonomy in their lives. This research will further develop the interface of Evangelicalism with issues of gender, class and culture as it investigates women missionaries in the AAM/UAM.

The First Biennial TransTasman Conference held in Canberra in 2004 addressed the topic of women missionaries from Australia and New Zealand. In her paper presented at the conference, Christine Brett focused on the Aborigines’ Inland Mission,

the other faith mission with the same foundation as the UAM. She raised an important issue for mission history when she recognised that historians are often critical of missionaries, whereas Aboriginal writers have written of their appreciation of female missionaries. Margaret Tucker was cited by Brett. Tucker certainly wrote graciously of the women missionaries at Moonah Cullah, even as she recalled the heartaches of her childhood on the government reserves at Moonah Cullah and Cummeragunga.

Anne O’Brien also recognised these contradictions within Australian mission history. In *God’s Willing Workers: Women and Religion in Australia* published in 2005 she wrote of those removed from their families as children who experienced the painful loss of identity and yet recognised that missionaries often provided the semblance of home. This ambivalence in light of the mission experience will be investigated in the thesis, using cross-cultural perspectives to draw conclusions.

This historiography of women missionaries has discerned a growing interest in a previously neglected area of research. Issues have emerged which will be investigated in this research of women missionaries who served with the Australian Aborigines’ Mission and/or the United Aborigines’ Mission in Western Australia between 1908 and 1971. The historiography has confirmed that gender-based issues are paramount in writing these histories of women missionaries. They include the recruitment and empowerment of women as independent and professional missionaries, the position of women as role models to other women in their community of origin as well as in the mission context and the stories of personal cost and courage that have been suppressed. Alongside the issue of gender, it has emerged that race, culture and class will all be significant areas for analysis.

The historiography has confirmed that missionary principles and belief will be essential to the analysis. While historians agreed that faith missions can be defined as missions which base their principles on those of the CIM founded by Hudson and Maria Taylor in 1865, there was inconsistency in the perception of the content of those principles. The following chapter will turn to writings of Taylor himself to determine the principles that will be used here to define a faith mission. Similarly, there was no consistency in the analysis of AAM/UAM principles and so the next chapter will provide an opportunity to return to source material relating to the NSWAM decision in 1902 to adopt the principles of the CIM. This will enable an examination of the principles to analyse the extent they really were in keeping with those of the CIM.
Chapter Two  Principles of faith missions

On 3 July 1893, a Miss J. Watson called together three members of the Petersham Congregational Church Christian Endeavour Society to join her in planning a picnic for the Dharawal families who camped at La Perouse on the shore of Botany Bay near Sydney, New South Wales. Eight years later, the New South Wales Aborigines’ Mission would claim that picnic as the foundation of the mission. ¹ This chapter will narrate the steps from 1893 when that small group of young people began to work at La Perouse until 1902 when the New South Wales Aborigines’ Mission (NSWAM) made the decision to adopt the principles of the China Inland Mission (CIM). This will lead on to an examination of the principles of the CIM, followed by an investigation into the extent they were applied by the NSWAM. It will show that although the NSWAM stated they were adopting the principles of the CIM, they already had some aspects of those principles in place since 1893 and while several additional principles of the CIM were adopted, other features of the CIM were never implemented. The analysis will demonstrate there were additional influences on the NSWAM and these all contributed to a mission that was Evangelical and premillennial in its theology.

Botany Bay was a significant site in the history of the colony of New South Wales. From La Perouse it was possible to look across to the southern shores of Botany Bay where Captain James Cook landed in 1770. The adjacent Yarra Bay was where Captain Phillip made his landing in 1788 before moving to Port Jackson to establish the British penal colony. Adjacent to the suburb of La Perouse was Frenchman’s Bay, so named because the French explorer Lapérouse camped on the beach there between January and March 1788. ² In her 2005 publication, Botany Bay: Where Histories Meet, Maria Nugent developed the symbolic meaning attached to Botany Bay within

¹ NSW Aborigines’ Advocate, July 1901, 1.
Aboriginal history and the history of Australia as a nation. 3 Botany Bay was not only the initial site commemorating European settlement, but marked the place where the dispossession of the Aboriginal people began. Nugent presented the Aboriginal historical analysis that Dharawal people continued to live in Botany Bay and the coastal region to the south throughout the nineteenth century. 4 That continued presence was recognised by Missionary Retta Long who worked at La Perouse in the 1890s for she recalled meeting “Old Jimmy,” a son of one of the Dharawal people who recalled witnessing the landing of Captain Cook. Long also described how these Aboriginal people living on the outskirts of the city of Sydney were despised by the settler community, “looked upon as refuse, fit only for destruction.” 5 It was to this community that the young Christian Endeavourers came in 1893.

The mission established at La Perouse was originally under the auspices of the New South Wales Aborigines’ Protection Association (APA). This Association had formed in 1881 when Daniel Matthews of the Maloga Mission on the Murray River came to Sydney and drew together a committee of Christian ministers and laymen, including some members of the New South Wales Parliament. 6 The APA should not be confused with the Aborigines’ Protection Board (APB), a government body, established in New South Wales in 1883 to deal with the claims by Aboriginal people for land in the aftermath of white settlement. 7 John Brown Gribble was the APA missionary at Warrangesda on the Murrumbidgee River and his report of 1882 described a building programme that included cottages for married couples and dormitories for singles plus a

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3 Ibid, 3-4.
4 Ibid, 56.
chapel large enough to hold two hundred people. Gribble was offended by the racial prejudice he observed among so-called “Christian” people. In his report Gribble cited a case where

One Christian lady(?) gave me her opinion that the very best thing to be done with the half-castes on the Murrumbidgee was to knock them in the head as soon as they were born, because she did not think they possessed souls.

In contrast, Gribble hoped Warrangesda would become a home for the residents and he worked alongside them to make the mission station self-supporting through farming and vegetable growing. School was provided for the children who were housed in dormitories rather than with their parents. In conjunction with the practical work, Gribble organised daily services of morning and evening prayer, and worship and Sunday school on Sundays. He reported that services were well attended and the people particularly enjoyed the singing. Gribble stated his belief that “civilisation” and Christianity were closely related and that his work incorporated both. Historian John Harris recognised that although Gribble and Matthews identified Christianity with their own culture, as APA missionaries they were among the few westerners in the nineteenth century who showed compassion and fought for justice for the Aboriginal people.

UAM historian Ernest Telfer wrote that in the year 1893, a committee member of the APA informed the Petersham Congregational Christian Endeavour members of their desire for a Christian witness at La Perouse and Jeanie Watson responded to the challenge. Some years earlier, in 1889, H. E. Hockey had commenced an occasional

9 Ibid, 3.
10 Ibid, 1.
11 Harris, One Blood, 184.
open-air Gospel meeting at La Perouse with Christian Endeavourers from the Woollahra Baptist Church however it was 1893 before Watson organised regular contact.12

Christian Endeavour was an Evangelical society for young people which began in a Congregational Church in America in 1881 and it spread rapidly to other denominations and countries.13 The first society to form in New South Wales was at the Newtown Congregational Church in 1888.14 By 1891 the various groups formed a union within New South Wales.15 Minutes of the inaugural meeting of the New South Wales Christian Endeavour Societies Union held on 23 November, 1891, show that those in attendance were all from Congregational Churches, however the constitution adopted at that meeting welcomed all Christian Endeavour societies into the union.16 That meeting resolved that the officers and one female delegate from each society would constitute the Executive Committee. When the Union met next in December 1891, Miss M. J. Watson represented the Petersham Congregational Church, one of six female delegates meeting with four male clergy and one lay man.17 Watson was the woman referred to by Telfer as the convenor of the Christian Endeavour committee that organised the first meeting at La Perouse in 1893.18 The Annual Report of the New South Wales Aborigines Protection Association for 1894 showed that Jeanie Watson was later appointed as the missionary to La Perouse and with the support of Christian Endeavour societies, a mission house had been opened there.19 A letter from the President of the New South Wales Christian Endeavour Union, quoted by Telfer, established that

12 Telfer, Amongst Australian Aborigines, 13-14.
14 Ibid, 11.
15 Ibid, 55.
17 Minutes from 17 December 1891, Ibid.
although CE members were expected to support the mission projects of their own
denomination, in this case it was decided appropriate to contribute to the work at La
Perouse because it was interdenominational, and so little was being done by the
denominations.\textsuperscript{20} Christian Endeavourers financially supported the building of the
mission house. In 1894, the Aborigines’ Protection Board adopted new regulations that
meant the Board would meet management expenses of APA mission stations, but would
not provide financial support for missionaries.\textsuperscript{21} As a result, the APA was not able to
continue its support of the mission work at La Perouse and within twelve months
Watson was transferred to Cumeroogunga, an APA settlement adjacent to Maloga,
where she served as the matron.\textsuperscript{22}

It was ironic that as the work struggled to survive at La Perouse, Australian
missionaries were already serving overseas. As early as 1882, two Baptist women from
South Australia, Ellen Arnold and Marie Gilbert had been serving as missionaries in
India and others followed.\textsuperscript{23} In China, a massacre in August 1895 resulted in the death
of nine missionaries and four children, including Nelly and Topsy Saunders from
Melbourne and Annie Gordon from Tasmania. Their martyrdom received wide publicity
in Australia and Australians quickly came forward to serve in their place.\textsuperscript{24} The appeal
of mission work in exotic locations has been linked by Margaret Allen to the
widespread belief in the inferiority of Aboriginal Australians. Allen also suggested that
women missionaries serving overseas accepted the gender and racial hierarchies

\textsuperscript{20} Telfer, \textit{Amongst Australian Aborigines}, 15-21.
\textsuperscript{21} New South Wales Aborigines Protection Association, "Annual report of the NSW Aborigines
Protection Association for 1894," 7.
\textsuperscript{22} Telfer, \textit{Amongst Australian Aborigines}, 22.
\textsuperscript{23} Donovan F. Mitchell, \textit{Ellen Arnold: Pioneer and Pathfinder} (Adelaide: South Australian Baptist Union
Foreign Missionary and Book and Publication Departments, 1932), 9.
\textsuperscript{24} Ian Welch, "Nellie, Topsy and Annie: Australian Anglican Martyrs, Fujian Province, China, 1 August
1895" (paper presented at the 1st Biennial TransTasman Conference: ANZ Missionaries, At Home and
Abroad, The Australian National University, Canberra, 2004), 1-27. & Loane, \textit{The Story of the China
Inland Mission in Australia and New Zealand 1890-1964}, 16.
inherent within the British Empire. In addressing these issues, Allen did not develop the spiritual motivation for missionary service, nor the role of women and men who did direct their concern for mission towards Aboriginal people. While historians have recognised that early attempts at mission work in the Australian colonies had been a failure, and overseas missions attracted more support, a new missionary movement was emerging.

From 1895, the New South Wales Christian Endeavour Union assumed responsibility for the mission at La Perouse and Telfer described an expanded “strong” committee known as the La Perouse Aborigines’ Mission Committee. Seven male members were added to the committee at this time and one woman, Harriet Baker. Although it was a woman who was the foundational convenor and missionary, the role of women at the committee level was already being reduced. The Aborigines’ Protection Association evidently still played a role at La Perouse for they recommended Paddy Swift, an Aboriginal Christian from Cumeroogunga, to be appointed as the La Perouse missionary. Telfer explained that problems emerged when the Aborigines’ Protection Board refused permission to build a house and after months of waiting the committee decided Swift was unsuitable. Telfer suggested that the APB believed a resident missionary at La Perouse would encourage Aboriginal people to settle in the Sydney area and they did not want that to happen. In her 1982 PhD thesis, Goodall cited two cases in 1915 where the Board was reluctant to give permission for Aboriginal Christian lay preachers to take services on Aboriginal reserves. As an alternative to

27 Telfer, Amongst Australian Aborigines, 24.
28 Ibid, 26-27.
30 Goodall, "A History of Aboriginal Communities in New South Wales, 1909-1939", 84.
Swift, Retta Dixon was appointed as missionary in September 1897, and approval was given by the APB to build a mission house in January 1898. This confirmed that Swift was deemed unsuitable because the APB served the interests of the white settlers and did not encourage leadership by Aboriginal people. Meanwhile, Dixon reported Christian converts at La Perouse and she visited other centres where Aboriginal people were living. This growth prompted another name change in 1899 to the New South Wales Aborigines’ Mission (NSWAM). In February 1901, Ernest Telfer, was appointed as the missionary in the Macleay River district in northern New South Wales.

The first edition of *The New South Wales Aborigines’ Advocate* was published by the NSWAM in July 1901, stating the aim of the mission to be “the carrying of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Aborigines scattered throughout New South Wales.” That first edition gave estimated numbers of Aborigines’ in each Australian state including one hundred thousand in Western Australia, six thousand eight hundred in New South Wales and none in Tasmania. These estimated figures were of “full-blood” Aborigines’ and showed that the definition of Aboriginality was based on race and colour of skin rather than family and cultural identification. The first editorial stated that the Aboriginal population was quickly dying out and since European settlers had taken their land, Christians had a responsibility to share the gospel and the benefits of western civilisation. The editorial revealed that in 1901 the NSWAM was aware of the debt Australians owed to the Indigenous people. Reference was made to a current political debate, that since Australian Federation on 1 January 1901 some Australians had been calling for the government to keep “Australia for the Australians.”

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32 Ibid.
33 Ibid, 36.
34 *NSW Aborigines' Advocate*, July 1901, 1.
35 Ibid.
36 Ibid, July 1901, 2.
37 Ibid.
phrase had been put forward by G. D. Meudell in 1882 as a call for Australia to be governed by “native-born Australians.”

In 1901 the NSWAM was referring to the White Australia Policy and the intention of the 1901 Immigration Restriction Bill to keep Asian and African immigrants out of Australia. To complicate the argument, in Queensland the sugar industry had benefited economically from the exploitation of thousands of Kanakas from Melanesia in what was virtually slave labour and the plantation owners did not want this practice ended. In his 1978 publication on the history of the twentieth century in Australia, Russel Ward suggested this problem arose due to the imperialism of most Europeans in the period from 1870 to 1914, which included a belief in the superiority of the Caucasian race.

Although some citizens expressed a humanitarian concern for the Kanakas, Ward alleged that racism was the primary motive when members of Parliament, irrespective of their political allegiance, supported the implementation of the White Australia Policy, and most white Australians at the time agreed with the politicians. This policy related to immigration and Ward did not comment on the plight of the Aboriginal population under a White Australia policy. In 1901 the NSWAM did not enter the debate regarding people born outside Australia, but suggested that it was both undemocratic and unchristian to deny equality to Indigenous Australians because of the colour of their skin. However when the mission described the Aboriginal people as “half civilised” and living in the “chains of sin and darkness”, they displayed their own perception of Aboriginal people as inferior to themselves. These instances confirm that on one level, the NSWAM spoke out against the racial prejudice within Australian society, but in other ways, their cultural and religious bias was evident when they perceived Aboriginal culture as sinful.

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40 NSW Aborigines' Advocate, July 1901, 2.
41 Ibid, July 1901, 1.
Also included in that July 1901 edition was a call for mission workers and for money to support them. Although missionary Ernest Telfer was a former student of Angas College, a missionary training college in Adelaide, there was no suggestion that a Bible College education was required nor was a professional qualification necessary. What was important was a desire to share the Christian gospel with Aboriginal Australians. When the NSWAM committee was named that month it included five Protestant clergy, and lay people included eight men and two women plus the four male office holders.42 The two missionaries at that time, Retta Dixon and Ernest Telfer, were both lay people. Denominations represented were Baptist, Congregational, Church of England, Primitive Methodist, Presbyterian, Wesleyan, Disciples of Christ and one from the interdenominational welfare agency known as the City Mission.

The lack of finance proved to be an ongoing concern for the NSWAM and in October 1901 for the second time in two months, the mission appealed to supporters for funds to carry on the work and maintain the two missionaries.43 President George Emery Bodley made a New Year call to prayer and suggested a week of self-denial during February 1902 to assist the mission finances.44 The year unfolded with deep concerns within the NSWAM about the plight of the Aboriginal people and the apathy of Australian Christians such that the committee asked themselves what they should do. In November 1902, *The New South Wales Aborigines’ Advocate* reported that the committee had decided that the NSWAM would operate in future under “faith lines” as practised by Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission (CIM).45

The historiography has established that faith missions, as stated by Fiedler, were defined historically as those missions based on the principles developed by Hudson and

42 Ibid, July 1901, 2.
43 Ibid, October 1901, 2.
44 Ibid, January 1902, 3.
Maria Taylor and put into practice in the China Inland Mission.\textsuperscript{46} That historiography was found to be inconclusive regarding the details of those principles, for historians described the principles of the CIM ranging between Orr’s interdenominational principle, located in the 1858-59 Revival, through to the specifics of Fiedler’s detailed list of fifteen principles. Because the historiography was inconclusive, a closer examination will now be conducted into the history of Hudson and Maria Taylor and the principles they adopted in the formation of the CIM.

Hudson Taylor was born in Barnsley, Yorkshire in 1832 and nurtured within a Methodist family.\textsuperscript{47} His biography written by his son and daughter-in-law, Howard and Geraldine Taylor, proudly told of how Taylor’s grandparents had provided hospitality to John Wesley in 1786 when, at the age of eighty-three, the evangelist had preached to the Methodist society at Barnsley.\textsuperscript{48} Brothers John and Charles Wesley and George Whitfield were among the early leaders of the Evangelical Awakening within Protestant Christianity which emerged in the eighteenth century.

True to his Evangelical culture, Taylor had a conversion experience at the age of seventeen, in June 1849.\textsuperscript{49} This was followed by an increasing concern for other people that led to active service among the poor, aimed at conversion of the poor rather than overcoming their poverty.\textsuperscript{50} A conversion experience and active involvement in Christian service were both recognised by the historian of Evangelicalism, David Bebbington, as receiving particular emphasis within the Evangelical ethos.\textsuperscript{51} On 2 December 1849, Taylor wrote to his sister Emily of his deep yearning to find true

\textsuperscript{46} Fiedler, \textit{The Story of Faith Missions}, 11.
\textsuperscript{47} Taylor and Taylor, \textit{Hudson Taylor in Early Years}, 34.
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid, 17.
\textsuperscript{49} Ibid, 69.
\textsuperscript{50} Ibid, 71.
\textsuperscript{51} Bebbington, \textit{Evangelicalism in Modern Britain}, 3.
holiness and that night a second spiritual experience convinced him of God’s call to go to China.⁵²

Internal conflict within the Methodist denomination between paid clergy and local preachers led in 1850 to the formation of the Wesleyan Reformers who were opposed to the power of ministers within their chapels.⁵³ Taylor, with his parents, joined the break-away group, showing Taylor’s early inclination to support lay leadership.⁵⁴ This experience brought with it a growing dissatisfaction with denominational distinctions and Taylor was drawn to associate himself with Brethren groups whose emphasis on unity in Christ appealed to the young man.⁵⁵ The Brethren movement also taught a premillennial view of the end times in which believers would be caught up in the rapture of Christ’s second coming, to be followed by “the great tribulation” for non-believers.⁵⁶ Fiedler researched this prophetic movement from the perspective of faith missions. He wrote that according to the premillennial view, the second coming of Christ was closely related to mission because premillennialists believed that the gospel must be preached to the whole world before the millennium would occur.⁵⁷ Taylor’s links with the Brethren movement and his urgent passion for evangelism as a condition for the return of Christ verified his alignment with this doctrine. It clarified that his passion was not only to evangelise those who had never heard the Gospel previously, but also to hasten the return of Christ. Fiedler recognised that Taylor gave a lead to later faith mission leaders in the way that he applied this theology in a practical way through his simple lifestyle. Taylor needed few possessions because his belief in the imminent

⁵² Taylor and Taylor, *Hudson Taylor in Early Years*, 75-80.
⁵⁶ Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 85-86.
return of Christ made them unnecessary. The perceived urgency of the task of evangelism also opened the way for lay involvement, including women.

In 1854, Taylor arrived in China as a medical missionary with the Chinese Evangelisation Society which had formed in response to a visit of Karl Gütlaff to England around 1850. Of Prussian nationality, Gütlaff aroused considerable support in Europe for his goal to convert the Chinese to Christianity, but organisational problems in China and his death in 1851 meant that the society had only a short life. Taylor disconnected his association with the society when it went into debt as this was against his beliefs and from 1857 Taylor trusted God to provide his needs.

In 1857, Hudson Taylor and his missionary colleague John Jones displayed above the mantel piece in their home in Ningbo, China, a text scroll with the words “Ebenezer, hitherto hath the Lord helped us”. Ebenezer, meaning “a stone of help” was celebrated by the Israelites in the biblical text of 1 Samuel 7:12 as a place of victory. Alongside that text was another, which used words from Genesis 22:14 to proclaim “Jehovah Jireh” - the Lord will provide.” Jehovah-jireh was named by Abraham as the place where God provided a ram to be sacrificed instead of Isaac. Both texts served as a reminder to the two missionaries of their faith in God to provide their needs, and became one of the principles of the China Inland Mission (CIM), which Hudson and Maria Taylor established in 1865. The same words in Chinese characters were hung in the preaching hall as a testimony to the Chinese people they had come to evangelise. There they also served as evidence that Taylor understood the importance of learning the Chinese language and culture in order to communicate the Christian message. Four years after his arrival in China, on 20 January 1858, Taylor was married

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59 Ibid, 253-256.
60 Ibid, 383.
62 Ibid, 95.
to Maria Dyer, a young missionary schoolteacher. At the same time, in 1858, there was an intensification of spiritual fervour among some Evangelicals in America and then Britain that came to be described as the 1858-59 Revival or the Second Evangelical Awakening. Alongside English revivalist preachers Richard Weaver and Reginald Radcliffe, the American James Caughey and Charles Finney conducted revival meetings in Britain that created deep responses.

Diversity within British Evangelicalism had led to the formation of the Evangelical Alliance in 1846 to promote unity among the various different groups and the following common beliefs held by the Evangelical Alliance were later identified with the 1858-59 Revival. The Alliance believed that the Scriptures were inspired by God and authoritative, with individuals having the right of personal interpretation. Unity was recognised within the Godhead of the Trinity and was a model for the unity advocated by the Brethren movement and taken up more widely within the Evangelical Alliance. The depravity of humanity was the result of the disobedience of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. The Incarnation of Jesus as the Son of God was understood for the purpose of his atoning work for sinful humanity, his role as intercessor and his reign. Justification was by faith alone. The Holy Spirit was actively involved in conversion and sanctification. The belief in the resurrection of the body and the judgement of the world leading to eternal reward for the righteous and eternal punishment for the unrighteous completed the list of commonly held beliefs within the 1858-59 Revival.

There were theological differences between the revivalists and other Evangelicals and these differences centred on ordination and the sacraments. The

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63 Taylor and Taylor, *Hudson Taylor in Early Years*, 422-455.
Evangelical Alliance believed that Christian ministry was instituted by God and that the celebration of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper were an obligation for ordained ministers. Members of the Brethren and the Quakers, with their emphasis on lay leadership, did not accept this principle although they were participants in the revival. Theology was not the only barrier between the revivalists and other Evangelicals however, as the emotionalism of the revivalist prayer meetings were too dramatic to have universal appeal. With his glowing descriptions of the revival in England Orr illustrated his bias as a revivalist evangelist and his writing itself displayed the emotional aspect of the revival that attracted some and alienated others.

After six years in China and in failing health, Taylor returned with his family to London in 1860, where the Second Evangelical Awakening was still influencing many Evangelicals. Broken in health, but undiminished in his Evangelical passion for China, Taylor published *China’s Spiritual Need and Claims* in 1865 to expose the urgency he felt for further missionary effort to evangelise the millions of people in inland China who had never heard the Christian gospel. In his *Retrospect*, first published about 1894, Taylor acknowledged the assistance of his wife Maria in writing the earlier publication and he recalled taking it with him to the Perth Conference in Scotland and the Mildmay Conference near London in 1865 and presenting the urgent spiritual need in China to the gathered crowd. Although the historiographical material has largely neglected the contribution of Maria Taylor, here was evidence that not only did she have missionary experience in China before her marriage, but she also worked with her husband to establish the China Inland Mission. Her invisibility to historians is another

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67 Ibid.
70 Taylor and Taylor, *Hudson Taylor in Early Years*, 495-500.
reminder that the story of missionary women has been suppressed until very recent research.

In later life, Hudson Taylor recalled that those years from 1860 to 1865 spent in London translating the New Testament into the Ningbo language led to his conviction that prayer and a deepening of the spiritual life were essential to convict “men” to offer themselves as missionaries with the CIM. As well as men, Taylor recruited both married and single women as missionaries and he recognised that they were an answer to his prayer for workers. This recollection also showed the importance Taylor placed on personal prayer and revealed his affinity with the holiness movement.73

The holiness tradition developed within early Methodism and it had a strong impact within the Second Evangelical Awakening.74 Participants in the Holiness Movement expected a second spiritual experience following conversion to bring a sense of victory over sin, and a life fully surrendered to God.75 Taylor had such an experience in 1849 when he surrendered himself to a life of holiness and missionary work in China.76 Conferences held at Mildmay in North London from 1856 were interdenominational gatherings within this holiness stream of Evangelicalism. In his reference to the importance of the Mildmay Conference, Bebbington noted that the conventions also emphasised missions and the second coming of Christ.77 By 1875, the Keswick Convention had grown out of the holiness convention movement and the support given by Keswick to missions added to its influence within the Second Evangelical Awakening.78 In his analysis of the 1858-59 Revival, Fielder recognised three influences, the Brethren movement, the Holiness movement and the Prophetic

73 Ibid, 118.
75 Fiedler, *The Story of Faith Missions*, 212-216.
77 Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 129.
movement which emerged from an earlier revival in the 1830s. 79 It was evident that these three influences were interconnected and that Hudson and Maria Taylor were attracted to that theological ethos. When Taylor attended the Perth and Mildmay Conferences in 1865, he looked for potential recruits within that revival ethos who would catch his missionary vision.

In the aftermath of the 1858-59 Revival, men and women, often uneducated, were already initiating independent and philanthropic interdenominational and Evangelical societies in their home country. For example, William Quarrier established the Orphan Homes of Scotland in 1864, one year before Taylor launched the China Inland Mission, and Quarrier trusted God entirely for the provision of needs without appealing for funds. 80 Taylor introduced this faith principle into a new focus of an interdenominational mission among people who were culturally and racially different, with the aim of evangelism, not philanthropy.

Orr claimed that the Second Evangelical Awakening lasted fifty years, including the British revivals of Dwight L. Moody and Ira Sankey during the 1870s, and he cited the 1905 Welsh Revival and evangelists such as Reuben Torrey, J. Wilbur Chapman and Charles Alexander in the early twentieth century. 81 As far as the history of faith missions were concerned, Fielder found that the later years of the revival were in fact more important than the earlier years as Moody influenced many people who joined the various faith missions that were emerging. 82 Moody’s influence continued until 1899. 83 Taking a less triumphant view and with the broader context of Victorian Christianity as his focus, Gerald Parsons described the 1858-59 Revival as a shift from earlier spontaneous revivals to gatherings that were organised with visiting revivalist

preachers. He suggested that this revival was actually a failure, appealing only to some Evangelicals with others finding it to be too emotional.\footnote{Parsons, "Emotion and Piety: Revivalism and Ritualism in Victorian Christianity," 214-218.} While Parsons was correct, arguing that at a time when many people were questioning traditional Evangelical beliefs this revival did not have universal appeal, he underestimated its importance to the expansion of Christianity particularly to people of other cultures and races. In addition, he neglected the emerging and significant role of women in this missionary expansion.

The formation of the China Inland Mission (CIM) in 1865 was timely as it was able to attract many lay Evangelicals who were caught up in the enthusiasm of the revival. The first group that sailed for China on 26 May 1866 on board the Lammermuir comprised eighteen adults, including women and men and four children.\footnote{Taylor and Taylor, \textit{The Growth of a Work of God}, 63-65.} By May 1888, the CIM listed its membership at one hundred and thirty two men and one hundred women missionaries, evidence of growth into a significant mission.\footnote{Taylor, \textit{China's Spiritual Need and Claim}, 91-93.}

It is appropriate to seek an understanding of Taylor’s position through his own writing and therefore the chapter will now examine the text he wrote with Maria and took to the Perth and Mildmay conferences, followed by a study of his later retrospective work. Although the historiography revealed that some historians described up to fifteen principles of the CIM, in \textit{China’s Spiritual Need and Claim}, first published in 1865, Taylor listed only three.\footnote{Ibid, 87.} Firstly, providing candidates were considered suitable theologically, there were no denominational restrictions. Taylor did not detail what he meant by the fundamental truths of the Christian faith, but since he was himself active within the 1858-59 Revival he would have been referring to that specific form of Evangelicalism which emphasised unity, personal holiness and an urgency for evangelism based on a premillennial eschatology. Despite the claim of being
interdenominational, the CIM was in fact limited to Evangelicals. Secondly, missionaries were sent out trusting God for their provision with no guaranteed salary and were required not to enter into debt. Thirdly, there were to be no collections or solicitation of funds. These three principles established the belief system of the CIM. Taylor had already put these principles to the test in China.88

When Taylor wrote “Upon past Ebenezers we built our Jehovah-Jirah,” he referred to the texts placed on his mantle piece and in the worship centre in Ningbo and which stated the faith he had practised throughout his Christian life.89 The statement described how his vision for the future was informed by his recollection of previous experiences of God’s provision of his physical needs. Although Taylor could recall times of desperate poverty, he could remember that his needs had been met and the word “Ebenezer” acknowledged that provision. It was upon the memory of past provision that Taylor built his hope and expressed it in the words Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide in the future. From his description of times when this faith was tested to the extreme limit of endurance, it was apparent that Taylor possessed a remarkable willingness to live simply and without concern for possessions and he asked this level of commitment from those who joined him.

Although Taylor listed only three principles, he wrote of other characteristics which arose out of the three basic principles and were part of the method used to achieve the goal of converting the Chinese to Christianity. The name China Inland Mission was an indication of the specific geographical focus of the faith mission that intended to work among people who were culturally and racially different to westerners. In *China’s Spiritual Need and Claims*, Taylor showed an appreciation of Chinese scholarship and governance.90 In spite of his understanding of Chinese culture, Taylor

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88 Ibid, 49-50.
89 Ibid, 85.
90 Ibid, 3.
perceived China as a land of darkness because the Chinese people did not know the way of salvation through Jesus Christ. When Taylor indicated that in 1889 there were eighty-seven CIM mission stations in China and one hundred and forty-four “native helpers” an attitude of cultural superiority was suggested in having a separate category for Chinese helpers who were not designated as missionaries.\(^{91}\) The use of this term clarified that Chinese missionaries did not have equal status with western missionaries within the CIM at that time. Bearing in mind that in a preface to \textit{Pastor Hsi: One of China’s Scholars}, a book written by his daughter-in-law Geraldine Taylor, Hudson Taylor wrote patronisingly of the Chinese culture and admitted to prejudice within his western culture, the issue of race has emerged from within the CIM itself.\(^{92}\)

Language study was regarded by Taylor as essential to present the Gospel and he suggested that the spoken languages could be easily learned by missionaries of even moderate education.\(^{93}\) In addition to learning the Ningbo language Taylor adopted Chinese dress as part of his identification with the local culture.\(^{94}\) Bacon described how Taylor was regarded by other westerners in China as offensive when he adopted Chinese dress and hairstyle.\(^{95}\) An “eccentric” was the descriptive word used by Broomhall to describe this man who would go to the edge of convention in his desire to share his faith and his possessions.\(^{96}\) In his revivalist beliefs, his simple lifestyle and his appearance, Taylor was often an object of ridicule amongst his own people.

Hudson Taylor described what he considered a significant and unique feature of the CIM, namely the hierarchy of command in China with himself in the highest position.\(^{97}\) Taylor believed that just as God had called him to China, so God was calling

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\(^{91}\) Ibid, 88.
\(^{93}\) Taylor, \textit{China's Spiritual Need and Claims}, 44.
\(^{94}\) Ibid, 76.
\(^{95}\) Bacon, "From Faith to Faith: The Influence of Hudson Taylor on the Faith Missions Movement", 40.
\(^{97}\) Taylor, \textit{China's Spiritual Need and Claims}, 87.
him to be the leader of the newly formed China Inland Mission. Within this sense of call to leadership, there was also an element of the autocrat. Taylor had been frustrated by his earlier lack of support from the bureaucracy of the Chinese Evangelisation Society located in England. In establishing himself as the leader on location, Taylor wanted to avoid a repeat of that situation when he was directed from England by a distant society unfamiliar with the Chinese situation. Local control of the mission was important. His leadership over forty years suggested Taylor was a patriarchal leader for whom control and power were important issues.

The historiography revealed that in the secondary literature most historians recognised the recruitment of women into the CIM and the role they were given as evangelists, however in the writing of Taylor himself little was made of the acceptance of women. Even though Maria had assisted Taylor with the first edition of *China's Spiritual Needs and Claims*, and women were recruited from the beginning, the invisibility of women indicated that the perceived urgent need for evangelism prompted his recruitment of women rather than any thought of female empowerment or equality. Taylor was of the opinion that providing potential candidates felt called by God their educational background was not important. Training would be given in China. This created opportunities for women who received limited education at that time and for working class men and women who may have been unacceptable to denominational missions to join the CIM. Itinerant evangelism was always important and in his description of the difficulties of the work, it became evident that although most CIM personnel were lay missionaries, some were ordained. Taylor made no distinction between lay and ordained within the CIM structure. By the time the eighth edition of his

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99 Because the CIM is not the primary area of research, the archives of the CIM have not been accessed to explore this issue further but this suppression of women’s contribution by Taylor only serves to emphasise the nuance of gender imbalance within the history of the CIM.
100 Taylor, *China’s Spiritual Need and Claims*, 85-86.
1865 work was published in 1890, the listed tables of officers revealed that the CIM had become international with branches in Britain, America and Canada and these consisted of male clergy and lay men with an auxiliary of women in the London Council.101

In his *Retrospect* written after 1894, Taylor recalled how from his youth he had believed that just as Jesus instructed the disciples to go out without a purse, so God had called him to let go of physical possessions and trust God to supply his needs.102 In this statement, Taylor continued to reveal his literal interpretation of the Bible and the way this interpretation led him to adopt the faith principle in his own life and within the CIM. With the prompting of a friend, Taylor explained that as a young man he had studied the biblical text and came to the acceptance of a premillennial understanding of the end times when Jesus Christ would return and literally take up the throne of his ancestor King David.103 When this would happen was not revealed, but from the time he became a premillennialist, Taylor lived as though Christ’s return would happen at any moment, not in fear, but in hopeful anticipation. He wrote of his desire to give a faithful account of his stewardship at the judgement day and so periodically throughout his life, he had reassessed his possessions and had given away anything he did not need.104 In this practical way, Taylor displayed his belief in the imminent Second Coming of Christ, when there would be no need for earthly possessions, but a readiness to face the judgement of God. An outcome of this belief was the urgency Taylor felt to obey Christ’s command to preach the Gospel to all people.

Taylor was personally aware of the cost of missionary service in terms of health and danger. Recalling the emotional struggle he experienced in 1865 prior to establishing the CIM, Taylor described the heavy responsibility he felt in asking people to take up such a hard life, but this was balanced by his intense concern for Chinese

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101 Ibid, 118-119.
103 Ibid, 11.
104 Ibid, 12.
people whom he believed were dying without knowledge of Christ.\textsuperscript{105} Earlier in his life, this had caused a breakdown in health and a spiritual crisis that was finally overcome by surrendering himself to what he perceived to be God’s call to establish the China Inland Mission. Missionary candidates were asked to count the cost before applying to the CIM, as it was understood there would be hardships to face.

From these two texts by Hudson Taylor, it has been confirmed that the CIM was established under the influence of the 1858-59 Revival. This meant unity within Evangelical denominations, an emphasis on personal faith in Jesus Christ, desire for a deepening of the spiritual experience and a belief in a personal call to engage in mission based on a premillennial eschatology. In addition, missionaries were required to put this theology into action by trusting God to provide their material needs without going into debt. Closely related to this was the principle of not soliciting funds.

The methodology of the CIM emerged from these principles. The CIM spread to other western countries and so, although international, the CIM recruited potential candidates from western culture. By its name and focus of work the CIM engaged in evangelism in a specific geographical location with people culturally different to themselves and members were required to identify with the local culture and language. These aspects all linked the faith mission with the issues of race and culture. Management of the CIM was hierarchical with Hudson Taylor serving in the role of director and his leadership was from China itself. It was also, but incidentally, empowering of women when they were given responsibility for evangelism. A lack of education and qualification was no barrier to missionary service and no distinction was made between lay and clergy. This opened opportunities for working men and women within the CIM, but taking into account the distinction between missionaries and “native helpers” it can be seen that class and status were issues that were interrelated.

\textsuperscript{105} Ibid, 119.
with those of race, culture and gender. Social historian Laura Tabili agreed that these issues are interrelated within relationships when she wrote in 2003 that social groups are never homogenous and a variety of different forces operate such that analysis of one of these issues must also take into account the other issues.  

When the New South Wales Aborigines’ Mission (NSWAM) decided in 1902 to adopt the principles of the China Inland Mission, some characteristics were already in place. For example, the recruitment of women as missionaries was not new to the NSWAM. In that first edition of The New South Wales Aborigines’ Advocate when a brief outline of the history was provided, Retta Dixon was named as the resident missionary from 1897. Although no mention was made of Jeanie Watson, she was the first convenor of the committee established in 1893 and appointed as the first missionary to La Perouse by the Aborigines’ Protection Association. Consequently, the NSWAM was established through the leadership of women and with women missionaries from the beginning, and yet within ten years that part of the story was forgotten. Gender division was already present within the mission organisation.

The 1902 constitution of the NSWAM reaffirmed that its object was the evangelism of the Aborigines of that state without promoting any denominational position. When the constitution suggested that missionary candidates needed to satisfy the committee as to their soundness in the basic truths of Christian belief it did not enunciate what was meant by that. When the NSWAM stated that committee members must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ for their personal salvation this confirmed that as with the CIM, Evangelical faith was essential, but education was not a criterion for acceptance.

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106 Laura Tabili, "Race Is A Relationship, And Not A Thing," Journal of Social History Fall 2003, 37, 1; Academic Research Library: 125.
107 Telfer, Amongst Australian Aborigines, 13.
108 NSW Aborigines' Advocate, November 1902, 3.
New principles did emerge in 1902 when the new constitution stipulated that the NSWAM would not go into debt and that no solicitation for funds was authorised. Missionaries, both female and male, were to depend on God to meet their material needs. There would be no guarantee of income from the NSWAM. Readers were referred to the work of the China Inland Mission and the Regions Beyond Missionary Union (RBMU) who both depended entirely on freewill offerings.109

That 1902 decision was made through several influences and not only the CIM. An Australasian Council of the CIM was formed in May 1890, prior to Taylor’s Australian visit later that year and Loane noted that eight applications from potential missionaries were considered at the first meeting.110 Another visitor was Dr Harry Guinness, who in 1899 established an African faith mission, the Congo Balola Mission.111 Guinness was the son of Grattan Guinness, a preacher and leader of the 1858-59 Revival. With his wife Fanny, Grattan Guinness established the East London Training Institute in 1873, on the advice of Hudson Taylor, as a training centre for faith missionaries. Their work prompted the spread of faith missions to Africa and Asia. The RBMU was established in 1900 as an umbrella organisation of those faith missions.112 Harry Guinness travelled to Australia in 1885 and 1901, and his visits introduced some Evangelical Australians to the principles of faith missions.113 By this reference to the RBMU and the CIM it was apparent that the members of the NSWAM had been challenged by the visits of both Guinness and Taylor to consider adopting the principles of faith missions.

When he wrote his UAM history in 1939, Ernest Telfer recalled that along with Hudson Taylor, George Müller and Lockhart Morton were recognised in 1902 as

109 Ibid, November 1902, 2.
111 Fiedler, The Story of Faith Missions, 39.
112 Ibid, 34-40.
113 Piggin, Evangelical Christianity in Australia: Spirit, Word and World, 57.
examples of people who lived by faith principles and their example encouraged the
decision to become a faith mission. Müller visited Australia in 1886 and it was
through his encouragement that Florence Young established the Queensland Kanaka
Mission along the principles of a faith mission. Müller lived by the principle of
trusting God to provide material needs when he established his homes for orphans in
Bristol, England in 1835 and he influenced and supported Hudson Taylor.116
Presbyterian minister Lockhart Morton was strongly influenced by Hudson Taylor when
Taylor visited Australia in 1890, and this led to his formation in 1893 of the Angas and
later the Kensington Colleges in Adelaide where first men and later also women were
trained for missionary service with the CIM, and other missions, including the
NSWAM.117 Ernest Telfer was a student in 1901.118 So, faith missions in Australia
clearly derived from a number of English sources that included Taylor himself, and
people who had close connections to Taylor and the CIM.

An outline of the principles and practices of the NSWAM was included within A
Short History of the New South Wales Aborigines’ Mission.119 No date was given for
this publication, but since it included information up to 1905, it has been assumed that
the principles and practices were those in use after the 1902 decision to adopt faith
mission principles. Seven doctrinal points were listed and candidates were required to
provide written evidence that they adhered to these principles. The seven points were
the inspiration and authority of Scripture, the Trinity, the fall of humanity, the
atonement, justification by faith, the resurrection of the body and eternal punishment.120
These seven points were all contained in the doctrines of the Evangelical Alliance, as

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114 Telfer, Amongst Australian Aborigines, 64.
119 "A Short History of the New South Wales Aborigines' Mission," in Box 49, File: Correspondence
from Missionaries, 1940, United Aborigines’ Mission Archives, (Melbourne: nd), 14. fl
120 Ibid, 13-16.
found in Orr.\textsuperscript{121} Like the British participants in the 1858-59 Revival, the NSWAM omitted the doctrine related to ordination and the sacraments. The doctrine of the atonement was listed, but not the incarnation of Christ. Another omission was the role of the Holy Spirit in the process of conversion and sanctification. These omissions in the doctrinal standard confirm that the NSWAM was primarily a mission of lay people who emphasised Evangelical faith and active service rather than theological scholarship.

Providing candidates displayed the required doctrinal beliefs, were willing to live under the faith mission principles and passed a medical examination, they would be accepted for training through a period of three months probation under the supervision of an accredited missionary.\textsuperscript{122} As it had done so from the beginning, the NSWAM under faith mission principles did not have expectations about educational background or professional qualifications. Healthy people of all backgrounds were acceptable if they had the right theology. Before applying, candidates were required to count the cost of missionary service as they could expect to live with adversity, hard work and loneliness. It was a huge step of faith and candidates were warned they were choosing a challenging future.

Even though the NSWAM was concerned about the spiritual welfare of the Aboriginal people, the mission showed signs of racial prejudice. This was taken into the principles and practices of the mission when, just as the CIM had done, they established a category of workers called “Native Helpers.”\textsuperscript{123} Compared to three months probation for white missionaries “Native Helpers” were required to serve twelve months probation and even after that remained under the supervision of an accredited missionary. Although this category seemed to be an advance from the earlier image of primitive people whose culture was perceived to be sinful, it showed that even after conversion

\textsuperscript{121} Orr, \textit{The Second Evangelical Awakening in Britain}, 252. See page 65-66 for details of Evangelical Alliance doctrines.
\textsuperscript{122} “A Short History of the New South Wales Aborigines Mission,” 14, f1.
\textsuperscript{123} Ibid, 15, f1.
Aboriginal people experienced prejudice and inequity. The decision to adopt faith mission principles did not erase the prevalent contemporary attitudes to Aboriginal people.

The 1902 decision brought growth to the NSWAM. By October 1903, three additional single women were listed as probationary missionaries, and prayers were being offered for seventeen more applicants. Women continued to form the majority of missionaries. Unlike the administration of the CIM, which for forty years had Hudson Taylor as its leader, the NSWAM was administered by a Council. Missionaries were ex-officio members of the Council. This meant that women held positions on the Council although the Council remained predominantly male. While the NSWAM operated solely in New South Wales, it was possible for missionaries to attend meetings. Following the decision in 1907 to become the Australian Aborigines’ Mission (AAM) and work in other states of Australia, distance made attendance at meetings impossible for those missionaries in centres far from Sydney, where the meetings took place. In the era under research, there was no provision for “Native Helpers” to have membership on the Council. So, gender and race issues were also of continuing significance at the administrative level, as well as the organisational and theological dimension of the NSWAM.

The NSWAM and its successors, apart from several exceptions, did not become an international mission drawing missionaries and support from other countries. The first exception was in 1925, when it was reported that through the deputation work of Mary Belshaw who was on furlough in Ireland, four applications had been received by the AAM. A Miss Allen returned with Belshaw to join the AAM in Australia while another probationer, Miss Murphy, was reported to be still in Ireland, but no evidence

124 NSW Aborigines' Advocate, October 1903, 2-3.
126 The Australian Aborigines' Advocate, (Sydney: Australian Aborigines' Mission), March 1925, 4.
could be found of her arrival, or of the appearance of the other two applicants.127

Another exception was during 1939-40 when Ernest Telfer toured America on behalf of the United Aborigines’ Mission and ongoing financial support was promised for two missionaries.128 Apart from these exceptions, the NSWAM and its successors remained in Australia with its focus the evangelism of Aboriginal Australians. Although some missionaries were born overseas, most were resident in Australia before applying. There was no evidence of committees established in other countries to support evangelism among Aboriginal Australians. Thomas Colebrook was President from 1902 until his death in 1928. Colebrook was not himself a missionary and it will be seen that although he was highly respected within the NSWAM and the AAM, his leadership was not in the style of the dominant leader in the field, as modelled by Hudson Taylor.

Unlike the CIM, whose missionaries were required to undertake language studies and adopt the customs and dress of the Chinese, the NSWAM made negligible effort to identify with Aboriginal culture or language. Early in the twentieth century the NSWAM were not alone in their belief that Aboriginal people were a dying race. In 1894, the New South Wales Aborigines’ Protection Association referred to their work among the “remnant” of the former population.129 John Harris agreed that the statistics suggesting this decline were correct.130 He recognised that even protective legislation was biased in favour of the dominant white culture.131 It was in this era of Protection that the NSWAM emerged and in spite of the lack of identification with culture and language, it became what Harris described as “one of the most historically important missionary movements in Australia in the first half of the twentieth century.”132

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127 Ibid, November 1925, 8.
128 The United Aborigines’ Messenger, June 1940, 4.
130 Harris, One Blood, 548.
131 Ibid, 550.
132 Ibid, 551.
NSWAM reflected the Protection view when they concentrated on evangelism and assisted Aboriginal people to adapt to western culture as a means of survival.

This chapter has demonstrated that when the NSWAM decided to adopt the faith principles of Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission it continued to be interdenominational within a narrowly based Evangelical theology. A new element was the adoption of the principle of trusting God to meet physical needs. This included not soliciting for funds and not going into debt. It required candidates to count the cost before choosing this lifestyle. Other characteristics of a faith mission were either already accepted by the NSWAM though its beginnings in the Christian Endeavour movement or they were never adopted. It was the principle of trusting God for physical needs that led to the name of faith missions as this was a distinctive feature. When missionary candidates were asked to count the cost this was with good reason. They were contemplating a step of faith that entailed considerable personal risk.
Chapter Three  The Child of Christian Endeavour

The 1902 decision of the New South Wales Aborigines’ Mission (NSWAM) to adopt the faith mission principles of the China Inland Mission (CIM) marked the beginning of a period of growth. This chapter will outline the story of that growth from 1902 to 1908, when the NSWAM established mission work in Western Australia under the new name of the Australian Aborigines’ Mission (AAM). An introduction to five female missionaries who worked in Nyungar country in Western Australia will follow as these women form the case studies for this research. It will become evident that the Christian Endeavour movement played a significant role in the formation of each of the women. Because the Christian Endeavour (CE) movement was also instrumental in the foundation of the NSWAM, the history of that movement in Australia will be analysed to determine its theological influence in the NSWAM and the AAM. The analysis will establish that the faith mission had its roots in Evangelicalism, and was influenced by the theology of the Second Evangelical Awakening. It will also show that the issues of gender, race and class were intrinsic to the NSWAM with its historical roots in CE in Australia, as they were for the CIM.

From 1902, when that historic decision to adopt faith mission principles was made, the NSWAM missionaries trusted God to provide their physical needs and agreed they would not solicit funds and neither would they enter into debt. Although not stated, the decision to adopt CIM principles implied identification with the revivalist Evangelical theology of the CIM. This decision was not unanimous however and resulted in the resignation of the president, the Congregationalist George Emery Bodley. Bodley was an active member of CE and a member of the La Perouse

1 *NSW Aborigines’ Advocate*, November 1902, 3.
Aborigines’ Mission Committee from 1895. After his resignation, Bodley remained committed to the Christian Endeavour movement, for his position as General Secretary of the New South Wales Christian Endeavour Union was noted in the February 1909 edition of The Roll Call, the periodical of the CE Union in New South Wales. The former secretary, Methodist Thomas Colebrook, assumed the presidency of the NSWAM from December 1902.

In 1902, the NSWAM was a small venture with two missionaries, Retta Dixon at La Perouse and Ernest Telfer at Kempsey. One year later, the report presented to the annual meeting held in November 1903, declared that three additional probationary missionaries, Nellie Timbury, Annie Lock and Maud Oldrey had been accepted and mission halls had been established at five new centres. This growth was seen as evidence that the right decision had been made. Harriet Baker had joined the La Perouse Aborigines’ Committee in 1895 and her induction as a missionary in 1904 was to the full time position of mission secretary.

A serious setback occurred when Retta Dixon tendered her resignation in February 1905. The following month, as the NSWAM agonised over the loss of their experienced missionary, the mission treasurer, Leonard Long, also resigned. Dixon was held in high regard by the NSWAM and no conflict was hinted at, only a sense of deep loss at her departure. By May 1905, it was reported that Timbury had also left the NSWAM. Dixon formed the Aborigines’ Inland Mission (AIM) at Singleton, New South Wales.

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3 Telfer, Amongst Australian Aborigines, 24.
4 The Roll Call, (Sydney: New South Wales Christian Endeavour Union), 1 February 1909, 183.
5 NSW Aborigines’ Advocate, December 1902, 4.
6 Ibid, November 1902, 3.
7 Ibid, October 1903, 2, Challenging the Almighty, 19.
8 Ibid, September 1904, 3.
9 Ibid, February 1905, 2.
10 Ibid, March 1905, 2.
South Wales, in August 1905 and in January 1906, she married Leonard Long. In her history of the AIM, Retta Long wrote of her sense of call to operate under faith principles and she claimed that the NSWAM only partly met this when the mission made the 1902 decision to adopt faith mission principles. According to Long’s description, the only difference between the principles of the two faith missions was that AIM missionaries were free to adopt the method of church government on their mission station that they believed was most biblical. This freedom was in keeping with Hudson Taylor’s insistence on local leadership for faith missions, as when he decided that he would lead the China Inland Mission from China itself. As AIM co-director in partnership with her husband, Retta Long held a position of leadership within the AIM which enabled her to exercise her skills. The NSWAM continued to be administered by a central council and local committees.

Even with this divisive element, the NSWAM continued to grow. Women responded to the missionary call in greater numbers than men and by November 1906, there were nine single female missionaries and three males. The report of the 1906 Annual Conference included a challenge to the Christian men of New South Wales to “look to their laurels” since women were outdoing the men in missionary service. Even though men were slow to offer for missionary service, they were present in higher numbers on the council for it was stated that of twenty-five workers including councillors and missionaries, thirteen were women. An additional seven honorary members were on the council and all were male, including five clergy. This meant that

14 Ibid, 10.
15 Taylor, China's Spiritual Need and Claims, 87.
16 NSW Aborigines' Advocate, November 1906, 2.
17 Ibid, November 1906, 3.
18 Ibid.
19 Ibid, November 1906, 2.
although women were in the majority on the mission field, and were members of the Council, male council members had a sufficient majority to determine policy decisions. By July 1907 there were sixteen missionaries, eleven single women and five men, with six additional voluntary helpers and three centres assisted by Christian Endeavour Societies, all committed to evangelise the Aboriginal people of Australia who it was feared, were in danger of dying out.\textsuperscript{20} Although the mission constitution provided for “Native Helpers,” none were listed at that time. The AIM produced the first edition of its monthly publication, \textit{Our AIM}, in September 1907 and named eight missionaries. These comprised three single women, two married couples and one male. A probationary missionary and a helper were both single women. Women were again in the majority. Like the NSWAM, no Indigenous helpers were named.\textsuperscript{21} This numerical comparison between the two faith missions showed the NSWAM to be the larger of the two faith missions in 1907.

The view that Aborigines’ were headed for extinction was prevalent in the early twentieth century. A decline in the population of both “full blood” and “half-caste” Aboriginal people was revealed in the first report of the New South Wales Aborigines’ Protection Board presented in March 1884 to the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales.\textsuperscript{22} The report stated that the difficulty of establishing correct figures was due to the nomadic lifestyle that included crossing between colonial borders. However, when Edmund Fosbery, Inspector-General of Police, described the role of the board to protect the “remnant” of the Aboriginal population from undesirable elements within the western population, he expressed the opinion of the time that Aboriginal people were a declining race.\textsuperscript{23} From his analysis, John Harris agreed that up to the 1920s, people of

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\textsuperscript{20} Ibid, July 1907, 2. \\
\textsuperscript{21} \textit{Our AIM}, (West Maitland: Aborigines' Inland Mission), September 1907, 8. \\
\textsuperscript{22} “Protection of the Aborigines,” (Sydney: New South Wales Aborigines Protection Board, 1883–4), 1. \\
\textsuperscript{23} Ibid, 5. 
\end{flushleft}
mixed Aboriginal and European ancestry were also declining numerically.\textsuperscript{24} This disturbed the NSWAM such that in September 1907 \textit{The New South Wales Aborigines’ Advocate} described “a loud wail” from the Aboriginal people of Western Australia, the Northern Territory and Queensland.\textsuperscript{25} This description was part of the NSWAM discourse of a dying people. This concern of the NSWAM did not persuade them to attack the social issues causing the demise of the Aboriginal people. It was expressed solely as an urgent need to bring the Christian hope of salvation throughout the land of Australia, while the race still lived.

With this sense of evangelistic urgency, the mission prepared for its annual conference to be held during November, 1907.\textsuperscript{26} When the NSWAM referred to the conference as our “Jerusalem,” the connection was made between the approaching convention in Sydney and the Jerusalem Council in the biblical text of Acts 15. In the biblical text, following the Jerusalem Council, Paul had a vision at Troas, in which a man pleaded with him saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.”\textsuperscript{27} Paul was convinced this vision was a message from God and his positive response extended the Christian faith in a westerly direction into Europe. At the NSWAM conference, the self-constructed vision of a loud wail from Aborigines throughout Australia who had never heard the Christian Gospel challenged the faith mission to widen its geographical boundaries. In their openness to new areas of mission, the NSWAM overlooked a vital component of the biblical text. At that first Jerusalem Council the early Christian church debated the issue of the acceptance of the Gentiles into Christian fellowship. With its roots in Judaism, the early Christian leaders needed to decide what aspects of the faith were cultural and could be regarded as optional, and what aspects were essential and needed to be retained. It might have been expected that the members of the NSWAM

\textsuperscript{24} Harris, \textit{One Blood}, 548.
\textsuperscript{25} \textit{NSW Aborigines' Advocate}, September 1907, 2.
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{27} Acts 16:9
would be challenged by this cross-cultural dilemma of the early church, but they were not. In late 1907, the mission remained focused on its call to evangelism and the issue of the interface of gospel and culture was not addressed.

The Annual Conference met over twelve days in November 1907 with missionaries, helpers and members of local committees present. The delegates agreed to extend their evangelistic work into other Australian states, beginning with Western Australia.\(^{28}\) The name of the mission was changed to the Australian Aborigines’ Mission (AAM) and Ernest Telfer was commissioned to begin work in Western Australia.\(^{29}\) Peter Wandy, from La Perouse and originally from the Western Australian Goldfields, also offered his services. In the centennial history published in 1994, the United Aborigines’ Mission described him as the first Aboriginal missionary.\(^{30}\) In 1908 however, the AAM referred to Wandy as Telfer’s companion and explained that he worked for wages to equip himself for the journey to Western Australia. This suggested that he did not receive the same financial support from the AAM as the western missionaries.\(^{31}\) From March 1908 until July 1912, a sketch of Wandy was part of the front cover of the monthly mission publication *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate* with the words “Peter Wandy, Our First Native Helper.”\(^{32}\)

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28 *NSW Aborigines' Advocate*, November 1907, 1.
29 Telfer, *Amongst Australian Aborigines*, 104.
31 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, March 1908, 3-4.
32 Ibid, March 1908, 1.
Wandy was proudly depicted in western clothing, with collar, tie and jacket as an example of the success of the AAM in gaining a convert and committed helper. However, in the list of missionaries and helpers that was included on page two of the mission publication each month, Wandy’s name was missing. Wandy was identified according to his race by the AAM rather than as an acknowledgement of his missionary role. His absence from the list of personnel made clear the lowly status he occupied. It was apparent that while the NSWAM and the subsequent AAM was inclusive in the way it welcomed women to serve as missionaries, Aboriginal Christians might be accepted as “Native Helpers” but they did not receive full recognition or responsibility.

Even so, Wandy was given a farewell in the La Perouse Mission Hall and the AAM recognised that this was an important event in that he was the first Christian to go from La Perouse to take the Christian message to his own people.33 Quoting from The Missionary Record the AAM included in its periodical a patronising report of Wandy’s good table manners, which was interpreted as a sign of the transforming power of the

33 Ibid, December 1907, 3.
Here was evidence of the tendency to equate western culture with Christianity and as superior to Indigenous culture. Unconscious of their latent racism, because it existed in the matrix of their dominant western culture, the NSWAM missionaries were at least concerned about the plight of the dispossessed people when most Australians were apathetic.

The Aborigines’ Inland Mission (AIM) had also felt called to Western Australia that year. In a letter from Ernest Telfer to Leonard Long, co-director of the AIM in November 1907, Telfer informed Long that he was about to go to Western Australia with the AAM. An undated response to that letter explained that at their Conference held in September 1907, the AIM had made the decision to begin work in Western Australia and this had been widely publicised among their supporters. Telfer agreed that it gave the appearance that the two groups were in competition with each other, nevertheless he maintained he had not been aware of the earlier AIM decision to send Charles Harrington to Western Australia and he stated his belief that the AAM was following God’s leading.

Telfer and Wandy arrived in Western Australia in 1908 and in the years that followed both women and men served as missionaries with the AAM/UAM in Western Australia. As in New South Wales, women missionaries were in the majority although their stories are largely forgotten. This project will use case studies to document the role of women, through the experiences of five particular women. The choice was made according to several factors. The AAM work in Western Australia began in the country of people who called themselves Nyungar. The case studies were chosen from women

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34 *The Missionary Record*, (Adelaide: Missionary Training Colleges), March 1908, quoted in *The Australian Aborigines Advocate* March 1908, 6.
35 “Correspondence from E. J. Telfer to Leonard Long, 18 November, 1907. AIM Correspondence 1907-1918,” in *Australian Indigenous Ministries - further records, 1904 -1930 Mitchell Library, SLNSW, MLMSS 7244/7/30* (Sydney).
36 “Undated draft letter replying to Telfer. AIM Correspondence 1907-1918,” in *Australian Indigenous Ministries - further records, 1904 -1930 Mitchell Library, SLNSW, MLMSS 7244/7/30* (Sydney).
37 “Correspondence from E. J. Telfer to Leonard Long, 18 November, 1907. AIM Correspondence 1907-1918.”

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whose work included encounters with the Nyungar land and people. In the absence of AAM archival material for Western Australia, mission publications were consulted to determine which women were sufficiently visible in the sources. This depended on the regularity of their monthly reports and their length of service. When it became apparent that some women missionaries married during their time of service, it was decided to include single and married women to facilitate a comparison of their experience. A time frame from 1908 when the AAM first came to Western Australia, until the 1970s when the mission era was in decline, will allow analysis of changes in mission praxis alongside changes within Evangelicalism and government policy. Annie Lock was the first woman to make a significant contribution to the early work of the AAM in Western Australia, but since her life has been researched by Catherine Bishop, she was not chosen for this project. The following five women will form the case studies.

Bertha Hochuli (1872-1965) was unofficially adopted by John and Caroline Telfer following the death of Bertha’s mother when she was three years old and from that time she was known as Bertha Telfer. Telfer spent her childhood at Arkaba in the Flinders Ranges in South Australia. The single teacher school in the district was not opened until 1883 when Telfer would have been thirteen years of age suggesting that she received little formal education. The family became members of the Methodist Church. A family history reported that John and Caroline Telfer were involved in all the activities of that church, including Christian Endeavour. Within that history was a copy of the Active Member’s Pledge of the Young People’s Society of Christian

41 Simmons, From the Borders to the Bush: Telfer Family History, 116.
Endeavour which was signed by Bertha’s youngest brother, Eddie in 1901. In light of her Christian commitment, it can be assumed that along with her adoptive parents and brothers, Bertha would also have belonged to this organisation within her local church and signed the pledge.

The words of that pledge are included here because they illustrate important aspects of the CE movement.

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ACTIVE MEMBER’S PLEDGE

Trusting in the LORD JESUS CHRIST for strength, I promise Him that I will strive to do whatever He would like to have me do; that I will make it the rule of my life to pray and to read the Bible every day, and that just so far as I know how, throughout my whole life, I will endeavor to lead a Christian life.

As an Active Member, I promise to be true to all my duties, to be present at, and to take some part, aside from singing, in every Christian Endeavor meeting, unless hindered by some reason which I can conscientiously give to my Lord and Master. If obliged to be absent from the monthly Consecration Meeting of the Society, I will, if possible, send at least a verse of Scripture to be read in response to my name at the roll call.

Date …………………… Signed ………………
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Young People’s Society of Christian Endeavor
Active Member’s pledge of Young People’s Society of CE (Simmons, 157)

The words of the CE Pledge, and the fact that it was to be signed and dated, show the significance of the conversion experience as members made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ, and then to active service in the church. The Bible had a central place within the CE and members pledged their commitment to a life of holiness through daily prayer and Bible reading. These four aspects of personal conversion, the atoning work of Jesus Christ, the Bible and active service were characteristics of Evangelicalism as outlined by Bebbington.

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43 Ibid.
44 Bebbington, Evangelicalism in Modern Britain, 3.
feature of the holiness movement, which has been seen to be a quality of the Second Evangelical Awakening.

From 1903, Telfer served as housekeeper to her brother Albert until in 1908 she followed the example of her brother Ernest Telfer when she studied at Angas College in Adelaide. This was a training college for missionaries operated by the Presbyterian minister Lockhart Morton, and included in the course for women students was involvement in Christian Endeavour meetings. Simmons expressed the opinion that it was probably through the CE that Bertha and her brother Ernest became involved with the Aborigines’ faith mission. Bertha Telfer joined the NSWAM in 1908 and served in New South Wales until she was appointed to the Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage in Western Australia in 1912. Telfer married James Alcorn in 1916 and ill health forced her retirement from the AAM in 1917.

Ethel Maude Hamer (1880-1929) was born in Tamworth, New South Wales, and appeared in the membership roll of the Newcastle Baptist Tabernacle from 1 February 1900, received by letter of transfer. A District Union of the CE had begun in Newcastle in 1893 and although no CE records were available from the Baptist Tabernacle, she probably became a CE member there. Certainly, she was a member by 1903, because Hamer was welcomed that year as a delegate on the Executive Committee of the Newcastle CE Union. Hamer appeared on the 1903 Electoral Roll of the Newcastle (Honeysuckle Point) Polling Place where her occupation was listed as domestic duties. Hamer’s interest in the NSWAM evidently grew through the CE appointment for in July 1906 the NSWAM monthly publication known as the New

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45 Morton, Drifting Wreckage., 290.
46 Simmons, From the Borders to the Bush: Telfer Family History, 127.
47 “Entry 203, 1900 Roll Book,” in Newcastle Baptist Tabernacle Archives (Newcastle, NSW).
49 “Minutes of Executive Meeting,” in Newcastle District Christian Endeavour Union Archives (Newcastle), 20 March, 1903.
50 Newcastle, Honeysuckle Point Polling Place, New South Wales Electoral Rolls 1903-1928 (Commonwealth Division), 1903, 11.
South Wales Aborigines’ Advocate named Hamer as the Newcastle agent.\(^{51}\) In August 1906, after three years membership of the committee, Hamer was appointed Assistant Missionary Superintendent of the Newcastle District Union of the CE.\(^{52}\) Hamer joined the AAM in October 1907 and she was welcomed at her first mission appointment at Roseby Park, New South Wales, in January 1908 by a church crowded with Christian Endeavour members and other supporters.\(^{53}\) By March of that year, Hamer reported that she had reorganised the CE at Roseby Park, suggesting that part of her missionary role was to provide leadership to the CE group.\(^{54}\) Hamer married AAM missionary William Fryer in 1911 and they came to Western Australia in 1914. In 1915, and while serving at the Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage in Western Australia, Ethel Fryer (nee Hamer) wrote an open letter to her “Fellow Endeavourers” in which she testified to the value she placed on her training within the CE movement.\(^{55}\) Clearly, CE played an important role in Hamer’s formation.

Hope May Malcolm (1896-1975) was born in Victoria and she joined the Australian Aborigines’ Mission in 1916. No information is available about her education, employment or prior membership within the CE movement. Malcolm was baptised into the Mildura, Victoria, Church of Christ in 1913 and received as a member.\(^{56}\) She was inducted into the AAM at the annual meetings held in Sydney during January 1917.\(^{57}\) Henry Bush, a member of the AAM Council and a prominent leader in CE was one of the speakers.\(^{58}\) In spite of this lack of evidence about her membership, Hope Malcolm must have been no stranger to CE. Writing from Carrolup in Western Australia in 1920, just four months after her arrival, she informed supporters

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\(^{51}\) *NSW Aborigines’ Advocate*, July 1906, 2.

\(^{52}\) “Minutes of Executive Meeting,” 17 August, 1906.

\(^{53}\) *NSW Aborigines’ Advocate*, October 1907, 3 & January 1908, 4.

\(^{54}\) Ibid, March 1908, 7.

\(^{55}\) *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, February 1915, 7.

\(^{56}\) Hope Malcolm, *The Harrop Story* (nd), Unpublished family history.

\(^{57}\) *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, January 1917, 3.

\(^{58}\) Ibid, June 1917, 5.
of the AAM that she was involved in the commencement of a Junior Christian Endeavour Society at Carrolup and that there were already fifty-four members.\textsuperscript{59} In April 1926, Malcolm married Hedley Wright and together they established an AAM station at Gnowangerup in Western Australia. It was evident that their involvement with CE continued over many years because in 1937 the West Australian CE Union named “Sister and Brother Wright” as the oldest workers amongst fifteen CE members working as missionaries with Aboriginal Australians.\textsuperscript{60}

Mary Jones (1905 –1977) was born in Scotland and according to her sister, Janet Johnston, she migrated to Australia with her family during her childhood.\textsuperscript{61} In later correspondence, Johnston wrote that the family moved from Tasmania to Melbourne to enable her brother to attend university.\textsuperscript{62} Jones worked as a secretary prior to coming to Western Australia in 1929, but no detail is available concerning her education or vocational training.\textsuperscript{63} Jones joined the UAM in 1930 and began her missionary service at Mount Margaret in Western Australia. In November 1930, the Western Australian State Christian Endeavour Union claimed her as “our WA Endeavourer”.\textsuperscript{64} This was explained in more detail the following year when it was revealed that prior to joining the UAM, Jones had organised the CE work in the church in Kalgoorlie where her father was the minister.\textsuperscript{65} Albert Edward Jones was ordained and inducted into the Presbyterian Church in Kalgoorlie on 21 November 1929.\textsuperscript{66} Since Jones organised the CE group in Kalgoorlie it could be expected that she also had experience within CE in Victoria prior to coming to Western Australia and that this gave her the necessary skills to provide leadership to the new group. Evidence of her continued commitment to CE

\textsuperscript{59} Ibid, May 1920, 4.
\textsuperscript{60} \textit{West Australian Golden Link}, (State Christian Endeavour Union), March 1937, 10.
\textsuperscript{61} Janet Johnston, Personal Correspondence to A.Longworth. 15 August, 2002
\textsuperscript{62} Ibid, 23 May, 2003
\textsuperscript{63} Ibid
\textsuperscript{64} \textit{West Australian Golden Link}, November 1930, 5.
\textsuperscript{65} Ibid, January 1931, 5.
\textsuperscript{66} “Rev Albert Jones J/K Presbyterian Church Persons File,” in \textit{Uniting Church Synod of Western Australia Archives} (Perth).
was acknowledged in an article in which the Christian Endeavour Union in Western Australia congratulated their long-time member Mary Jones for the successful CE Society she had established with the Aboriginal people at Mount Margaret Mission.\textsuperscript{67}

Melvina Alice Langley was born in Victoria in 1916, and she became a missionary with the UAM in 1940. Langley married UAM missionary Nelson Rowley in 1956 and they remained with the UAM until 1971. In a personal interview with the writer, Rowley spoke of her desire to be a teacher, but following the death of her mother when Rowley was fourteen years of age she left school to housekeep for her father and younger sister.\textsuperscript{68} Rowley described her involvement in the Junior Christian Endeavour at the Portland Baptist Church from about the age of twelve years, until she graduated to the Young Peoples Christian Endeavour after she left school.\textsuperscript{69} Members were taught to take part in the meetings and became used to speaking and praying in public. Papers on various topics would be researched and presented. Rowley also described a monthly Consecration Meeting at which every one would respond to the roll call with a verse of Scripture, or words of a hymn. More than seventy years after Rowley first joined the CE Society at Portland, she was still able to recall the CE Pledge through which she had consecrated her life to God and had promised to read the Bible and pray every day, and she expressed her gratitude to the CE movement for the skills she had learned. Rowley omitted to say in the interview that at the time of her application to study at the Melbourne Bible Institute she was the Superintendent of the Junior Christian Endeavour at Portland, demonstrating that even before becoming a missionary she found opportunity for Christian service through the CE society of her local church.\textsuperscript{70} When Rowley affirmed that the CE pledge had provided a model for her throughout her life, it was clear that the Christian Endeavour movement had been a significant influence in

\textsuperscript{67} \textit{West Australian Golden Link}, August 1935, 5.
\textsuperscript{68} Melvina Rowley, \textit{Interview by A. Longworth} (Perth: 2003), 4.
\textsuperscript{69} Ibid, 6.
\textsuperscript{70} “File 848 Melvina Langley,” in \textit{Bible College of Victoria Archives}.
her early spiritual formation and had continued to impact on her life as a Christian missionary.

From these brief introductions, it has emerged that these women were all from Evangelical churches and had limited educational backgrounds. Jones had professional experience as a secretary but Telfer, Hamer, Malcolm and Langley had no professional qualification. Telfer and Langley received training at Angas College and at the Melbourne Bible Institute respectively, but Hamer, Malcolm and Jones received no biblical training prior to joining the faith mission, apart from their formation in their local church and specifically within the Christian Endeavour society. Like the China Inland Mission, the AAM/UAM did not require educational or professional qualifications of its missionaries, thus opening up opportunities for working people to become missionary candidates. Their membership of CE was a sign that the organisation was an Evangelical movement that provided women with opportunities for growth and leadership that they might not otherwise have experienced within the church context. Because it was a significant part of the spiritual formation and missionary practice of these women, it is necessary to examine the beginnings of the CE movement and its theology, principles and structure in order to understand the contribution of this movement to their missionary culture.

The first Christian Endeavour Society began in the United States of America in 1881 in the context of a local revival. The founder of the movement, Francis E. Clark, described how a revival amongst the young people of the Williston Congregational Church in Portland, Maine, where he was the minister, caused him to develop a strategy to support these new converts through their early Christian life.71 Regular attendance at the weekly prayer meeting, including the expectation of active participation in every meeting, was central to this strategy. In addition, members were asked to covenant to

pray and read the Scriptures every day. It was anticipated that participation in a variety of committees of the Christian Endeavour Society would ensure the formation of young people who were capable of engaging in Christian service.

Many years later, Harriet Clark, wife of the founder, recalled that on 2 February 1881 she conducted an afternoon meeting of the Mizpah Circle, a group for children which met in the Clark home each week focused primarily on learning about and supporting missions. Later that day the older youth joined the children, and Francis Clark presented the combined gathering with the Constitution for the Williston Young People’s Society of Christian Endeavour. Harriet Clark demonstrated the inhibiting influence the patriarchal church and society of that time exerted on a woman. She confessed that she was initially hesitant about the expectation that every member would take part in every meeting because she had never known women to speak in that way. However, she overcame her uncertainty and signed the Constitution with the proviso that the missionary work of the Mizpah Circle would be incorporated into the new society. Consequently, although her husband was recognised as the founder, Harriet Clark actually had a significant role in the nature of this new society. Her recollections show that from its inception, the Christian Endeavour Society was innovative in the way it required the active participation of both female and male members, and they indicate that the movement owed its strong focus on missionary activity to Harriet Clark.

Frances Clark published an account of this first CE group in the journal *The Congregationalist* and his idea became a model for other groups. Within less than a year, additional societies had formed in other local denominations. In June 1882, representatives of these societies met at Williston and developed the idea of Christian

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73 Ibid, 11.
74 Ibid, 13.
Endeavour Conventions to provide mutual support and fellowship. The CE spread rapidly across America and to other continents, including Australia. Increased travel in the steamship era and the fact that Portland was a prosperous city located on the Atlantic coast, and was the closest American port to Europe, was a factor in this spread of the movement that clearly met a need within Evangelicalism for the nurture of young converts.  


Within a few years CE had also spread to Western Australia where the first society to form in that state was at the Trinity Congregational Church, Perth, in 1890. State Unions of the organisation were formed in Victoria in 1890 and in 1891 in South Australia. It is evident therefore that the Christian Endeavour movement arrived in Australia very soon after it began in America and it spread rapidly in Evangelical congregations across the continent, forming in each of the states.

The CE movement grew to such an extent that in 1886 Clark resigned his pastorate to work full time for the CE Unions within a global context. That Clark continued to hold the position of World President until his death in 1927 would have contributed to the fact that fifty years after its formation the Christian Endeavour movement had not changed its foundational principles. Richard Cleaver was State Secretary of CE in Western Australia during the years 1935 to 1952, when CE was a strong movement in that state. He described this lack of change as a very positive quality and agreed with Clark’s own interpretation that this was a sign that the CE movement carried the approval and blessing of God. In his thesis submitted in 1989 when the CE movement had suffered severe decline, P. W. Godman suggested that one of many factors that influenced that decline was an aging leadership that was out of step with modern youth, and he saw the need for a creative young male leader to challenge the new generation. All failed to recognise that patriarchal leadership and resistance to change could also result in a rigidity of theology and methods that would ultimately contribute to the decline of the movement.

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83 Ibid, 11.  
84 Ibid, 12.  
89 Godman, "Mission Accomplished?" 96-100.
The motto of the Christian Endeavour was “For Christ and the Church” and there was an expectation of undivided loyalty to both Christ and the Church.\(^9^0\) Rallies and conventions brought people together from Evangelical churches, but members were expected to maintain loyalty to their own denomination; societies operated within the local church with the minister an ex-officio member.\(^9^1\) Clark yearned for Christian revival and perceived that a sign of revival would be the willingness of people to confess their faith. He wrote of the seeming reluctance of Evangelicals to do this and declared his vision that through the CE societies an increasing number of people would willingly testify to their faith.\(^9^2\)

A movement that encouraged fellowship of likeminded Evangelicals across the denominations was in keeping with the concern for unity that was characteristic of the 1858-59 Revival. American revivalist preacher, Dwight L. Moody, and his musician, Ira Sankey, ran a highly organised revival ministry compared to the more spontaneous revivals of earlier decades and their influence was felt in America and the United Kingdom from the 1870s.\(^9^3\) Influenced by the Young Men’s Christian Association, Moody focused on evangelising the unchurched in contrast to the CE movement whose centre of attention was the nurture of young people within the Evangelical churches. However, the CE movement was clearly influenced by the Moody/Sankey revivals, particularly through its music, which was incorporated into the CE repertoire. This was evident when Francis and Harriet Clark both attended the Third Annual Convention of the Victorian Christian Endeavour Union held in Melbourne in September 1892, and the programme included twelve hymns from Sankey’s hymnbook.\(^9^4\)

\(^9^2\) Ibid, 34.
\(^9^4\) Francis E Clark, "Programme with words of hymns to be used at the welcome meetings to the Rev Francis E Clark, D.D. and the third annual convention of the Victorian Christian Endeavour Union" (Melbourne, 1892).
Clark urged members to be involved in missionary work because of the unsaved millions of people around the world. He anticipated that the work of CE would contribute to the return of Christ, however Clark portrayed a different emphasis to premillennialists such as Hudson Taylor who believed the Gospel must be proclaimed to all people before Christ would return. Instead, Clark perceived progress on earth because of CE, whereas premillennialists were pessimistic about the state of the world. Clark believed CE contributed to world peace through international friendships, by breaking down sectarian barriers and promoting Christian unity.

Clark proposed a practical approach and his 1903 CE manual concentrated on the structure of the CE movement more than theology, for he was convinced of the need to teach Christians to live out their faith through their actions. The disciplined approach of the CE was evident in the 1903 manual which was designed as a textbook for young people to study the working method of the organisation, and within it Clark listed the four essential principles of the movement. These were confession of Christ, service for Christ, loyalty to Christ’s Church and fellowship with Christ’s people. The public confession of personal faith in Jesus Christ was an essential part of the movement and in keeping with the emphasis on personal conversion among Evangelicals. The Covenant that was signed by active members became a personal obligation to live out the Christian faith and it was regularly reaffirmed through active participation at the weekly prayer meeting and monthly Consecration Meeting. Active membership reflected the activism of Evangelicalism and in addition to taking part at every meeting, it involved active service through committee work where tasks of various kinds were

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96 Ibid, 232.  
97 Ibid.  
98 Ibid, 35-37.  
100 Ibid, 24-26.
assigned to every member. Clark understood Christ to be the head of the Church and so personal commitment to Christ included loyalty to the Church of which Christ was the head. As an ordained Congregational minister, Clark had served under a system of church government that valued the independence of local congregations where membership was upon public confession of Christ. Clark’s Congregationalism was evident when he insisted CE retain a strong loyalty to the local church whose minister would act as ex-officio president of the local society. Advocating denominational loyalty meant that while it was influenced by the revivalism of the era, CE developed a broad Evangelicalism that encouraged unity within diversity. Associations between different societies were an essential element of CE, for Clark recognised the benefits in building interdenominational, international and interracial friendships as a force for peace.

The CE principles were revised over the years, but continued to include the preceding four just listed. An Australian edition of Clark’s *The Christian Endeavour: What it is! How it works!* was published in Australia in 1936, and the list of principles had expanded to eleven. The first principle located the CE within Evangelical theology when it stressed personal devotion to Jesus Christ and acceptance of the Bible as the inspired word of God and only rule of faith and practice. The second principle was the covenant pledge, which witnessed to a personal commitment to Jesus Christ, the daily practice of prayer and Bible reading, and an active Christian life which included active involvement in the CE society. The signing of the pledge and public renewal at

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101 Ibid, 26-27.
105 Ibid, 38.
106 Ibid.
the consecration meeting every month reinforced the importance given to personal commitment.

The third principle emphasised the continuing training for Christian service through involvement in various committees. 107 The Australian CE Manual, edited by Cleaver in 1967, suggested that the committee structure was one of the finest characteristics of CE in the way that it developed potential leadership among young people. It meant that members were not just occupied in devotional and consecration meetings, but learnt to balance that with active service such as involvement in Sunday Schools and hospital visitation. 108 The number of committees in a society would be adjusted according to the number of members, but Cleaver thought four were essential in the Australian context; these were Membership, Devotional, Social and Missionary Committees. 109 Through involvement in committee work, it was anticipated that members would learn how to conduct meetings, write minutes and prepare reports which were all seen as useful skills for leadership in the church. A fourth principle was loyalty to the local church, resulting in an organisation which did not threaten denominational boundaries and so could support the fifth principle of interdenominational fellowship. 110

Christian citizenship was the sixth principle and emphasised temperance and law and order. 111 The New South Wales CE Union took up the issue of temperance in 1902, when there was a call to Citizenship Committees of CE to introduce a Home Crusade through which members would pledge total abstinence from alcohol. 112 Patriotism was another issue. The new Commonwealth of Australia introduced legislation in 1902 to establish an army and navy. There was concern within CE that militarism was being

107 Ibid.
111 Ibid.
112 The Roll Call, April 1902, 220-221.
equated with patriotism whereas the CE accepted that working for reconciliation and justice was the sign of a true patriot. Clark wrote in 1903 from an American perspective when he stated that patriotism and Christianity went together and so Christian Endeavour could promote patriotism. His deep concern was for peace and that CE members would contribute to a peaceful world. In his biography of Clark, W. Knight Chaplin attributed this concern for peace and good citizenship to Clark’s childhood when he learnt about the effects of war from his father, who served as a chaplain during the American Civil War. The 1936 Australian edition of Clark’s *The Christian Endeavour: What it is! How it works!* did not refer to Clark’s emphasis on peace, suggesting that Australian CE at that time was not as concerned about peace as was Clark himself. In their efforts to be good citizens, CE members were expected to influence all of society without taking up membership of any particular political party.

It was significant that Cleaver did not rate the Citizenship Committee amongst his list of the four most important committees. From 1955 to 1969 Cleaver was the Liberal member for the Western Australian Seat of Swan in the Australian Parliament House of Representatives. In an interview with John Ferrell in 1992, it emerged that during his term in office Cleaver introduced the Richard Cleaver Citizenship Award for school students in his electorate. Citizenship was clearly important to him, but when Cleaver stated that the Christian Endeavour movement had a powerful impact on his life and “became the foundation for my interest in Federal politics” it became apparent that

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113 Ibid, May 1902, 258.
115 Ibid, 194.
118 Ibid.
while the movement encouraged his public service to the community, he had disregarded the CE principle of not aligning oneself with a political party.  

The Citizenship Committee within CE, when it did operate, focused on issues at a personal level such as gambling, temperance and observance of Sunday as a day of rest, but broader social issues in the Australian context, such as the injustices suffered by Aboriginal people were avoided, because of their political nature. Eli Stanley Jones, a missionary in India for many years, was the guest speaker at the Tenth World’s Christian Endeavour Convention held in Melbourne in 1938 and his message was included in the report of the Convention. Stanley Jones made a strong call for justice and accused Australians of taking the land of the Aboriginal people, destroying their animals and then dealing harshly with them when they have stolen for food. He went on to describe a native population decimated by diseases, mainly syphilis, and he called for the return of land to the Indigenous people. The historian of CE in Australia, Godman, analysed that CE was already in decline by this time and suggested that this urging towards an emphasis on social justice was partly responsible. It would appear that although the speaker at a World CE Convention, Jones was more radical in his theology than the CE movement within Australia. Although the CE was supportive of the faith mission work among Aboriginal Australians, for many years the focus had been on conversion isolated from political involvement in the struggle for justice.

Sabbatarian observance of the Lord’s Day formed the seventh principle and advocated abstinence of work and leisure activities on Sundays. Petersham Congregational minister William Allen was praised by the CE Union in New South

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120 Ibid, 2:5.
Wales in 1902 for publicly denouncing a picnic enjoyed on a Sunday by the Federal Government delegation, which was seeking an appropriate site for the nation’s capital city. Their response confirmed that in 1902, this principle was taken seriously.\textsuperscript{124} The eighth principle of loyalty to denominational missions expressed the importance given within the CE to missionary work, but in keeping with the principle of loyalty to the church, clearly located that missionary interest within the denominational context.\textsuperscript{125} The ninth principle related to financial appeals, which were to be approved by the particular denomination of a CE society, and only made through that avenue.\textsuperscript{126}

Although listed as the tenth principle, the evangelisation of the world was expressed as the primary aim of the CE movement.\textsuperscript{127} The role of the CE movement in the formation of the interdenominational NSWAM, and the example of the five women missionaries chosen to be case studies within this research, confirmed that evangelisation was taken seriously by CE members. The apparent anomaly regarding CE support of the Aboriginal mission at La Perouse was an exception made possible because of the interdenominational nature of the work at La Perouse and the limited denominational missionary work among Indigenous people at the time.\textsuperscript{128}

Finally, according to the eleventh principle, CE Unions were to have no authority over individual societies and could not levy funds.\textsuperscript{129} They existed solely to promote fellowship and share information. This interdenominational fellowship and support among Evangelicals, including the training of young people for leadership in church life and evangelism, was an ideal foundation for the growth of an interdenominational missionary organisation.

\textsuperscript{124} The Roll Call, 2 June 1902, 267.
\textsuperscript{125} Clark, The Christian Endeavour Society: What it is! How it works! , 38.
\textsuperscript{126} Ibid, 38-39.
\textsuperscript{127} Ibid, 39.
\textsuperscript{128} Telfer, Amongst Australian Aborigines, 15-21.
\textsuperscript{129} Clark, The Christian Endeavour Society: What it is! How it works! , 39.
The requirement that all members would actively participate in the weekly meeting suggested that although controlled by male clergy, women were finding leadership opportunities at CE gatherings at all levels. When the programme for the New South Wales Annual Convention in 1897 advertised a Grand Missionary Gathering with the theme “Woman in the Mission Field” to be led entirely by women it appeared hopeful that women were taking up leadership on the mission field and within the CE organisation.\(^{130}\) The following month however, it was reported that at the missionary meeting during that Convention the audience was predominantly made up of the “weaker sex”, establishing that missionary work was not given a high priority by the male participants, but left to the women.\(^{131}\) Undaunted by the patronising attitude that described them as weak, the women speakers gave a strong message. They challenged the audience to consider the needs of women around the world and to maintain the missionary focus within the CE. Missionary speakers at that gathering were from China, Bengal, France and Madras. No opportunity was given to missionaries working in Australia among the Aboriginal people. Although mission work was encouraged, exotic locations attracted more attention and the local mission field was invisible on that occasion.

The issue of gender reappeared in 1902. In November 1902, the approaching federal election was recognised as the first at which Australian western women over twenty-one years of age could vote. In his presidential letter that month George Waldon suggested that female members of CE who had “chided” men for the vote, arguing that they would use it as a force for good, should now show that they meant it, by voting for the Protestant cause.\(^{132}\) His remarks were evidence of the sectarianism within the Australian community in the early twentieth century, particularly when he stated his

\(^{130}\) *The Roll Call*, 2 August 1897, 8.
\(^{131}\) Ibid, 18 September 1897, 13.
\(^{132}\) Ibid, 1 November 1902, 117.
opinion that the Roman Catholic Church had a stronger hold on its female members than on male members.\textsuperscript{133} Voting rights for women was obviously an issue and the strident remarks from the president did not appear at all supportive of women.

An article on CE and young men in December 1902 revealed that male critics of CE suggested that the organisation did not appeal to young men because the meetings were too “namby-pamby” and exhibited “intellectual and moral weakness”.\textsuperscript{134} In rebuttal of such accusations, the article referred to the capable, even “manly” speeches, not only of a prominent woman such as Josephine Butler, but by the many women who participated within regular CE meetings.\textsuperscript{135} To suggest that competent public speaking was a male attribute was hardly complimentary to women. Images of “manly” young women or “namby-pamby” meetings confirmed that although CE was a strong movement within Evangelical churches, the empowerment of women did not receive universal support. Indeed, as this article proves, women could find themselves the subject of ridicule from within the CE movement itself. Female leadership remained restricted within the movement. For example, in Western Australia the leadership at state level was dominated by male clergy; the CE Union in Western Australia was formed in 1894 and when Meyer published his history in 1989, the only woman to serve as President was Thea Shipley in the years 1985 to 1987, when the movement was in decline.\textsuperscript{136} It would appear that young women were trained for leadership at the local level and particularly within the Junior CE, or for future service as missionaries, but leadership opportunities at the state and national level of CE were extremely rare.

The CE movement began in the context of revival and when Francis Clark visited Australia in 1892 and again in 1904 the meetings with this charismatic leader

\begin{footnotes}
\item[133] Ibid.
\item[134] Ibid, 1 December 1902, 124-125.
\item[135] Ibid.
\end{footnotes}
continued to fit within the revivalist ethos; certainly they were reported to have encouraged further growth.\textsuperscript{137} Other revivalists were welcomed by the CE movement in Australia. For example in 1902, the CE gave strong support to the visit of Reuben Torrey and his musician Charles Alexander to Australia.\textsuperscript{138} Torrey, Alexander and Dwight L. Moody were evangelists within the stream of the Second Evangelical Awakening.\textsuperscript{139} Marsden described both Torrey and Moody as dispensationalists, which meant they adopted a form of premillennialism that took a literal reading of the scripture, particularly in the area of prophecy and interpreted seven dispensations in human history, all of which end catastrophically until finally Jesus returns to earth to establish his kingdom.\textsuperscript{140} The CE acknowledged Torrey as a prominent person in CE circles. During his six month visit to Australia Torrey conducted a mission in the Sydney Town Hall for seventeen days in August and it was described in \textit{The Roll Call} as a revival that had also spread to regional centres.\textsuperscript{141} With its close ties to CE, the NSWAM would also have supported the Torrey revival of 1902. It seemed likely that the enthusiasm engendered by this revival would have influenced the NSWAM to come to its November 1902 decision to adopt faith mission principles.

The rise of the Christian Endeavour Movement was followed by a decline. In his research Godman found that by 1905 almost one in forty Australians belonged to the Christian Endeavour, the majority of them coming from the Baptist, Congregational or Methodist denominations.\textsuperscript{142} In spite of the enthusiastic support among some Evangelicals, Godman recognised that the movement was in decline in Australia.

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\item[137] Bush and Kerrison, eds., \textit{First Fifty Years: The Story of Christian Endeavour Under the Southern Cross}, 15.
\item[138] \textit{The Roll Call}, August 1902, 29.
\item[139] Orr, \textit{The Second Evangelical Awakening in Britain}, 9.
\item[141] \textit{The Roll Call}, 1 September 1902, 1.
\item[142] Godman, "Mission Accomplished?" 10.
\end{footnotes}
following a peak in 1908 and this continued through the years of the First World War. He suggested that the rise of the CE movement could be correlated with times of economic depression so that this first period of decline in Australia was connected with economic growth. Confirmation of his argument was evident when CE revived in the late 1920s and reached its strongest peak during the Depression years of the early 1930s. However, Godman argued that another factor in the decline of CE came with Clark’s retirement in 1926 and death in 1927, when Daniel Poling, the new leader of the World CE, advocated increased social action and this was resisted by the members in Australia, leading to a decrease in members. In placing blame on Poling, Godman did not address the wider theological debates of the time. Although Godman did not refer to it, such a resistance from the conservative CE members had its basis in the modernist versus fundamentalist debates in western Christianity in the early decades of the twentieth century. From 1902, when CE in Australia enthusiastically embraced the Torrey revival, the movement was aligning itself with the rising stream of fundamentalism. With its roots in the CE, this explained the conversionist and individualist thrust of the NSWAM. The influence of fundamentalism upon the faith mission will be examined in subsequent chapters.

The CE movement was influential in the foundation of the mission work at La Perouse. In his history of the UAM Telfer explained that the New South Wales Christian Endeavour Union encouraged its members in the work at La Perouse and called for financial assistance towards the erection of a Mission House. He omitted to say that the Aborigines’ Protection Association had given permission to the Christian Endeavour Union to erect the mission house and it was to be called “The Endeavour

143 Ibid, 34.
144 Ibid.
145 Ibid, 45-46.
146 Ibid, 43.
147 See pages 239-246 for an investigation into the effects of this controversy on the AAM/UAM history.
In spite of this oversight by Telfer, the fact that the first missionary, Jeannie Watson, was an ambassador for the Christian Endeavour was evident when in June 1894, several months before the completion of the Mission House, the La Perouse Aborigines’ Christian Endeavour Society was formed. When the New South Wales CE Convention was held in 1897, it was reported that at the Consecration Service “our Aboriginal Society” participated in the roll call of societies represented at that Convention. Although unnamed, this was likely to have been the La Perouse Society. These references show that from 1894, the young Christian Endeavourers not only took on the role of proclaiming the Christian message to the Dharawal people at La Perouse, but they encouraged the spiritual growth of their converts through the principles of Christian Endeavour.

This chapter has established that the CE society was directly connected to the NSWAM from its beginnings in New South Wales. It has demonstrated that the five women chosen as case studies for this research project received their early missionary formation within the CE movement. Within the Evangelical CE Movement and the NSWAM issues of gender, race and class were discerned. Through the CE pledge, the women publicly acknowledged their personal conversion to Evangelical Christianity. The evangelisation of the world was a primary goal of CE with the specific focus of these women directed towards the conversion of Indigenous Australians. The chapter has established that the conservative theology of the CE movement in Australia discouraged political action. Conversion to Christianity remained the focus of NSWAM missionaries, rather than the struggle for justice for the dispossessed Indigenous people or the empowerment of women. The CE culture gave limited opportunities to women. Evangelical women who lacked professional qualifications, but felt called to mission

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150 Telfer, Amongst Australian Aborigines, 22.
151 The Roll Call, 18 September 1897, 21.
work among Aboriginal Australians, were drawn from the CE movement into the
NSWAM or its subsequent faith missions. AAM Secretary Harriet Baker was correct
when she reflected on the history of the mission in 1912 and wrote “Our mission is the
child of Christian Endeavour”.

152 The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, February 1912, 6.
Chapter Four  Bertha Telfer and “the wail” of the west.

Thirteen months after the November 1907 decision of the New South Wales Aborigines’ Mission to begin work in Western Australia, the renamed Australian Aborigines’ Mission (AAM) welcomed Bertha Telfer as a probationary missionary, with the expectation that she would serve her probation in the west.\(^1\) Although this did not eventuate, Bertha Telfer did serve in Western Australia from May 1912 until November 1917. The chapter will narrate the steps from May 1908 when Ernest Telfer and Peter Wandy arrived in Western Australia, through to the arrival of Bertha Telfer in Western Australia in 1912. It will examine Telfer’s family background and formation followed by an investigation of her period of missionary service from 1908 until 1917 when she left her position in Western Australia due to ill health. The analysis will focus on evidence of Telfer’s Evangelical theology and understanding of faith mission principles and their application in her missionary praxis. It will demonstrate that during her missionary service Telfer remained committed to her goal of the conversion of Indigenous people to Christianity, but an anomaly was present when she cared for children separated from their families and yet questioned the justice of that practice. It will become apparent that the issues of race, gender and class were present in Telfer’s relationship with the AAM and the Aboriginal people she sought to convert.

Prior to her own involvement, Bertha Telfer’s younger brother Ernest had been commissioned by the AAM to begin work in Western Australia in November 1907 and the Aboriginal convert, Peter Wandy, from La Perouse in New South Wales and originally from the Western Australian Goldfields, offered to accompany Telfer.\(^2\)

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\(^1\) *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, December 1908, 1

and Wandy arrived at the south coast port of Albany aboard the *SS Riverina* in May 1908.³ Travelling on their bicycles, the two men made their way towards the capital city of Perth, following the route of the Great Southern Railway. Contact was made with Nyungar people at the towns of Albany and Katanning.⁴ The people who called themselves Nyungar were the first Indigenous group to be affected by the Swan River Colony, established by the British in 1829, but the dispossession spread throughout the land. Anna Haebich coined the expression “a Pandora’s box of troubles and secrets” to describe the dispossession of Indigenous land throughout Western Australia.⁵ If the troubled history was hidden from most Western Australians, Telfer and Wandy were better informed, through their intentional encounters with the Nyungar people en route to Perth.

As the Indigenous people grieved their loss, the colonial population grew. A period of prosperity caused by the gold rush of the 1890s brought many new settlers from overseas and new arrivals from the eastern colonies, known somewhat disparagingly as “t’othersiders”.⁶ As a “t’othersider” himself, Telfer needed to build relationships with the local Christians because the AAM was an unknown organisation in Western Australia at that time. In addition, the Protestant churches likely to include Christian Endeavour (CE) societies and support the Evangelical faith mission comprised a minority of the population. Marian Aveling described Western Australian society during the early twentieth century as increasingly secular. Furthermore, those who were practising Christians the Evangelicals were still outnumbered by the Anglican and Roman Catholic denominations.⁷

³ *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, May 1908, 4.
Telfer and Wandy were not the first faith missionaries to come to Western Australia. A report published in January 1908 in *Our Aim* showed that Telfer and Wandy had been preceded in Western Australia by Charles Harrington, travelling missionary with the Aborigines’ Inland Mission (AIM), who had arrived in Perth in December 1907. Following conversations with the recently appointed Chief Protector, Charles Gale, Harrington anticipated commencing mission work in the Kimberley region in the north of the state. By February 1908, Harrington had met with the Church Council of Western Australia comprising representatives from Baptist, Congregational, Presbyterian and the Church of Christ Churches, visited Aboriginal prisoners at the Rottnest Island Prison and the people living at the Cannington Reserve. This reserve was also known as the Welshpool reserve. In March 1908, the AIM announced they would be establishing their work at the Welshpool Reserve and would receive a government subsidy of £250 per annum until the reserve was able to support itself. The AIM expected that all the residents of Aboriginal camps around Perth would be moved to Welshpool where there would be land allocated for vegetable growing and poultry farming. The mission planned to establish a home for Aboriginal children, sent to them by the government, however this did not eventuate. When Telfer and Wandy of the AAM arrived in Perth, Harrington had resigned following his marriage and Mr Richard and Mrs M. Ruddell were appointed to Western Australia. The Western Australian representatives of the two missions were mutually supportive and Wandy accompanied the Ruddells to the Welshpool Reserve, however they found only two people in residence. Anna Haebich suggested that the Aboriginal people had moved due to their

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8 *Our AIM*, January 1908, 3.
9 Ibid, February 1908, 5-6.
10 Ibid.
11 Haebich, *For Their Own Good*, 377.
12 *Our AIM*, March 1908, 3.
13 Ibid, June 1908, 1.
14 Ibid, August 1908, 3.
resentment at the intrusion of the missionaries.\textsuperscript{15} Since the Ruddells arrived to find the reserve already deserted this resentment was more likely to have been dissatisfaction with the decision by Chief Protector, Henry Prinsep, to turn the Welshpool Reserve into a central ration depot for the Perth region with the intent to remove Aboriginal people from other camps around the city.\textsuperscript{16} From their headquarters in Cannington, the Ruddell’s began visiting the Guildford camp as only a handful of people eligible to receive rations returned to Welshpool.\textsuperscript{17}

Meanwhile, Telfer’s former teacher, the Rev Lockhart Morton, founder of Angas College, a missionary training institution in Adelaide, was conducting evangelistic meetings in Perth in 1908, and Telfer renewed his association with Morton.\textsuperscript{18} This visit would have assisted his networking among the Evangelical churches. A council was formed by August 1908 and readers of \textit{The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate} were asked to pray for the newly formed Western Australian council and for Telfer and Wandy.\textsuperscript{19}

The Western Australian AAM council was interdenominational to the extent that it included Evangelical representatives from the Anglican, Baptist, Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian denominations. A Mrs J. Selby, who with her husband was on the Western Australian Board of the AIM, was an inaugural member of the AAM Council.\textsuperscript{20} Eustace Vivian Radford, a first cousin of Telfer, accepted the position of Press Correspondent.\textsuperscript{21} The President was the Methodist minister at East Perth, William Burridge, while the Baptist Reverend Silas Mead and Congregationalist minister F. V.

\textsuperscript{15} Haebich, \textit{For Their Own Good}, 104.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid, 64.
\textsuperscript{17} \textit{Our AIM}, October 1908, 6.
\textsuperscript{18} Telfer, \textit{Amongst Australian Aborigines}, 111.
\textsuperscript{19} \textit{The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate}, August 1908, 3.
\textsuperscript{20} Telfer, \textit{Amongst Australian Aborigines}, 111. & \textit{Our AIM}, July 1908, 3.
Dowling accepted the positions of Vice Presidents. Presbyterian Mary C. Fox Angelo was secretary.

With the strong connections between the Christian Endeavour (CE) movement and the AAM in New South Wales, it was understandable that Telfer approached people connected with the CE in Western Australia, and this was reflected in the membership of the committee. For example, in 1910 the President, Rev William Burridge, was the President of the Brisbane Street Methodist CE.22 Silas Mead was the President of the CE Western Australian Union in the years 1900 and 1904.23 Mead had a long history with the CE, having commenced the first Society in South Australia in 1888, at the Flinders St Baptist Church.24 When it was decided to form the Australian United Society of CE in 1893, Silas Mead was chosen as the first President.25 The leadership of prominent CE figures like Burridge and Mead contributed to the building of a network of likeminded people within the Evangelical churches who would become the support base for the work of the AAM in Western Australia.

The first council meeting, held on 19 August 1908, formed a sub-committee to consist of Burridge, Pittman, Angelo and Telfer from the committee itself, and in addition W. T. Kench, minister of the Trinity Congregational Church in Perth, to meet with the Colonial Secretary regarding the establishment of mission work in the north-west of the state.26 Ernest Telfer was deeply concerned at the injustice inflicted upon Indigenous people in the north of the state.27 He was wading into already controversial water. Following federation in 1901, the Labour member for Coolgardie in the House of Representatives, Hugh Mahon, had called for a Royal Commission into the treatment of

27 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, September 1908, 5.
Aboriginals in the pastoral industry of Western Australia. In 1904, Dr E. W. Roth was appointed by the Western Australian Premier, Walter James, to conduct a Royal Commission. The new Labor Premier, Henry Daglish, introduced legislation before the report was received and this was enacted the following year. That 1905 Aborigines Act included the supervision of Aboriginal people in employment and sought to close the town camps and move people onto designated reserves. The Chief Protector was responsible for implementing the 1905 Aborigines Act which was designed to protect Aboriginal people in Western Australia, but when it gave legal guardianship of “half caste” children to the Chief Protector it entrusted him with authority to take children from their families simply on the grounds of their race.

Following another Royal Commission to inquire into the treatment of Aborigines by the Canning Exploring Party, there were extensive reports in The West Australian newspaper in February 1908. The inquiry dismissed charges of immorality through lack of evidence, while charges of cruelty were dismissed because chaining had been considered necessary to force the Aboriginal captives to show the exploration party where to find water. Even though the charges were dismissed, the findings revealed that on at least two occasions an Aboriginal had been restrained by a neck chain to the saddle of a camel, while travelling. When Telfer arrived in Western Australia in May 1908, he was certainly concerned about such treatment and he arranged for a series of mission postcards to be produced, including a photograph of Aborigines in chains to publicise this treatment to supporters of the AAM.

28 Haebich, *For Their Own Good*, 72.
29 Ibid, 75.
33 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, June 1908, 4.
That image was a visual construction of the “loud wail” which had prompted the NSWAM to send Telfer and Wandy to Western Australia. The postcard revealed a concern for oppressed people in chains, and the marginal text expressed the hope of freedom through Christ. Telfer used the postcard in June 1908, to write from Perth to his parents in Hawker, South Australia, drawing their attention to the chains, and his intention to travel to the north-west where he would assess the situation with a view to AAM involvement.

Although the AAM intended to begin mission work in the north of Western Australia, the plan was revised following consultations with the Chief Protector of Aborigines during the closing months of 1908, when Gale emphasized to the AAM deputation his desire to establish a home for “neglected” children of mixed descent. Under the Western Australian State Children Act of 1907, one of several ways of classifying a “neglected” child was a child who slept in the open and did not have a

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34 NSW Aborigines’ Advocate, September 1907, 2.
35 Ernest Telfer, 12 June 1908. Copy of postcard courtesy Neville Simmons.
36 Telfer, Amongst Australian Aborigines, 111.
home. Presumably, this was understood to be a western-type house and so children of Aboriginal descent living in bush camps could be classified under that Act as neglected, and be removed from their families. The power of the 1905 Aborigines Act was extended in 1909 when the Aborigines’ Protection Regulation was introduced which gave authority to police, local protectors and justices of the peace to remove “half-caste” children from their families and send them to a mission. The AAM colluded with the government in the implementation of this Act which classified people on racial grounds, for on the day following Ernest Telfer’s marriage to Florence Nicholas on 24 February 1909, the Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage opened at 34 Bulwer Street, East Perth, with Ernest serving as the first director and Florence as the matron. Wandy had been a companion and assistant to Ernest Telfer during those early months establishing the work in Western Australia, but he returned to New South Wales shortly before the Telfer wedding and he continued to serve at La Perouse.

When Ernest Telfer named the Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage he knew little of the Mooro people on whose land the orphanage stood, however he had some knowledge of the Djangattie language spoken in northern New South Wales. He chose two words from that language when he named the new institution; “Dulhi” was the word for child and “Gunyah” meant shelter. This name may have seemed appropriate to Telfer and his New South Wales supporters, but ignored the language and protocols of the people whose country he had entered. In the Nyungar language, the name “Mooro” referred to land north of the Swan River, extending to the ocean in the west and Gynning (Ellen’s Brook) to the east, land recognised in 1833 by Robert Menli Lyon, an early settler, as

38 Ibid.
39 Telfer, Amongst Australian Aborigines, 111.
40 Ibid, 113.
41 Ibid, 112-113.
Yellagonga’s Territory. Nyungar Elder Cedric Jacobs identified himself as a descendant of Yellagonga, who welcomed Captain Irwin as he came ashore on the north bank of the Swan River at the beginning of white settlement in 1829. In the pamphlet “One Water Many Lakes” Stories of Reconciliation from Mooro Country Jacobs spoke of the Swan River and the system of lakes which stretch north from the river to Yanchep describing them as the sacred creation of the Wagyl, the Rainbow Serpent, and the outward appearance of the soul of the land. He told how since time immemorial to the present day Aboriginal people knew the boundaries of their country according to their birthplace. Jacobs showed a spiritual and cultural connection to the land that has survived to the present era in spite of an enormously changed landscape and the destruction of much of the traditional Indigenous culture. Even by 1909, the area of land north of the Swan River, within Mooro territory, was no longer the bushland it had been at the first arrival of white settlers in 1829, and the descendants of the traditional owners had been dispossessed of their land. Rapid development of the colony following the gold rush of the 1890s meant that by 1909, ninety percent of East Perth had been cleared. Just over half comprised residential properties and the remainder were factory and industrial sites, with the result that the suburb was considered a working class area and not a desirable address.

In a letter sent to The West Australian newspaper on 10 April 1909, Telfer stated the institution would take in “native” or “half-caste” girls under fourteen and boys under eight. He envisaged a safe place for children of Indigenous ancestry where they would...
be taught the Christian faith. However, when an unnamed Aboriginal woman saw the
sign outside the Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage, she suggested to Telfer that in her language
these words meant “Hold your tongue, you’re a big liar”.46 It was evident that this
particular woman had already learned to distrust the words of the white community and
her perception of the name was included in that understanding.

During 1909, an attempt was made to reunite the Aborigines’ Inland Mission
and the Australian Aborigines’ Mission, but this was unsuccessful even though there
had been some cooperation between the two groups in Western Australia.47 By April
1909, it was announced by the AIM that the Western Australian Government had
relieved them of their contract to develop industrial work at the Welshpool Reserve.48
Because they recognised that the local Evangelical community could not support two
faith missions, the AIM withdrew its work from Western Australia.49 In his 1939 history
of the United Aborigines’ Mission, Telfer made no mention of the earlier AIM
connection in Perth, which is not surprising since the AAM had virtually poached their
support.

Meanwhile, the first two residents at the Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage arrived from
Geraldton in May 1909.50 Maintenance Returns for June 1909 recorded three additional
girls admitted that month.51 No surnames were recorded for these first residents and
even their place of origin was unrecorded when Telfer reported that three little girls had
been captured “in the interior” of the state by the police with the authority of the Chief
Protector to be placed in the care of the Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage.52 The returns showed
that the Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage provided the state government with an institution

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48 *Our AIM*, April 1909, 6.
49 Ibid, April 1909, 7.
50 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, May 1909, 5.
51 “AN 1/3, Acc 652, File 903/09, Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage - Maintenance Returns," in *Aborigines and
Fisheries Department, SROWA*. Microfiche.
52 Telfer, *Amongst Australian Aborigines*, 112.
where they could send children under the provisions of the 1905 Act and in return, the AAM received financial support for children given into their care by the Aborigines Department. Although Florence Telfer described the first children as orphans, this was not always the case. For example, AAM missionary Annie Lock brought Isobel Bropho with her siblings to Dulhi Gunyah from Busselton in 1910, at the request of her uncle, after her mother left the family and went to live in Pinjarra. Bropho recalled the sight of her father sitting on a kerosene tin and weeping with sadness when his children were taken away.53 Telfer anticipated benefits for the children as they received shelter within Dulhi Gunyah and adopted Christianity. The inequalities of standards and resources between institutions for Aboriginal children and those for non-Aboriginal children, have been documented by Haebich.54 Telfer either ignored or was unaware of this for he supported the government argument that the children were being rescued from neglect. Nor did he question the loss of culture, language and family that was an inherent part of this process.

Telfer reported optimistically to the AAM in July 1909, that interest was growing in the AAM as the Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage was becoming known in churches and CE Societies.55 His report was directed towards supporters of the AAM who would be looking for confirmation that the faith principles were working and therefore it needed to be positive to encourage ongoing support. However, when Telfer expressed his disappointment at the limited support given by local Christians he revealed a contradiction within his report. In reality, he experienced a period of severe testing of the principles of a faith mission when some weeks insufficient money was received to pay the rent and he often did not know where the next meal would come from.56 The offer from the Chief Protector of Aborigines of financial support for each child in the

55 The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, July 1909, 6.
56 Ibid.
home was seen as an answer to prayer. Telfer was quick to explain that the subsidy did not cover all the expenses, so the missionaries at Dulhi Gunyah were still dependent upon God for their daily needs. Supporters of the mission were not asked directly for funds, but they were informed of the needs and encouraged to pray that the needs would be met. There was a fine line here between adhering to the principle of not soliciting funds and yet letting the needs be known to supporters.

The children listed in the Aborigines and Fisheries Department files relating to the Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage were only those for whom the state accepted responsibility. This was evident from correspondence from the Department dated 19 September 1913, and addressed to E. V. Radford, secretary of Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage, which stated that a “quarter caste” child was not covered by the 1905 Aborigines Act and therefore the white father, if known, or else the mother, was expected to pay for the maintenance of the child. With the incomplete government records and lack of AAM archives for Western Australia, it is impossible to know accurate numbers of children who were resident at Dulhi Gunyah. To trace where children came from or what happened to them when they left is problematic.

The AAM Council in Sydney maintained support and control of the outreach in the west, even though the originator of faith mission principles, Hudson Taylor, ensured that the work of the China Inland Mission was controlled from the field rather than by a distant body. AAM missionary Annie Lock was appointed to Western Australia in June 1909 to relieve the pregnant Florence Telfer of the position of matron of the orphanage. The intention of sending more missionaries to work in the north-west had not occurred and, concerned about the isolated group in Western Australia, the New South Wales AAM Council appointed Secretary Harriet Baker to travel to Western

57 “AN 1/3, Acc 652, File 1283/13, Halfcaste woman wants to place her 6 month old child in Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage,” in Aborigines and Fisheries Department, SROWA.
58 Taylor, China's Spiritual Need and Claims, 87.
59 The Australian Aborigines' Advocate, June 1909, 3.
Australia to reorganise the work in that state, suggesting there were unreported difficulties.60

Baker introduced significant changes. Ernest and Florence Telfer moved to 83 Bagot Road, Subiaco, which became the AAM headquarters, while Annie Lock and the Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage relocated to Victoria Park under the supervision of an advisory committee.61 Subiaco was close to the city and within bicycling distance of several fringe-dweller camps, making it a convenient location for Telfer. Victoria Park was on the southern side of the Swan River, connected to the city by the Causeway Bridge and considered more suitable for the children, being away from the city and fifteen minutes walk from the last tram stop. Victoria Park was within country known in the Nyungar language as “Beeloo”, which extended between the Canning River, Melville Water, the Swan River and Ellen’s Brook and east into the Darling Scarp.62

The Post Office Directory for 1911 showed the second location of Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage was on Albany Road (later Albany Highway) between Oats Street and Welshpool Road.63 Isobel Bropho was brought to this house by Annie Lock and her description was of an old weatherboard house that had seen better days.64

In addition to these changes in location, a new Western Australian Council of the AAM was formed. The Western Australian Vice President Silas Mead had died in October 1909 at the age of seventy-five.65 Since the Methodist minister William Burridge was in failing health, which led to his early retirement in 1911, it was assumed that he withdrew from the committee on health grounds at this time.66 The division into a state council and an advisory committee for Dulhi Gunyah created the need for

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60 Ibid, November 1909, 6 & December 1909, 5.
61 Ibid, January 1910, 3.
62 Lyon, “A glance at the manners, and language of the Aboriginal inhabitants of Western Australia; with a short vocabulary,” 174-176.
63 Western Australia Post Office Directory (Wise’s), (Perth (W.A.): H. Wise & Co, 1911), 268.
64 Bropho, Interview with R. Jamieson, 4.
65 The Westralian Endeavourer, October 1909, 5.
66 Extract from Minutes of WA Methodist Conference 1911, 6 "Rev William Burridge, Methodist Church, Persons File," in Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Western Australia Archives (Perth).
additional supporters and Baker sought out practical people who could be of real assistance. The advisory committee for Dulhi Gunyah was not named in The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, however the new Western Australian Council members included a Mr Filmer as President. From the original council Mr C. A. Hall became Vice President and Miss Sanders became secretary. There were an additional eleven new members. In order to maintain the connection with the CE movement the missionary superintendent of the State CE Union became a member of the AAM Council. From March 1910, the Western Australian Council was listed each month in the mission publication, as was the New South Wales Council, and a monthly report from the council in Western Australia became a regular feature.

When Ernest Telfer was satisfied that the new arrangements were in place Florence Telfer and her new baby remained in Perth, while her husband finally left in May 1910 with Radford for the north-west, travelling by steamer to Carnarvon and then on to Derby by bicycle. Telfer met with independent missionary Sydney Hadley who proposed that the AAM might take over his work on Sunday Island. Although Hadley was to play a significant role in the life of Bertha Telfer some years later, this offer was not taken up at that time. Radford remained at Derby as a volunteer worker until new missionaries arrived, but after six months when this did not eventuate, he returned to Perth. Radford and Telfer endured many hardships on this journey to the north and in November 1910, the AAM reported that both Ernest and Florence were unwell and resting in South Australia. Ernest was still recovering in January 1911, and a

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67 The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, January 1910, 4.
68 Ibid, February 1910, 3.
69 Ibid, July 1910, 5.
70 Ibid, March 1910, 3-4.
71 Telfer, Amongst Australian Aborigines, 115-128.
72 Ibid, 126.
73 The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, January 1911, 7 & February 1911, 3.
74 Ibid, November 1910, 3.
resignation letter was received from Ernest and Florence Telfer that month.\textsuperscript{75} Ernest Telfer entered the Baptist ministry, although he remained a supporter of the AAM.\textsuperscript{76}

With growing numbers of children in care at Dulhi Gunyah, Catherine Mantell, a probationary missionary from New South Wales with nursing experience, was appointed in March 1911 to assist Annie Lock.\textsuperscript{77} The location of Dulhi Gunyah in Victoria Park was soon outgrown, for in May 1911 the Government Health Officer and Chief Protector Gale declared that the premises were too small for the twenty-one children now in residence.\textsuperscript{78} It was not until August 1911 that a special meeting of the Western Australian Council of the AAM recommended the purchase of new premises for the orphanage, a property of twelve acres of bushland close to the current site and able to accommodate up to forty residents who would be trained on “industrial lines”.\textsuperscript{79} This meant training for domestic service or agricultural labouring. The financial statement presented at the Dulhi Gunyah Anniversary meeting that month described a balance in hand of eleven shillings and ten pence halfpenny and provided no information as to how the AAM was able to purchase land at this time when the government was providing financial support for only five out of the twenty-one residents.\textsuperscript{80} Lot 20 of Canning Location 2, an area in Argyle Street, Victoria Park, of approximately twelve acres was bought in 1911 with George Filmer, a veterinary surgeon, Henry Hunt, a manufacturer, and Charles Hall, an Insurance Agent as joint tenants.\textsuperscript{81} These three men were on the AAM Council in Western Australia, but the title was not in the name of the AAM, as it was not an incorporated body at that time, and the land was registered under the names of the committee members. No details were

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid, February 1911, 3.
\textsuperscript{76} Telfer, \textit{Amongst Australian Aborigines}, 145.
\textsuperscript{77} \textit{The Australian Aborigines' Advocate}, March 1911, 5.
\textsuperscript{78} Ibid, May 1911, 6.
\textsuperscript{79} Ibid, September 1911, 5.
\textsuperscript{80} Ibid, August 1911, 6.
\textsuperscript{81} “Certificate of Title Volume 498 Folio 68,” (Department of Land Information, Government of Western Australia).
given within *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate* as to how they were able to finance the purchase. While they were still settling into the new property in March 1912, Annie Lock tended her resignation from her position at Dulhi Gunyah to follow her call to evangelistic work in the rural fringe dweller camps rather than childcare in the city.\(^{82}\) Lock proceeded alone to begin work at Katanning in the Great Southern region of Western Australia.\(^{83}\) It was due to this staffing crisis, that AAM missionary Bertha Telfer agreed to fill the vacancy and she was welcomed in June 1912.\(^{84}\) Telfer’s arrival brought to five the number of AAM missionaries in Western Australia, and these comprised three single women and the recently arrived couple Horace and C. Smith who were stationed at the independent mission at Sunday Island.\(^{85}\) It was four years since the faith mission had extended its work in Western Australia, but in 1912, it remained a small venture supported by local Evangelical Christians and the wider AAM network in eastern Australia.

An examination of Telfer’s family background and formative influences will provide some understanding of her motivation to missionary service. Her surname Telfer was never Bertha’s legal name, however she was known by this name during most of her missionary service, and it will continue to be used here. A Telfer family history suggested that at about three years of age Bertha and her unnamed brother of about eight years were unofficially adopted by John and Caroline Telfer, following the death of their mother.\(^{86}\) Bertha was christened Bertha Hochuli in Switzerland in 1872.\(^{87}\) South Australian shipping records listed Rudolph and Elizabeth Hochuli and their four children Rudolph, Rosetta, Gottlieb and Bertha who arrived in Port Adelaide, South

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\(^{82}\) *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, March 1912, 5.

\(^{83}\) Ibid, May 1912, 4.

\(^{84}\) Ibid, June 1912, 5.

\(^{85}\) Ibid, June 1912, 2.

\(^{86}\) Simmons, *From the Borders to the Bush: Telfer Family History*, 113.

\(^{87}\) Julius Billeter, “Genealogical Record of the Hochuli family of Reitnau, Kt. Aargau, Switzerland, 1538-1939,” (Salt Lake City: Filmed by the Genealogical Society of Utah: 1960), 68.
Australia, on 17 January 1877 on the emigrant ship *Herschel*, which had sailed from Hamburg in Germany.\textsuperscript{88} Elizabeth Hochuli died on 11 August 1877, seven months after her arrival.\textsuperscript{89} In a letter to her cousin, Telfer’s niece, Joyce Telfer, wrote that rather than place his children into permanent government care Rudolph Hochuli appealed for help.\textsuperscript{90} John and Caroline Telfer of Kersbrook offered to care for two of the children. During that year, John Telfer was allocated a farming block in the Hundred of Arkaba in the central Flinders Ranges.\textsuperscript{91} When John Telfer had built a one-room hut, his pregnant wife and child plus Rudolph and Bertha Hochuli joined him. Since Bertha was born in 1872, she would have been five years of age when she left her natural family to live with the Telfer family at Arkaba.

In South Australia, land was opened up for wheat farming in one hundred square mile units, which were then subdivided into farm units.\textsuperscript{92} The Hundred of Arkaba was north of the Goyder Line set in 1865 by South Australian Surveyor General Goyder as the limit of land suitable for agriculture.\textsuperscript{93} Goyder’s recommendation against settlement in areas unsuitable for agriculture was disregarded when good years of rainfall convinced settlers that “the rain follows the plough”.\textsuperscript{94} After several good years, the droughts of 1880 to 1882 followed and people learned from bitter experience that the land was unsuitable for wheat growing.\textsuperscript{95} Living under difficult pioneering conditions in marginal land meant that children were required to work, and the Telfer family history suggested that Rudolph Hochuli may have been overworked, resulting in tension which

\textsuperscript{88} *Hamburg Departure Lists (1851, 1855-1886)*, vol. 3 1870-1886 (Adelaide: Mortlock Library).
\textsuperscript{89} Billeter, "Genealogical Record of the Hochuli family of Reitnau, Kt. Aargau, Switzerland, 1538-1939," 68.
\textsuperscript{90} Joyce Telfer, (Adelaide: nd).Quoted in Personal Communication from Neville Simmons to Alison Longworth 10 January 2004
\textsuperscript{91} Simmons, *From the Borders to the Bush: Telfer Family History*, 113.
\textsuperscript{93} Ibid, 45.
\textsuperscript{94} Ibid, 59.
\textsuperscript{95} Ibid, 81.
caused him to rejoin his father in his teenage years. Although Bertha Hochuli was known by the Telfer surname, the departure of her brother to rejoin his father showed that links with her Hochuli family were not entirely broken, however from this time Bertha no longer had day-to-day contact with any of her birth family. Years later, in 1912, Telfer wrote to former students from the Missionary Training Colleges in Adelaide and passed on news of her sister Rossette and brother, both in New Guinea, so in spite of their childhood separation, family ties were important to Telfer and she maintained communication with her Hochuli siblings.

John and Caroline Telfer were Baptists but in 1878, one of the first church services in the district was held outdoors on the Telfer property led by a Methodist local preacher. When the Wesleyan Methodists appointed a minister to the Wonoka Circuit in 1880 the Telfer family were associated with the South Arkaba congregation within that circuit. The circuit became part of the Methodist denomination when the Bible Christians, the Primitive Methodists and the Wesleyan Methodists united in South Australia on 1 January 1900. The Wesleyan Methodists were the strongest of these groups in Australia, but Bible Christians and Primitive Methodists were known to have settled in the Hawker region. The Bible Christians and the Primitive Methodists both provided opportunities for women preachers in England in the nineteenth century. In South Australia, women were known to serve as evangelists among the Bible Christians, including Serena Thorne Lake who preached for many years until her death.

96 Simmons, *From the Borders to the Bush: Telfer Family History*, 117.
97 The Missionary Record, October 1912, 9.
100 Telfer, *Built With Living Stones*, 11.
in 1902.\textsuperscript{102} With that tradition behind her, Bertha Telfer was accepted as a local preacher in the Hawker Circuit of the Methodist Church.\textsuperscript{103}

A Christian Endeavour society was associated with the South Arkaba Methodist church and a copy of the Active Member’s Pledge of the Young People’s Society of Christian Endeavour, which was signed by Bertha’s youngest brother, Eddie, in 1901, was included in the family history.\textsuperscript{104} Band of Hope meetings were a regular occurrence in the Telfer home. The Band of Hope was a Christian temperance society designed to promote total abstinence of alcohol, particularly among young people. The meetings were usually in the form of a concert with those in attendance contributing to the entertainment and, in the small community of Arkaba, with limited social opportunities, it was well patronised.\textsuperscript{105}

The first state secondary school in South Australia was for girls and opened in 1879, however Bertha was far removed from that opportunity in the isolation of Arkaba.\textsuperscript{106} The single-teacher Willow Plains School was opened in 1883 when Bertha Telfer would have been thirteen years of age therefore her education before that date was likely to have been at home.\textsuperscript{107} There is no reference to Bertha’s attendance at the school. Her brothers were all working full-time by the age of fourteen so if Bertha did attend the school it was unlikely she would have remained beyond her fourteenth birthday, but would have contributed to the home and farm duties alongside her mother.

Although Telfer spent her childhood under pioneering conditions and the Flinders Ranges are renowned for significant cultural sites of the Adnyamathanha people, her nephew doubted that Bertha would have had any contact with Aboriginal

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{102} Hunt, \textit{This Side of Heaven: A History of Methodism in South Australia}, 129-130.
\textsuperscript{103} Reginald F (Bill) Telfer, \textit{Interview by A. Longworth} (Windy Hill, Hawker: 2003), 2.
\textsuperscript{104} Simmons, \textit{From the Borders to the Bush: Telfer Family History}, 157. See page 91 for the wording of that pledge.
\textsuperscript{105} Ibid, 119.
\textsuperscript{106} Helen Jones, \textit{In Her Own Name: A History of Women in South Australia from 1836} (Kent Town: Wakefield Press, 1994), 80.
\end{flushleft}
people in her youth. The country had earlier been worked as pastoral leases and he was aware of only an occasional itinerant Indigenous worker. Before European settlement, the Flinders Ranges and surrounding plains were occupied by people from six Indigenous language groups, but following colonisation these groups have over time blended into the Adnyamathanha cultural group. From the 1850s when miners and pastoralists came into the Flinders Ranges, the Adnyamathanha people were markedly reduced through disease, drought and the conflict created by the dispossession of the traditional landowners. However, in her research into the Adnyamathanha people Peggy Brock wrote that their employment in the pastoral industry was a factor that enabled the people to survive and retain their cultural identity into the mid-twentieth century. Ernest Telfer recalled that before he came to Western Australian in 1908, he and Wandy made contact with a small group of Aborigines’ camped a few miles north of Hawker. This confirmed that Adnyamathanha people were still in the area even though her nephew and possibly Bertha were not aware of this. Telfer’s interest in mission work among Aboriginal people was more likely to have been fostered through membership of the CE, which had encouraged evangelistic work among the Aboriginal people in New South Wales since 1893.

When John Telfer acquired the Warcowie Station in 1903 Bertha’s young brother Albert managed that property. Bertha became his housekeeper and the local teacher, Beatrice Rowe, boarded with them. In the family history Simmons included the story that one Easter Telfer, Albert and Beatrice rode sixty miles on their bicycles from

108 Telfer, Interview by A. Longworth, 5.
110 Ibid, 159-173.
112 Telfer, Amongst Australian Aborigines, 108.
113 Simmons, From the Borders to the Bush: Telfer Family History, 145.
Warcowie to attend the CE Convention held in Quorn. This would have been Easter 1905, when the Great Northern Christian Endeavour Union Annual Convention was held at Quorn, South Australia. Representatives from adult and junior societies attended the Convention from Arkaba and from Warcowie. Her attendance brought Telfer in contact with an interdenominational group of Evangelical young people. Given her rural isolation, the experience was no doubt stimulating and increased the influence of CE religious culture in her life.

In May 1905, the South Australian CE publication *The Christian Endeavour News* included in its Missionary Column an article entitled “Mission to the Australian Aborigines” by “A Worker.” This anonymous writer, who could have been Ernest Telfer since the article stated it was written by a worker with the New South Wales Aborigines’ Mission, drew attention to the fact that this mission had commenced through a CE society. The writer challenged Christian Endeavourers not only to support missionary work in other countries, but also to show a sense of responsibility towards the Aboriginal people of Australia. When the anonymous writer referred to Aboriginal people as the “heathen at our door,” this was an example of the widespread belief by western people that non-western people were heathens in need of conversion to Christianity. That ethnocentric belief constituted a call to Christian Endeavourers to become involved in the task of evangelism.

The marriage of her brother Albert to Beatrice Rowe in February 1908 provided Telfer with freedom from domestic responsibilities. Telfer sought a new identity as a missionary to the “heathen” Australian Aboriginals whose plight she had learned about through her involvement in the Christian Endeavour movement. As preparation, Bertha

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114 Ibid.
116 Ibid, 3 May, 1905, 10.
followed the example of her brother and during 1908 studied at Angas College in North Adelaide, completing her time there in December of that year.118

Angas College was an Evangelical and interdenominational college established in 1893 to prepare young men for mission work.119 The founder, Presbyterian minister Rev W. Lockhart Morton, recalled that a woman named Fanny Allen visited Angas College in 1895 and enquired about the possibility of training for women, but at the time he felt that was not possible.120 Allen was burdened by her knowledge that many women in China and India would not hear the Christian message unless women went as missionaries, because it was culturally inappropriate for men to evangelise women. In the company of Morton’s wife, Allen prayed that Morton would recognise the need. Another woman, Gertrude Trudinger, also expressed her desire for missionary training and a donation of money for the purpose persuaded Morton that God was leading in that direction and would provide the necessary finance. The Ladies Missionary College, known as Kensington College, was established in 1895 in conjunction with Angas College.121 These two women were among the first group of women students and Gertrude Trudinger served as a missionary in China while Fanny Allen served in India.122

The only surviving copies of the monthly publication of these training colleges, *The Missionary Record*, appear to be held in the Mortlock Library in South Australia and copies are missing during the period when Bertha Telfer was a student in 1908. However, in 1914, these colleges were described as residential colleges where students contributed to the household duties and learned how to live in community.123 Practical work such as Sunday School teaching, speaking at missionary meetings and Christian

118 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, December 1908, 1.
119 *The Missionary Record*, May-June 1914, 1.
121 Ibid, 271.
122 Ibid, 313-314.
123 *The Missionary Record*, May-June 1914, 2.
Endeavour meetings was an additional component of their formation. No fees were charged as both students and the principal trusted God for their support, just as faith missionaries were required to do, and they contributed to the running costs as they were able. The programme of study for women included biblical studies using Scofield’s Bible Course, mission studies, English grammar, nursing class, voice culture, preparation of Sunday School lessons and homiletics and presumably this would have been similar to what was offered in earlier years.  

Scofield was the editor of Scofields Reference Bible, a King James Version of the Bible that included margin notes with a dispensational interpretation. Scofield’s Reference Bible was not published until 1909, so could not have been in use during Telfer’s time at Angas College, however when Morton wrote of his involvement in the evangelistic campaigns of Torrey and Alexander in 1902 this verified his identification with the theology of Torrey. Morton’s subsequent use of the Scofield Reference Bible with his students provided confirmation of this influence. Dispensationalism was a version of premillennialism advocated by John N. Darby, the founder of the Plymouth Brethren in England from about 1830. Although the Plymouth Brethren advocated the imminent second coming of Christ from 1830, and time has proved their error, premillennialists continued to look for the imminent return of Christ. In his work on faith missions Fielder recognised how the premillennial view of the second coming of Christ was closely related to mission because premillennialists believed that the gospel must be preached to the whole world before Christ would return. In addition to Bertha Telfer, Ernest Telfer, Annie Lock, William Fryer, Horace and C. Smith were all

124 Ibid.
128 Fiedler, The Story of Faith Missions, 274-278.
former students of the college and served with the AAM in Western Australia. So, there was a definite correlation between the Evangelical Dispensationalist theology of Angas College and the AAM.

Before being accepted by the AAM Telfer had to provide a certificate of health and show her doctrinal acceptance on the following aspects of doctrine: the inspiration and authority of Scripture, the Trinity, the fall of humanity, the Atonement, justification by faith, resurrection of the body and eternal punishment. These points were all included in the doctrine of the Evangelical Alliance and came to be identified with the 1858-59 Revival, to which the CE movement and the NSWAM were theologically aligned. Telfer’s application has not been located within the United Aborigines’ Mission (UAM) archives, but her personal statement of belief must have been acceptable to the AAM. In December 1908, Telfer was accepted as a probationary missionary and it was anticipated that she would serve her probation in Western Australia where her brother was already located. This was not to be however, and in April 1909 Bertha Telfer arrived at La Perouse in New South Wales for her probationary period.

While at La Perouse Telfer gained first-hand experience of revival preaching when musician Charles Alexander, who had accompanied Torrey in his campaign in 1902, returned to Australia with the evangelist Wilbur Chapman, and the two men held revival meetings in Sydney during the month of June 1909. Not only did the La Perouse people attend the revival meetings in Sydney, but the revival team also visited La Perouse and about twelve of the Aboriginal people were reported to have made public commitments to Jesus Christ. Telfer was also present that month at the farewell

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132 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, December 1908, 1.
133 Ibid, April 1909, 5.
134 Ibid, June 1909, 1.
of Annie Lock who was leaving her position at Forster, New South Wales, to take on the role of matron in the Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage in Western Australia. In June 1909, Telfer was transferred to the Burnt Bridge station on the Macleay River near the town of Kempsey in northern New South Wales, replacing the incumbent missionary Elsie Jelbart who was leaving on health grounds.

In the Kempsey region, Aboriginal people had survived the violent years of dispossession and their culture was adapting to western influence. In her thesis on the history of Aboriginal communities in New South Wales from 1909 to 1939 Heather Goodall described Burnt Bridge (formerly known as Euroka Creek) as a reserve notified in 1894. Although it was first considered suitable for grazing land only, by 1896, it was yielding a maize crop and other produce. Even with this adaptation from an Indigenous hunter/gatherer lifestyle to western practices of agriculture, from 1890 children in the north coast region of New South Wales began to be excluded from public schools, with alternative schools often established on a nearby reserve. A segregated school was established at Burnt Bridge in 1905. This was yet another sign of the racism inherent in the dominant society. Goodall described how the reserve at Burnt Bridge was first issued by the Aborigines’ Protection Board (APB) in New South Wales for a particular family, and this changed as it did for other APB stations when the 1909 Protection Act increased the power of the Board over all reserves and gave it the authority to move people on, particularly children of mixed descent who were deemed to be neglected. When Bertha Telfer arrived at Burnt Bridge in 1909, Indigenous parents lived with the fear of possible removal of their children, but Telfer made no mention of this in her reports from that time.

135 Ibid.
136 Ibid.
137 Goodall, "A History of Aboriginal Communities in New South Wales, 1909-1939", 38, 63.
138 Ibid, 64.
139 Ibid, 74.
Writing two weeks after taking up her appointment at Burnt Bridge, Telfer described her involvement with Junior Christian Endeavour and Sunday School and she asked for prayers for the “unsaved” at Burnt Bridge, confirming her Evangelical concern.\textsuperscript{140} Apparently, the school opened in 1905 had not continued for Telfer expressed her disquiet that there was no teacher. Telfer obtained approval from the Education Department and by September 1909, she had opened a school three days a week and she reported that the fourteen children were doing well with writing, drawing and sewing.\textsuperscript{141} This action revealed that while her premillennial theology gave Telfer a sense of urgency for evangelism the missionary was not only concerned about the spiritual welfare of the Indigenous people, but also believed the children had a right to be educated as preparation for life in the dominant western culture. It appeared that Telfer shamed the Education Department into action when the following month Inspector Cotterill assured the missionary of his intention to appoint a permanent teacher.\textsuperscript{142} Telfer continued as the teacher until a Miss Rutter was appointed by the APB in May 1910.\textsuperscript{143}

In her dual role of missionary and teacher, Telfer was so busy in October 1909 that she could only send a postcard home to the Telfer family at Hawker. The postcard Telfer used was produced by the AAM featuring a photograph of her brother Ernest with Native Helper, Peter Wandy. The two men stood together, each holding their bicycle, with the caption “Pioneering in Western Australia.” On the reverse side of this image of a cross-cultural missionary team, Bertha Telfer expressed her homesickness and then wrote of her role as teacher: “I have not caned any little niggers yet”.\textsuperscript{144} In her correspondence to the family Telfer wrote candidly in the language of her time and her

\textsuperscript{140} The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, August 1909, 7.
\textsuperscript{141} Ibid, September 1909, 7.
\textsuperscript{142} Ibid, October 1909, 7.
\textsuperscript{143} Ibid, May 1910, 7.
\textsuperscript{144} Bertha Telfer, Personal Correspondence to J. Telfer, 26 October 1909.
use of the word “nigger” exposed an unconscious racist attitude. Her comment suggested that the family had questioned her ability to control and teach the children at Burnt Bridge, since she had no training or experience. Telfer was able to report she was managing under difficult circumstances without resorting to the use of the cane. Telfer’s great nephew, Neville Simmons, remembered that “nigger” was colloquial language of the day even into the 1950s and argued that Bertha’s life of service said more about her attitude than one ill-used word.145

Telfer was not alone in her use of the word. Further evidence of the use of the word “nigger” was found in 1908 in Western Australia. Sir John Forrest, former explorer and Western Australian Premier, appeared before the Royal Commission into the treatment of Aborigines by the Canning exploring party and the verbatim report revealed his use of the term “nigger” to describe “half civilised” Aboriginal people in contrast to those who had learned to live as white men and were therefore “civilised.”146

The use of the word “nigger” reflected the attitude by Europeans of the superiority of western culture. When Telfer used the word, she reflected her acceptance of the attitudes of her time that was not only evident in the use of racist language, but saw Aboriginal children excluded from state schools.

Bertha Telfer’s induction as a fully accredited missionary was held in the Cleveland Street Methodist Church.147 No date was given, but this was probably Thursday 18 November 1909, when missionary meetings were held in various suburban churches, including Cleveland Street Methodist, during the nine days of Annual meetings of the AAM.148 Telfer took the opportunity to witness to her conversion and call to missionary service.149 The genre of women’s published conversion narratives

145 Neville Simmons, Personal Correspondence to A. Longworth, 7 March 2004.
146 The West Australian, 22 February 1908, 13.
147 The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, December 1909, 5.
was analysed by Virginia Lieson Brereton in 1991, when the writer found that the narratives utilised a “language of the heart” that allowed little room for original thought, although she argued women still found them a way of giving voice to their experience.150 This analysis cannot be tested against the testimony of Telfer for it was not published in detail. Instead, supporters of the mission were asked to pray for suitable male candidates for work in the isolation of the north-west.151 The majority of AAM missionaries were women, but the wisdom of the council was that men were needed for the pioneering work. They failed to value Telfer’s background under pioneering conditions in outback South Australia and her experience in the Methodist Church as a local preacher. Although Telfer had expected to go to Western Australia, she remained at Burnt Bridge after her induction. The issue of gender equality was submerged in the tasks at Burnt Bridge.

From January 1910, Telfer was assisted by Native Helper Fred Barber.152 Telfer never referred to Barber by name although in one report she expressed her thanks to all who had assisted, including Native Helpers.153 Although the AAM existed for the evangelisation of Aboriginal Australians Barber was not named as a Native Helper in the list of personnel within the mission publication each month.154 This confirmed that the goal of conversion to Christianity did not eradicate the attitude of racial superiority held by western people, and minimal recognition continued to be accorded to Indigenous workers such as Barber.

Telfer was again present at the annual AAM conference held in January 1911 and she was one of several to address the public meeting.155 Close to one thousand

151 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, December 1909, 5.
153 Ibid, October 1910, 6.
154 Ibid, November 1910, 2.
155 Ibid, January 1911, 5.
people gathered in a circle for the open-air meeting where the President, T.E. Colebrook, spoke against the government policy of taking Indigenous children from their parents. Colebrook proposed to support parents, where necessary, to be better parents, and he advocated a dormitory system within each reserve.\textsuperscript{156} His plan exposed a cultural bias that judged good parenting according to a western model and would result in children being removed from the day-to-day care of their parents. The report did not address the AAM involvement in the policy of removing children through their institutions such as Bomaderry Children’s Home in New South Wales and the Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage in Western Australia. Given his stand against the separation of children, it is certainly ironic that later Colebrook supported the establishment of a Children’s Home in Oodnadatta in South Australia and that when the home moved to Quorn it was named the Colebrook Home.\textsuperscript{157} The published report was entirely positive and therefore it was presumed that the missionaries, including Telfer, agreed with their president.

The resignation of Ernest Telfer early in 1911 may have contributed to Bertha’s depressed state, which was evident in a very short report in April that referred to her discouragement in the work at Burnt Bridge even though God had provided all her needs.\textsuperscript{158} Owing to continuing health problems, Bertha was granted three months furlough and planned to spend the time with her family in the Flinders Ranges.\textsuperscript{159} By then Telfer had served three years without any leave, but it seemed as though this was not granted until her need for respite was at a crisis point.

The timing of her furlough enabled Telfer to attend the CE Convention held in Adelaide in October 1911.\textsuperscript{160} A missionary day formed part of the programme and

\textsuperscript{156} Ibid, January 1911, 4.
\textsuperscript{157} Telfer,\textit{ Amongst Australian Aborigines}, 168, 172.
\textsuperscript{158} \textit{The Australian Aborigines' Advocate}, April 1911, 7.
\textsuperscript{159} Ibid, September 1911, 3.
\textsuperscript{160} Ibid, September 1911, 4.
included missionary speakers from Africa, China and India, but not from Australia. In a report by the Adelaide press, it was revealed that an extensive exhibition of Indigenous artefacts had been assembled by women, and included a display by Annie Lock on leave in South Australia from the Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage. Although both women were accredited AAM missionaries Lock was clearly far more confident and outgoing than Telfer who attended, but did not actively participate. The report of the Missionary Day confirmed that the CE gave more attention to overseas mission work than work with Indigenous Australians, and most of this support came from women. With this limited support even from people of similar Evangelical theology, both Lock and Telfer certainly needed to be strong in their sense of call.

A holiday with her family, and attendance at the CE Convention resulted in renewed self-assurance and by February 1912 Telfer reported her joy at being back at Burnt Bridge. However, events in Western Australia were soon to impact on Telfer, for she was asked to fill the vacant position at Dulhi Gunyah following the resignation of Annie Lock. If she was disappointed at being overlooked earlier for work in Western Australia, this appointment was too late to enable Telfer to work alongside her brother Ernest who had since resigned. However, Telfer took up the opportunity to be involved in the work her brother had begun and she was officially welcomed to the Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage at a Saturday afternoon work party in June 1912.

The investigation of Telfer’s work over five years in Western Australia will focus primarily on her theology and practice of faith mission principles and the impact that issues of gender, class and race had on her missionary practice. Telfer had been accustomed to write a monthly report for the AAM from Burnt Bridge, however when

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161 *The Roll Call*, November 1911, 113.
162 *Adelaide Advertiser*, (Adelaide), October 5, 1911, 11.
163 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, February 1912, 7.
164 Ibid, March 1912, 5.
165 Ibid, June 1912, 5.
she arrived in Western Australia Eustace Radford, as secretary of the Western Australian Council, wrote the monthly reports for publication in *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*. A letter written by Telfer to the AAM in New South Wales in July 1912, was referred to, but not published.166

Telfer also wrote to her former classmates at Angas College in 1912 and that letter published in the College periodical *The Missionary Record* provided some insight into her theology at that time. Telfer wrote:

> I feel quite settled down to the work in the Children’s Home now, it is not so trying as station work. One does not come into contact with the awful sin that is so heart breaking to the missionary among the adults. We have 27 children to care for, feed, clothe and educate, and we are kept very busy; for many of these little ones do not know a word of English when they come to us, and others know so little that is good and so much that is evil… Some of the older girls have lately taken Christ as their Saviour and it is a joy to witness the change in their lives.167

Her words revealed that although Telfer was occupied with the day-to-day care of children, their conversion to Christianity was her goal and it was eagerly reported to supporters. Telfer’s account displayed a western bias against Indigenous language and culture, although the reference to evil influences may be more directed to alcohol abuse than cultural practice. Her comment may have been referring to an incident in August 1911 when she returned to Burnt Bridge after an absence to find that “some notoriously bad characters” had camped at the reserve and “their evil influence has resulted in serious drinking bouts among some of the men.”168 With her strong temperance beliefs, Telfer appreciated the absence of alcohol abuse in her work with the children at Dulhi Gunyah.

When Telfer arrived in Western Australia in June 1912 the AAM was engaged in the process of lobbying the government to take up its responsibility to provide

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166 Ibid, July 1912, 4.
167 *The Missionary Record*, October 1912, 9.
168 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, August 1911, 7.
education for the children. Historian Neville Green described this incident as “the first test of the State’s obligation to educate all children, regardless of ethnicity and circumstances.” Radford had written to the Education Department in March 1912 requesting a teacher. Cecil Andrews, Inspector General of Schools, responded to the request by passing the responsibility on to the Aborigines Department. In July 1912, Radford wrote to Chief Protector Gale challenging the Government of Western Australia to recognise its responsibility towards the education of Aboriginal children and reminding Gale that the children at Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage, for whom no government maintenance was received, had a rightful claim to state education. Following a deputation from the AAM to the Colonial Secretary the Western Australian government responded with an annual grant of £156 for the salary of a teacher. Notes from the deputation meeting described twenty-eight resident children of whom twenty-three were school age, who were receiving two hours daily tuition from the two missionaries, with the emphasis being to train the older girls for domestic service. Taking into account Telfer’s limited education and lack of teacher training, her teaching skills would have been basic. It was to be a year after the initial request for the provision of a teacher, before Radford in July 1913, was able to call for applications. Lynda Upham commenced teaching at Dulhi Gunyah in August 1913.

Eustace Radford suggested that AAM missionary Catherine Mantell and Telfer worked well as a team of equals when he reported they were both missionaries-in-

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169 Ibid, July 1912, 4-5.
171 E. V. Radford to Education Department, 19 March, 1912, "AN 1/3, Acc 652, File 269/15 Australian Aborigines Mission Education of children and appointment of teacher," in Aborigines and Fisheries Department, SROWA.
172 Cecil Andrews to E. V. Radford, 28 March 1912, Ibid.
173 Radford to Gale, 1 July 1912, Ibid.
174 F. D. North to E. V. Radford, Ibid.
175 Notes of Deputation to Hon. Colonial Secretary from the Australian Aborigines Mission, 13 June, 1913, Ibid.
176 The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, July 1913, 6.
177 "AN 1/3, Acc 652, File 269/15 Australian Aborigines Mission Education of children and appointment of teacher," f34.
charge, but when Mantell was married to Radford, on 15 October 1912, there were inevitable changes.\textsuperscript{178} With the assistance of Eustace at Dulhi Gunyah, and the additional support of a local woman named only as “Miss Philips”, Telfer had time to resume the role of evangelist and travelling by bicycle, she began to conduct services for the Nyungar people living in the fringe dweller camps in the Perth suburbs of Claremont and Guildford.\textsuperscript{179} Telfer wrote in May 1913

\begin{quote}
Over £5 worth of ready-made garments was received during the week, besides gifts of cash and groceries. On Good Friday we were again able to visit the Guildford camp and hold a service. About 60 natives were present, and gathered round to hear the story of the Cross, some for the first time. Little Evelyn is still in the hospital and is progressing very favourably.\textsuperscript{180}
\end{quote}

Telfer interspersed news of the Dulhi Gunyah children and provision of their needs with an account of her visit to the Guildford camp to share an Easter message. Proclaiming the Christian faith and encouraging people to accept it was clearly an ongoing concern.

The invisibility of Telfer was an issue within the operations of the AAM when she was unnamed in the annual report of the AAM in WA submitted to the Aborigines and Fisheries Department for the year ending 30 June 1913.\textsuperscript{181} After his earlier recognition of both Mantell and Telfer as a team of equals, in this report Radford named his wife Catherine as the missionary-in-charge at Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage and Annie Lock as the missionary at Katanning. His marriage to Catherine and his subsequent residence in the Dulhi Gunyah home may therefore have clouded the relationships between Telfer and the Radfords. In her research into Protestant missionary women in Central Africa in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Deborah Kirkwood noted that marriage brought invisibility for missionary women, but single women found new

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{178} The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, August 1912, 4, October 1912, 1 & November 1912, 5.
\textsuperscript{179} Ibid, November 1912, 4.
\textsuperscript{180} Ibid, May 1913, 6.
\textsuperscript{181} “AN 1/3, Acc 652, File 1276/13 Australian Aborigines Mission Annual Report year ending 30.6.13,” in Aborigines and Fisheries Department, SROWA, Microfiche.
\end{footnotes}
opportunities of service and recognition. In the case of Telfer during her service at Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage, her single state did not bring recognition, and possibly a reduction in status.

In light of the minimal recognition of Telfer in the written reports from Dulhi Gunyah, the wearing of a mission uniform by female missionaries may have contributed to her sense of professional identity. In a photograph of Bertha Telfer taken at Dulhi Gunyah during that first year she was in Western Australia, she was wearing the distinctive cape, and bonnet tied in a bow under the chin, which was the uniform of the women missionaries at that time. According to the anonymous “Stockrider’s Daughter” who was a former resident of Dulhi Gunyah, the missionary cape was navy blue, worn over a long white dress with an elastic belt at the waist while the bonnet of blue velvet was the shape of a horseshoe and was tied with a long ribbon. Black lace-up shoes and gloves completed the uniform which provided an outfit suitable to wear to church or when speaking at public meetings. The photograph is included on the following page.

184 Photograph from the Telfer Family Collection courtesy of Neville Simmons.
Like the missionary women, the Dulhi Gunyah girls also wore a uniform when they attended the Victorian Park Methodist Church and Christian Endeavour Society.\textsuperscript{185} The “Stockrider’s daughter” recalled that she liked to dress up to go to church and she described a winter uniform of dark grey with a red collar, cuffs and belt plus black shoes and stockings, and a summer uniform of a light coloured dress and straw hat with the same black shoes and stockings.\textsuperscript{186} She remembered that when the missionaries marched the children in two lines to church, the children suffered racist taunts from white children who attended the church.\textsuperscript{187} This memory portrayed complex levels within the cross-cultural relationships between missionary women and mission children.

\textsuperscript{185} \textit{The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate}, April 1914, 4.  
\textsuperscript{186} Carter, \textit{Nothing to Spare: Recollections of Australian Pioneering Women}, 22.  
\textsuperscript{187} Ibid.
Telfer’s uniform witnessed to her identity as a missionary, even though she had limited education and no professional qualification. The uniform of the girls from Dulhi Gunyah identified them with a subordinate status as “neglected” Aboriginal children, being taught Christianity alongside their training for domestic service within a western culture. While the status of missionary also raised Telfer above Aboriginal children trained to be servants, Telfer shared with her young female charges the gender discrimination of a patriarchal society, for she became invisible when men wrote the Dulhi Gunyah reports. However, the barriers of race and class were stronger influences. Reference was made earlier in the chapter to racist language used by Telfer herself and this racial prejudice was also present in the church community in Victoria Park. The racist taunts from white children suggested that these Indigenous children would remain unequal in a white church and society even though they were being raised according to western culture. The issues of gender, class and race were all present and interrelated in this weekly exercise of uniformed missionary and children walking to church.

The appointment of the teacher to Dulhi Gunyah meant that finally Telfer was to realise her call to the north-west. Although Sunday Island remained an independent settlement, the AAM included Horace Smith and his wife, formerly C. McQueen, in their list of missionaries. 188 Before proceeding to new work in the north-west, Telfer accompanied Horace Smith on his return to Sunday Island while his wife remained at Dulhi Gunyah until she regained her strength following childbirth. 189 Sydney Hadley had begun his mission on Sunday Island in 1899 among the Bardi people who were already known to him from his earlier life as a trader. He could speak their language and did not attempt to break down the traditional culture. Peter Biskup, in his history of Aboriginal-white relations, wrote that a former assistant accused Hadley of practising

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188 The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, June 1913, 2.
189 Ibid, July 1913, 1.
his own form of Christianity, and taking “wives” from among the young girls.\textsuperscript{190} This brought Hadley under a cloud with the authorities, but when he insisted on a public inquiry the matter was put aside and he remained at Sunday Island until 1923 when the AAM assumed responsibility.\textsuperscript{191} Considering this controversy and the AAM involvement, it can only be assumed that his theology was similar to that of the AAM, and the AAM was prepared to overlook the allegations of sexual abuse of young girls, either believing the allegations to be untrue or that Hadley had reformed following his conversion to Christianity prior to 1899.

In August 1913, Horace Smith wrote that while he and Telfer were on board the \textit{SS Westralia} Telfer had made use of her portable organ to sing and preach to the other passengers, receiving both positive and negative responses.\textsuperscript{192} Smith passed on Telfer’s hope that the north-west would be supplied with missionaries. As with Radford at Dulhi Gunyah, so now with Horace Smith, Telfer did not find her own voice in the mission record, although she was not shy about witnessing to her faith to her fellow passengers.

By December 1913, with the return of Mrs Smith, Telfer relinquished her role as matron at Sunday Island and began to explore the options for establishing a new AAM centre in the north of the state. Now that she was working independently, two of her letters were published by the AAM.\textsuperscript{193} In a letter addressed to AAM President Colebrook and written on 25 October 1913, Telfer revealed a strength and resourcefulness that enabled her to follow a pioneering course of action. From Broome Telfer undertook a three-day journey on a schooner to Cape Bossett and then travelled to the isolated settlement of La Grange. As described by Christine Choo in her research into Aboriginal women at Catholic Missions in the Kimberley region, La Grange was a

\textsuperscript{190} Peter Biskup, \textit{Not Slaves, Not Citizens: The Aboriginal Problem in Western Australia, 1898-1954} (St Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press ; Crane Russak & Co., 1973), 54.
\textsuperscript{191} Ibid, 55, 130.
\textsuperscript{192} \textit{The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate}, August 1913, 6.
\textsuperscript{193} Ibid, December 1913, 5.
traditional meeting place for the various Indigenous groups of the region, and by the early twentieth century, the pearling industry widened that social contact to include the Asian crews from the luggers. The 1905 Aborigines Act attempted to control sexual relations of Aboriginal women, and children of mixed racial descent were removed from their mothers and taken to missions. This experience made a deep impression on Telfer who wrote:

I have listened to some very heartbreaking stories of the cruelty perpetrated upon some of the dark parents, who have had their little ones torn from them. The natives have no redress, and nobody else cares, so this has gone on for a long time; but I shall see there is no more work done like that while I am here.

In her childhood, Telfer was also separated from her family of origin and at Dulhi Gunyah she had cared for children taken from their families, but at La Grange she witnessed the grief of parents when separated from their children, and their powerlessness under the law to change that. Telfer resolved to change that injustice.

A second letter was addressed to an elderly male colleague, L. Railton at Wellington, New South Wales, and dated 17 November 1913. Written more candidly and perhaps not intended for publication, Telfer wrote:

The natives are in thousands, scattered over a wide area of country... I find very few who understand our language, and their's is very different to any of the Island tribes. They are, of course, absolutely heathen, and have no idea of God... I am camping here on sufferance. I just mention this that you may know how I am situated. I know that if God wants me here He will overcome all opposition and supply all need. This is the hardest position I have ever been in, but His grace is sufficient, I know.

Her words displayed the personal cost of missionary service. In addition, they revealed the lack of training for her work among people from a different culture and language.

194 Choo, Mission Girls: Aboriginal Women on Catholic Missions in the Kimberley, Western Australia 1900-1950, 106.
195 The Australian Aborigines' Advocate, December 1913, 5.
196 Ibid, December 1913, 5-6.
197 Ibid.
Telfer’s description that the Indigenous people were “absolutely heathen, and have no idea of God” showed her superior attitude to Indigenous culture. Like Annie Lock at Katanning, Telfer worked as a lone missionary at this most isolated place. Telfer was given the freedom to decide her course of direction and location. The AAM had no strategic plan for the work in the north-west and provided minimal support.

Telfer’s work in the north-west was curtailed when Catherine and Eustace Radford resigned in January 1914 owing to an unexplained difference with the AAM, and Bertha Telfer and Annie Lock were both recalled to Dulhi Gunyah until the new workers, Ethel and William Fryer, arrived from New South Wales.198 Once again, Telfer was asked to fill a gap for the AAM. She was suffering from malaria, and when the AAM expressed the hope that looking after forty-six children would improve her health, no doubt they were thinking of the milder climate in the southern part of the state.199 It was hardly surprising that Telfer and Lock were both unwell when Ethel and William Fryer arrived early in 1914.200

The invisibility of women missionaries working alongside male colleagues did not change with the arrival of William Fryer at Dulhi Gunyah. William Fryer and the teacher Lynda Upham wrote the Dulhi Gunyah monthly reports, and the work of Bertha Telfer and Ethel Fryer went unacknowledged. Ethel Fryer will be the subject of the following chapter and so will not be dealt with at length here. News of Telfer did emerge in the annual report presented at the Anniversary Meeting of the AAM in July 1914 when the Secretary, Mary Fox Angelo, explained that Telfer remained at Dulhi Gunyah to assist the new missionaries.201 With around forty children, including two babies, and several in hospital, the AAM Council had decided she could not be freed to resume her work at La Grange. In October 1914, William Fryer reported that Telfer left

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198 Ibid, January 1914, 1.
199 Ibid, January 1914, 7.
200 Ibid, February 1914, 1.
201 Ibid, July 1914, 4-5.
Dulhi Gunyah at the end of September, but he omitted any further information about her whereabouts. Lock’s report disclosed that Telfer had not returned to her position at La Grange, but was assisting her colleague Annie Lock at Katanning before returning to South Australia. After three years work in Western Australia and a bout of malaria, Telfer had certainly earned a rest.

Telfer had returned to Perth by May 1915, and with the assistance of Philips, she opened a school for the nineteen Nyungar children at the Guildford camp. During Telfer’s absence on furlough, Auber Octavius Neville had begun his new appointment as Chief Protector of Aborigines in Western Australia, following political manoeuvring that resulted in the resignation of Gale. In her biography of Neville, Pat Jacobs wrote that R. H. Underwood, Minister for Aborigines, chose Neville for his administrative skills at a time when Australia was involved in the First World War and under a wartime budget. There was a perceived need to economise within the Aborigines Department and it was Underwood’s intention to reduce government support of Christian missions, particularly in the Kimberley region. Neville had no experience with Indigenous people, but within months of taking up the position, he organised a tour of the southern part of the state and was particularly disturbed by the conditions under which the dispossessed “half caste” people were living. This experience convinced Neville to develop the government settlement at Carrolup River. Neville visited Telfer at the Guildford Camp and suggested the residents should move to the new government reserve. Telfer knew the Nyungar people were camping on privately owned land, and she displayed some knowledge of Nyungar culture and attachment to land when she explained it was a traditional camping ground. From her base at Guildford Telfer visited

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202 Ibid, October 1914, 4.
203 Ibid, October 1914, 6.
204 Ibid, May 1915, 1.
206 Ibid, 66.
seven additional camps around Perth, but she wrote of her hope to get back to the north-west where she continued to believe God had called her.\footnote{208 Ibid, July 1915, 5.} Within weeks, Telfer did return to the north-west and specifically to Sunday Island to replace Horace and Mrs Smith, while Phillips remained to continue her work at the Guildford Camp.\footnote{209 Ibid, December 1915, 3.}

Telfer could once again write her own reports and her letter written at sea on the way to Sunday Island was printed in full in the mission publication in October 1915. When providing details of her farewell at the North Perth Congregational Sewing Circle Telfer wrote: “The minister presented me with a Soldier’s Testament, as he said I was now going to the front as a brave Soldier of the Cross.”\footnote{210 Ibid, October 1915, 7.} Australia had been at war with Germany since 1914, and the martial symbolism of the gift was a sign that the war was not forgotten. The courage of the woman missionary was not lost on the unnamed minister who likened her service to Christ to that of a brave soldier.

It was December 1915 before Telfer’s next letter was published, describing her arrival at Sunday Island and exposing an inconsistency in her attitude regarding the care of children.

They all remembered me, and called me by name as I shook hands with each one... nearly everyone on the Island has brought me a gift of some description. I am already busy with the school, and have managed to get most of the girls back into the dormitory.\footnote{211 Ibid, December 1915, 7.}

Caring for girls in the dormitory was inconsistent with Telfer’s earlier awareness of the cruelty of separating children from their families. Perhaps the fact that the girls could still have some contact with their families who were also present on the island mitigated her concerns.

Australia’s involvement in the First World War had its effect on the AAM and in December 1915, the following statement appeared in the mission publication.

\footnote{208 Ibid, July 1915, 5.} \footnote{209 Ibid, December 1915, 3.} \footnote{210 Ibid, October 1915, 7.} \footnote{211 Ibid, December 1915, 7.}
The awful war which has brought such disaster into our midst, has had its effect upon the financial side of our work. Many friends have remained loyal to the Mission, and their assistance has been just as marked; but there are a few who have apparently become so absorbed in the nation’s strife, and in the confusion have lost sight of the work of the Mission to the Aborigines.  

Telfer seemed personally unaffected by these concerns and her December 1915 report from Sunday Island, published in February 1916, described a scene of domestic peace and joy, including Christmas celebrations, the renovation of the mission buildings and painting of the boats by Sydney Hadley and “the other gentleman.” “The other gentleman” may have been the cause of her happiness. Under her birth name of Hochuli Bertha was married to James Alcorn on 31 January 1916.

James Alcorn was not a missionary, but assisted Sydney Hadley in his work on Sunday Island. Even so, when James wrote a report and it was published in the AAM publication in August 1916, this effectively silenced Bertha’s voice yet again. Alcorn claimed that Malay ancestry within the Indigenous community could be attributed to Macassan fishermen who had traditionally fished off the coast and had a reputation as pirates and slavers, but he insisted the only “half caste” children were the two daughters of a beachcomber and sheller from the mainland, with no “half caste” children born to the mission girls. This explanation was evidence that the earlier accusations about Hadley and his assistant Hunter regarding sexual exploitation of young girls still influenced the reputation of Sunday Island and James Alcorn felt the need to defend it.

Congratulations were expressed in July 1917 to Bertha and James Alcorn on the birth of their son at Sunday Island. Giving birth for the first time at forty-five years of age resulted in health problems for Bertha. James Alcorn understated the situation when he wrote in September that the family were in need of a change and they were looking

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212 Ibid, December 1915, 4.
214 Western Australian Register of Births Deaths and Marriages. Marriage record.
215 The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, August 1916, 5.
216 Ibid, July 1917, 1.
forward to the arrival of Annie Lock to relieve them.\textsuperscript{217} A later report by James in October suggested that medical advice was that Bertha should not spend another monsoon season at Sunday Island.\textsuperscript{218} Bertha and James Alcorn travelled to South Australia and although they had hoped to return to their work on Sunday Island, this never eventuated. James Alcorn was employed in New Guinea for some years and the family returned to South Australia about 1926, when they purchased and managed a shop.\textsuperscript{219} After the death of her husband, Bertha lived with her son Frank until her increasing frailty required nursing home care. Bertha Alcorn died in 1965, aged 93 years.\textsuperscript{220}

As her life as an AAM missionary unfolded, the importance of Telfer’s call was evident. It has been noted earlier in the chapter that at her induction into the AAM in 1909 Telfer told the story of her call to missionary service.\textsuperscript{221} Witnessing to her personal sense of call presupposed an earlier conversion experience and verified Telfer’s credentials as an Evangelical. The opportunity to live out her call to the north-west was frustrated by the AAM itself. Telfer accepted the AAM Council directives, but it was possible to discern her disappointment in her reports from Burnt Bridge, particularly in April 1911 following the resignation of her brother Ernest who had pioneered the AAM work in Western Australia, but resigned before it was established in the north-west.\textsuperscript{222} When Telfer accepted her recall to Dulhi Gunyah, just at the time her pioneering work was going well at La Grange, she once again became involved in caring for children separated from their parents even though she had resolved to work against that practice because of the grief it caused. This acceptance could be partly explained by the fact that Telfer was suffering from malaria and needed time out from

\begin{footnotes}
\item[217] Ibid, September 1917, 1.
\item[218] Ibid, October 1917, 1.
\item[219] Simmons, \textit{From the Borders to the Bush: Telfer Family History}, 129.
\item[220] Ibid, 130.
\item[221] \textit{The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate}, December 1909, 5.
\item[222] Ibid, April 1911, 7.
\end{footnotes}
her work in the tropics, but she appeared to accept the direction of the AAM even when it went against her better judgement.

During July 1911, on the tenth anniversary of the commencement of the monthly publication, *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, the AAM took the opportunity to revisit what it meant to be a faith mission.\(^{223}\) The editorial column described a reliance on financial contributions sent in answer to prayer, not entering into debt and providing no guaranteed income for missionaries.\(^{224}\) Some missionary testimonies were published on that occasion. For example, Annie Lock from Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage in Western Australia testified that she had always been blessed with plenty.\(^{225}\) Ethel Hamer, serving at La Perouse and preparing for her marriage the following month to William John Fryer, shared that whether she was singing around the camp fire, or ministering to the sick, she was sustained in the knowledge that God understood her circumstances and what was best for her, therefore she could praise God.\(^{226}\) Life was not so cheerful for Bertha Telfer who had been suffering health problems for weeks and while she did not contribute to the testimonial column, Telfer did submit her regular report from Burnt Bridge in which she wrote of sickness and death in the camp.\(^{227}\) Her quote of Hudson Taylor’s motto “Hitherto the Lord hath helped us” did not conceal her struggle during that time as with pious sentiment she asked for the prayers of God’s people.

Although at times Telfer was invisible in the reports, there were opportunities for her to be heard and recognised. For example, in February 1913 she informed the mission council of the provisions which had been received by the children’s home, showing the continued dependence on God and the need to keep supporters informed of

\(^{223}\) Ibid, July 1911, 3.
\(^{224}\) Ibid, May 1911, 2.
\(^{225}\) Ibid, July 1911, 4-5.
\(^{226}\) Ibid.
\(^{227}\) Ibid, July 1911, 11.
the gratitude of the missionaries.\textsuperscript{228} It was evident that Telfer took the principle of not entering into debt very literally, for in April 1913 Telfer and Catherine Radford agreed to pray that they would be able to pay cash for items for the home rather than accrue bills and they reported that month that their prayer had been answered.\textsuperscript{229}

In July 1913, the annual meeting of the Western Australian Council met in Saint Andrews Presbyterian Hall, Pier Street, Perth, and when Telfer spoke of her need of prayerful support, this was further evidence of her reliance on God and her belief in the power of prayer.\textsuperscript{230} Given her simple trust in this principle, it seemed possible that Telfer was unaware that the AAM committee in Western Australia had allowed the principle of not entering into debt to lapse when they negotiated the overdraft on the Dulhi Gunyah property. In Radford's annual report to the Aborigines’ and Fisheries Department in June 1913, he stated that £80 had been paid off the overdraft against the property.\textsuperscript{231} This was the first evidence of an overdraft. Catherine and Eustace Radford were present at the AAM Annual Conference in Sydney during January 1913 when the principles of the faith mission were reaffirmed.\textsuperscript{232} No reference was made concerning the overdraft during that conference, confirming that the matter of the debt was kept quiet.

Across the nation, 1915 was a difficult year for the AAM. The number of missionaries was down from thirty at the beginning of 1915 to twenty four at the end of the year and was attributed to health, marriage and enlistment for war service.\textsuperscript{233} The war also brought a downturn in financial support and with many overdue subscriptions, The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate had acquired a debt.\textsuperscript{234} The secretary’s Annual

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{228} Ibid, February 1913, 4.
\item \textsuperscript{229} Ibid, April 1913, 4.
\item \textsuperscript{230} Ibid, July 1913, 5.
\item \textsuperscript{231} "AN 1/3, Acc 652, File 1276/13 Australian Aborigines Mission Annual Report year ending 30.6.13." Microfiche.
\item \textsuperscript{232} The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, January 1913, 3.
\item \textsuperscript{233} Ibid, December 1915, 3.
\item \textsuperscript{234} Ibid, December 1914, 4.
\end{itemize}
Report for 1915 stated that in Western Australia, six missionaries were on faith lines and four were managers or teachers.\textsuperscript{235} Telfer was teaching at Sunday Island at that time, suggesting that she, along with Ethel and William Fryer who were managing Carrolup and Lynda Upham teaching at Dulhi Gunyah, were not at this time living under the faith principle. Nationally within the AAM, eleven missionaries were living according to the principles of a faith mission while thirteen were supported by other means. The AAM Conference accepted as its motto for the New Year of 1916, “My God shall supply all your need”.\textsuperscript{236} The AAM was clearly adapting the understanding of what it meant to live by faith in these austere war years by accepting financial payment from government or other sources wherever this was possible, and this included Bertha Telfer at Sunday Island.

During her furlough of 1915, following three years service in Western Australia Telfer wrote a report for the Angas College community in which she provided an insight into her perception of her life as an AAM missionary.\textsuperscript{237} She listed the steps to take when setting up a new mission. First came the erection of a mission church enabling the establishment of a Sunday School and worship services and this was followed by a day school. Although the Christian Endeavour (CE) movement was an important part of her own formation, Telfer made no mention of the establishment of CE groups in this description. The Western Australian CE Union went into recess during the First World War when many members were either serving with the armed forces overseas or preoccupied with the war effort at home, and there was a decline in the strength of the CE movement during this period until the 1920s.\textsuperscript{238} The absence of references to CE in Telfer’s writing was in keeping with the decline of the CE movement during most of her missionary service in Western Australia. Telfer felt called to evangelism rather than

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{235} Ibid, January 1916, 6.
\bibitem{236} Ibid, January 1916, 3.
\bibitem{237} The Missionary Record, May/June 1915, 3-4.
\bibitem{238} Meyer, A Historical Survey of Christian Endeavour in West Australia, 4.
\end{thebibliography}
institutional work and her work in the Nyungar camps around Perth showed that she understood evangelism to be in terms of preaching towards conversion to Christianity.

The Dispensationalist theology taught at Angas College was never referred to by Telfer and so it is not possible to determine whether she continued to hold this very conservative view. Telfer certainly never lost her concern to evangelise the Indigenous people of Western Australia. The children at Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage were being raised according to western values. Telfer developed a more positive attitude towards Indigenous culture for she came to identify herself with the Bardi culture at Sunday Island. Her baby son was accepted into the kinship system of the Bardi people, which was a sign of the mutual respect between the missionary and the Bardi people.239 Even though she stated it was good to be back on faith principles when she went to La Grange, Telfer appeared to be most fulfilled during her final time of service at Sunday Island when she was supported through the independent mission of Sydney Hadley and enjoying the roles of wife and mother. The experience of living according to the faith principles of the AAM was certainly not a lifetime vocation for Bertha Telfer. Telfer’s marriage to Frank Alcorn, who was not associated with the AAM, health problems arising from life in the tropics and childbirth all combined to bring closure to this period of her life following nine years of missionary service.

Family was important to Telfer. This was evident when she sent a postcard from Burnt Bridge, on 26 October 1909, yearning for family news and writing: “Dear Ones at Home… I hope you are all well, have not heard from home for a very long time. How are the crops and sheep and cows etc … Love to Albert and Beatie and all at home.”240

In 1911, when Telfer appeared depressed and unwell following the resignation of her brother Ernest, it was to the family and the Flinders Ranges that she returned to find

239 Telfer, Interview by A. Longworth, 4.
240 Bertha Telfer, Personal Correspondence to J. Telfer, 26 October 1909.
Although she had been separated from her birth family in childhood, during her adult life Bertha continued to enjoy relationships within the Alcorn and Telfer families and with her Hochuli sister Rosette. At the conclusion of her missionary service, Bertha returned to South Australia and the company of her family. The photograph below shows an elderly Bertha Alcorn with several generations of family members, including Bertha’s son Frank Alcorn and grandchildren Jane and Jonathon Alcorn.

Bertha Alcorn and extended family (courtesy Neville Simmons)

While Bertha enjoyed her extended family relationships, a 1989 headline in *The West Australian* newspaper described Isobel Bropho, one of the child residents of Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage, as “A survivor of WA’s harsh history.” It gave a cameo view of the deprivation she suffered at Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage, Carrolup and Moore River Native Settlement and as an itinerant worker and fringe dweller in the suburbs of Perth and surrounding districts of the Swan Valley. She did not assimilate into the western culture, but survived and raised a family as a Nyungar woman.

241 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, September 1911, 3.
242 Simmons, *From the Borders to the Bush: Telfer Family History*, 174.
243 Telfer Family Collection courtesy Neville Simmons. Photograph taken on 19 April, 1964. Left to Right unknown, unknown, Bertha Alcorn, unknown, unknown, unknown, Beryl Alcorn, Hope Simmons, Jane Alcorn, Neville Simmons, Jonathon Alcorn, Watt Telfer, Frank Alcorn
244 *The West Australian*, 13 April 1989, 50.
This chapter has shown that in 1908 the AAM expanded its mission into Western Australia in response to its perception of “a loud wail” from the dispossessed Indigenous people in that state. The investigation into Bertha Telfer’s service in Western Australia from 1912 until 1917 found that her relationship with the AAM and the Aboriginal people was affected by not only gender and class, but by the racial prejudice that was inherent in her western culture. Although Telfer had misgivings about the practice of separating children from their families, her involvement in caring for the spiritual and physical wellbeing of children at the Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage meant she was part of the process that created the ongoing “wail” of the west.
Chapter Five  Ethel Fryer counts the cost.

Midway through the 1907 Conference of the New South Wales Aborigines’ Mission (NSWAM), at the Saturday evening Testimony and Thanksgiving Meeting, the programme advised that “Miss Hamer” was to be welcomed as a new missionary.¹ In the formality of the era, first names were rarely used in mission publications, but Ethel Hamer was to be given the opportunity to address the public gathering. It was during this conference that the NSWAM made the decision to begin working in Western Australia, and changed its name to the Australian Aborigines’ Mission (AAM).² Within seven years that decision would directly impact on Hamer’s life.

Ethel Hamer served in New South Wales and married AAM missionary William John Fryer in 1911. From 1914 the couple worked together in Western Australia, first at Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage and then from 1915 to 1918 at the Carrolup Native Settlement. This chapter will investigate Ethel Hamer’s family background and formation and establish there were two distinct phases to her missionary service, firstly as a single woman and then following her marriage, when she became known as Ethel Fryer. Each of these phases will be analysed with a focus on the issues of race, gender and class and will include an investigation into the role of the Christian Endeavour (CE) in Hamer’s work and her understanding and adherence to the principles of a faith mission. The chapter will show that Ethel and William Fryer’s involvement in the implementation of government policy was destructive to the Nyungar people. It will also document that her experience, particularly as a married woman in Western Australia, came at great personal cost to Fryer’s health and wellbeing.

¹ NSW Aborigines’ Advocate, October 1907, 3.
² Ibid, November 1907, 1.
Ethel Maude Hamer was born in Tamworth, New South Wales, on 2 December 1879. Hamer was the first child of William Henry Hamer and Mary Ellen Johnston who were married in Tamworth on 5 April 1879. Mary Ellen Johnston was also born in Tamworth, in 1856, the tenth child of James Johnston and Mary A. Bonner, both from Ireland. A history of the district published in 1919 named a James Johnston and his wife as one of the first families to settle in Tamworth, from 1839. From this information, it is apparent that Ethel Hamer was born to a pioneering family, two generations after the first European settlement of New South Wales in 1788. Along with other colonists, Hamer benefited from a lifestyle that was at the expense of the original inhabitants. This became evident when William Telfer’s manuscript of the pioneering era of the district described massacres of the Indigenous people in the Liverpool Plains District including the Myall Creek massacre in June 1838, which occurred just one year before Hamer’s grandparents settled in Tamworth. When a history published in 1918 boasted of a peaceful past in which no invaders had disturbed the land, it was obvious that the story of European settlement was being sanitised from a western perspective. There is no evidence to suggest that Hamer was aware of the atrocities of the past, and given the silence by historians early in the twentieth century, it was extremely unlikely.

Hamer spent her childhood in Tamworth and sometime between the birth of her sister in Tamworth in 1895 and 1900, she moved to Newcastle in New South Wales. Church records reveal that on 19 September 1900, Ethel Hamer was received by letter

3 "New South Wales Register of Births Deaths and Marriages," Birth Records.
5 Ibid.
8 Prentice and Newling, Origin and History of Tamworth and District: Published on the Centenary of Oxley's Discovery of the Peel River on 2nd September, 1818, 12,13.
of transfer into membership of the Baptist Tabernacle at Laman Street in Newcastle. The following photograph of Hamer on the left with her sisters Rachel and Ruby, and brother Charles was taken in 1904, after the move to Newcastle.

![](image)

Ethel Hamer and siblings *(courtesy Wendy Simes)*

Hamer was listed on the 1903 Electoral Roll of the Newcastle (Honeysuckle Point) Polling Place, with her occupation recorded as domestic duties. From her research of the Hamer family, Wendy Simes suggested that William Hamer was estranged from the family by the time the children were in their teens, and since his heavy drinking may have been a factor this was likely to have prompted a commitment from other members of the family to the Temperance pledge of total abstinence from alcohol. In March

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9 "Entry 203, 1900 Roll Book."
10 Photograph courtesy of Wendy Simes.
11 *Newcastle, Honeysuckle Point Polling Place*, 11, microform.
12 Wendy Simes, personal correspondence to A. Longworth, 13 October 2004
1903, an E. Hamer was named as a member of the Newcastle District Christian Endeavour Executive, a new delegate representing the Laman St Baptist Church.13

The minutes of those Executive meetings revealed that Hamer found opportunities for leadership within the Newcastle District CE Union over the next few years, and it was through her involvement in the CE that Hamer learned about the New South Wales Aborigines’ Mission and its encouragement of women missionaries. For example, the minutes of 14 April 1905 when Hamer was the acting secretary, included a reference to the occasion when Florence Pain was set apart as a missionary with the NSWAM.14 Pain was a member of the Danger St Methodist Church in Newcastle.15 Filed with the minutes of the Newcastle CE Union was an unreferenced newspaper cutting that described how Pain informed those attending her commissioning of her desire since the age of three to be a missionary, and explained that she had received her training through her membership of CE.16 Pain appealed to her listeners to respond positively to the opportunity of missionary service. Perhaps Hamer responded to this appeal, for she certainly demonstrated a growing interest in the NSWAM. She not only arranged for NSWAM missionary Ernest Telfer to present a Lantern Lecture on the work of the mission at the Newcastle Baptist Tabernacle in January 1906, but he was provided hospitality in the Hamer family home, and from that time Hamer was the Newcastle agent for *The New South Wales Aborigines Advocate*, the monthly publication of the NSWAM.17 One month later, she was unanimously appointed as assistant to the Missionary Superintendent of the Newcastle CE Union.18

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13 20 March 1903, "Minutes of Executive Meeting."
14 14 April 1903, Ibid.
15 *NSW Aborigines' Advocate*, April 1905, 3.
16 14 April 1903, "Minutes of Executive Meeting."
17 *NSW Aborigines' Advocate*, February 1906, 3.
18 17 August 1903, "Minutes of Executive Meeting."
Hamer remained a committee member with the Newcastle CE Union from 1903 until July 1907, when she was accepted as a missionary with the NSWAM.\footnote{19} No evidence has been located that would suggest Hamer had undertaken vocational or theological formation other than her membership of the Baptist Church and her active membership within the CE movement. Given her active role in CE, Hamer would have been aware of the support given by the movement in New South Wales to the dispensationalist evangelist Reuben Torrey and his 1902 revival and it was likely she would have adhered to the premillennial teaching out of which dispensationalism emerged.\footnote{20} It was this premillennial belief that the gospel must be preached to the whole world to hasten the return of Christ that created the urgency of the missionary vision for members of faith missions.\footnote{21} With this background and formation, Hamer was a typical female faith missionary according to the definition of Dana Lee Robert.\footnote{22} She came from a rural, small town community where she received a limited education and this was combined with a strong personal and Evangelical faith in God that included a premillennial urgency to share the Christian gospel with all people.

Hamer’s application to join the mission was not found within the UAM Archives. Although the faith mission grew out of the CE movement which maintained extensive archives, record keeping was not a priority for the NSWAM. Dana Lee Robert attributed the poor record keeping of faith missions to premillennial theology, suggesting that the urgency of preaching the gospel negated the need for keeping records.\footnote{23} Hamer evidently met the requirements of the NSWAM, for the NSWAM President, T. E. Colebrook, formally welcomed her during the annual meetings in

\footnote{19}19 July 1907, Ibid.  
\footnote{20}The Roll Call, August 1902, 29.  
\footnote{22}Ibid, 215-216.  
\footnote{23}Ibid, 208.
November 1907. In the typical style of the mission publication, it was reported that following her welcome Hamer responded with a few well-chosen remarks, but no details of her message was provided. The Newcastle Christian Endeavourers showed their support of Hamer and the NSWAM when they contributed to the hospitality expenses of those meetings. Hamer served the required three months probationary period at La Perouse, probably under the supervision of Harriet Baker who was the NSWAM Secretary and stationed there. Hamer’s induction service was held in the Baptist Tabernacle in Newcastle on 31 March 1908. Before a large crowd, Hamer described her vocation to mission work and witnessed to God’s faithfulness to her since she had begun to live in reliance on God. Living by faith principles meant not soliciting for funds, but with her wide circle of Christian friends within the CE movement Hamer was well supported, and donations of two dozen copies of Sankey’s hymnbook were among the items she gratefully received. Ira Sankey was the musician for the evangelist Dwight L. Moody, an associate of Reuben Torrey, and his hymns reflected the same dispensational theology as the two evangelists. In the absence of her written doctrinal statement, Hamer’s use of Sankey’s popular revivalist hymnbook confirmed her theological position within the stream of the Second Evangelical Awakening.

The first appointment for the new missionary was to Roseby Park in New South Wales, amongst the south coastal people who described themselves as Gurus. Roseby Park had been established as an Aborigines Protection Board (APB) station in 1906. Hamer received support from the Guri people and the United Aborigines’ Mission paid

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24 NSW Aborigines' Advocate, November 1907, 3.
25 Ibid, November 1907, 1.
26 Ibid, November 1907, 2.
27 The Australian Aborigines' Advocate, April 1908, 7.
28 Ibid.
29 Marsden, Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism, 21, 40.
31 Ibid, 83.
tribute to the capable leadership given by George Longbottom to the Roseby Park area in its centennial publication.\textsuperscript{32} His leadership was evident when Hamer referred to Longbottom in the first edition of the mission publication \textit{The Australian Aborigines Advocate} in March 1908 and told how he had spoken on behalf of his people, at the farewell to missionary Ethel Black.\textsuperscript{33} At that time Hamer wrote of her appreciation of the help she was given by the Guri people of Roseby Park, which revealed a mutual acceptance.\textsuperscript{34} The generosity of the people who shared their catch of fish with her was an example of her integration into the community and Hamer interpreted this as fulfilment of the biblical promise found in Philippians 4:19 that God would provide all her needs.\textsuperscript{35} It showed that her support came not only from her own cultural group, but also from the Guri people who welcomed her presence among them. The support of the Guri Christian community may have contributed to the fact that Roseby Park was considered an appropriate place for newly accredited missionaries, for after only six months, Hamer was transferred and another newly accredited missionary, a Miss Dunning, was appointed there.\textsuperscript{36}

In August 1908, Hamer was transferred to Ulgundahi Island, on the Clarence River in northern New South Wales where there were fifty people.\textsuperscript{37} In a very short report printed in September 1908 Hamer wished the building of her house would begin, but this concern paled in significance with the death that month of her colleague and friend Flora Pain, from heart failure, at the young age of twenty-seven.\textsuperscript{38} “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble,” Hamer wrote to express the comfort she received from the Scriptures to cope with sickness and death, not only of her

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{32} \textit{Challenging the Almighty}, 7.
  \item \textsuperscript{33} \textit{The Australian Aborigines' Advocate}, March 1908, 7.
  \item \textsuperscript{34} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{35} Ibid, April 1908, 7.
  \item \textsuperscript{36} Ibid, July 1908, 1.
  \item \textsuperscript{37} Ibid, August 1908, 8.
  \item \textsuperscript{38} Ibid, September 1908, 3-4, 7.
\end{itemize}
colleague, but also of a resident on the island for whom she conducted the burial service.\footnote{Ibid, October 1908, 8.} It was unclear where Hamer was living during those months, but by October 1908, Mayor Cameron, of the nearby town of Maclean, officially opened the mission house, and five of the guests at the celebration planted banana trees to mark the occasion.\footnote{Ibid, August 1908, 8 & October 1908, 8.}

Hamer did not forget her CE commitment in her role as a missionary and in February 1909, she reported that she had formed a Junior CE group which all the children on the island attended.\footnote{Ibid, February 1909, 7.} In that report, Hamer described her consultation with the residents on ways to improve their life. This suggested a non-authoritarian leadership style by the missionary, however, when she wrote that the “drink and gambling evils were dealt with” it appeared that her own agenda of temperance values were included within that consultation.\footnote{Ibid.} Because the only reports available are from the missionary perspective, it was impossible to analyse the Indigenous response. It appeared that there was a mutually supportive relationship between Hamer and the Indigenous people of Ulgundahi Island, for in the mission publication in March 1909, she expressed her thanks for their gifts and love.\footnote{Ibid, March 1909, 7.}

Month by month Hamer’s reports demonstrated a confident faith. Hamer regularly quoted a scripture text in her report, revealing that her faith was grounded in a literal interpretation of the biblical text. For example, in July 1909 she wrote “His grace is sufficient” and “through Christ we can do all things.”\footnote{Ibid, July 1909, 7.} In August 1909, as she celebrated the completion of her first year at Ulgundahi Island Hamer wrote “Ebenezer, hitherto hath the Lord helped us” adopting the scriptural text used by Hudson and Maria Taylor of the China Inland Mission to express her gratitude for physical needs met, and
progress made in her work with the Indigenous people.\textsuperscript{45} When Hamer returned to Maclean after a Christmas holiday with her family in Newcastle, she was met by two of her students accompanied by some of the men from the island. The men rowed her across to the landing, where three arches were erected to welcome her and all the residents gathered to cheer her return.\textsuperscript{46} Her colleague F. Smith reported Hamer’s response of “Home, sweet home” as evidence that Hamer was equally pleased to return to the island community.\textsuperscript{47}

By May 1910, Hamer was transferred to Nymboida, also on the Clarence River and twenty-nine miles from Grafton, to work among the Kumbaingeri people.\textsuperscript{48} Arrangements there were quite inadequate at the time of her arrival. While the AAM recognised it was imperative that the missionary live among the people, Hamer let supporters know through her report that she was praying that a house would be built soon.\textsuperscript{49} Her missionary colleague Arthur Satchel worked with the Kumbaingeri men to build a bark kitchen for Hamer and some furniture, which made her camp more comfortable, but even with the support she received from her home town of Newcastle Hamer entered a period of severe testing of the faith principles.\textsuperscript{50} During the winter of 1910, Hamer lived in “The Gunyah”, a tent, since no other accommodation was available, and although living among the people was important to her, she did not find the conditions a pleasant experience.\textsuperscript{51} While Hamer struggled under difficult circumstances, the AAM remained true to its principles and did not solicit financial

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid, August 1909, 8.
\textsuperscript{46} Ibid, February 1910, 6.
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{49} \textit{The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate}, May 1910, 1 &8.
\textsuperscript{50} Ibid, May 1910, 8.
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid, June 1910, 7.
assistance but called on its supporters to pray for their missionaries.\textsuperscript{52} Hamer hid the stress she was under from the mission supporters and wrote optimistically in July:

\begin{quote}
We were pleased to have a visit from Mr Fryer. His visit was a help to both Missionary and people...The work of clearing the Reserve has been started at last, and we hope very soon to see houses erected for the people. We also desire to thank our kind friends, Mrs Graham and Mr and Mrs Maxwell for many gifts which have added greatly to the Missionary’s comfort in the Gunyah; also to Mr Boney, one of our men, for an interesting lantern entertainment. We also thank all our people who try to help their missionary. \textsuperscript{53}
\end{quote}

This report showed that Hamer was lonely for companionship from western colleagues and welcomed their visits. It also revealed that the missionary lived under the same conditions as the Kumbaingeri people and was concerned that they receive adequate shelter, although in that July 1910 report she did not refer to her own inadequate accommodation. Her thanks expressed to the Kumbaingeri people who had helped their missionary was a sign that as at her previous appointments, the Indigenous people supported Hamer as they were able.

Like other female missionaries, Hamer found opportunities for leadership within the AAM organisation. With her colleague, a Miss Smith, she was invited to lead a session on “The Work Among the Young Life” at the AAM annual conference in January 1911 and the following report was included in the mission publication:

\begin{quote}
Miss Smith illustrated by a chalk talk, a method of appealing to what Bunyan calls Eye-gate and Ear-gate. Miss Hamer then spoke of her methods, instead of three R’s use three H’s – Head work, heart work, and hand work. Seed thoughts:- “Begin well”; “Try to make our school the very best”; “Discipline necessary;” “Introduce much manual labour.”\textsuperscript{54}
\end{quote}

From this summary of her presentation, it can be seen that Hamer’s three-fold method in teaching the Kumbaingeri children did not concentrate only on the skills of reading,

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{53} Ibid, July 1910, 8.
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid, January 1911, 5.
writing and arithmetic, but included teaching practical skills and also spiritual
instruction in the Christian faith. Hamer understood the importance of developing self-
estime among her pupils by building a sense of ownership and striving for a high
standard, and she recognised a need for discipline and tried to achieve that by keeping
the children busy with physical work. This adaptation from a more academic western
curriculum did not appear to be designed to enable the children to learn their
Kumbaingeri culture, but arose out of the primary vision of converting the children to
Christianity and equipping them to live in a western culture. In New South Wales,
Aboriginal people had gravitated towards the towns during the closing decades of the
nineteenth century, at least partly motivated by the desire to enrol their children in
public schools, but Goodall showed that segregation of children also began to occur
from the 1880s.55 This suggested that parents whose children were denied entry into the
public schools would have sought after the western teaching given by AAM
missionaries such as Hamer.

As the AAM missionary at Nymboida, Hamer continued to use the Christian
Endeavour movement as a tool and news of the Junior CE group she led at Nymboida
was published in the CE publication *The Roll Call* in March 1911.56 That month
however, Hamer’s resignation from Nymboida was announced by the AAM and
William Fryer was appointed in her place.57 Although understated in the mission
publication, the collegial relationship between Hamer and Fryer had grown into more
than friendship and during the following four months of their courtship the AAM
ensured that propriety was seen to be observed, so Hamer served away from the
Northern Rivers region at La Perouse.58 The marriage of Ethel and William was

56 *The Roll Call*, March 1911, 209.
57 *The Australian Aborigines Advocate*, March 1911, 1.
58 Ibid, May 1911, 2.
celebrated on 9 August 1911, in the Newcastle Baptist Tabernacle where Hamer was a member.59

In that first phase of her missionary career, the mission publication certainly presented Hamer as acceptable to the Aboriginal people at each of the stations where she served. This can be attributed to the fact that she cared about the people, lived among them and taught the children. She was also appreciated by her colleagues and invited to share her experience with them in conference. Hamer’s vision of sharing the Christian gospel was put into action through church events such as Christian Endeavour meetings, but alongside these activities Hamer also taught practical skills such as sewing, housekeeping and gardening that were useful to the community.60

In the absence of a first-hand Indigenous interpretation of Hamer’s work, reference is made to a history published by Worimi woman, Patricia Davis-Hurst. Davis-Hurst is from Sunrise City, also known as Purfleet, located on the Manning River near Taree in New South Wales.61 Davis-Hurst named the first missionary to Purfleet, a “Miss Delves” who came to the station in 1900 followed by a “Mrs Oldrey” in 1902.62 Both names appeared in The New South Wales Aborigines Advocate, where Delves was named as a “helper” while Maud Oldrey was appointed as a missionary to Purfleet in 1904.63 Oldrey remained there until her marriage in 1911 and so was a contemporary of Ethel Hamer.64 Davis-Hurst stated that Oldrey related well with the residents of Sunrise City and taught the children during her time there and it was not until 1932 that the Aborigines Protection Board (APB) appointed a teacher to Purfleet.65 Her analysis was that the people at Purfleet trusted the missionaries, but had a strained relationship with

59 “New South Wales Register of Births Deaths and Marriages,” Marriage Records.
60 The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, November 1909 & December 1910, 7.
61 Patricia Davis-Hurst, Sunrise Station (Taree, NSW: P & R Hurst, 1996), 29.
62 Ibid, 15.
63 NSW Aborigines' Advocate, July 1901, 3 & June 1904, 4.
64 The Australian Aborigines' Advocate, February 1911, 1.
65 Davis-Hurst, Sunrise Station, 51-52.
the APB managers, however she went on to criticise the AAM practice of discouraging the use of the Indigenous language, which contributed to the loss of language and culture.\textsuperscript{66} Since both Hamer and Oldrey were accredited AAM missionaries and adhered to AAM principles and theology, it seemed likely that a similar analysis could be applied to the missionary service of Ethel Hamer, for her teaching clearly used a western perspective and yet she appeared to be received positively by the Indigenous people.

Following her marriage Hamer assumed the additional role of wife to William Fryer and entered a second phase of her vocation as a faith missionary. William John Fryer was born in Crookwell, New South Wales, in 1879 and he supported the work of the NSWAM from at least October 1906, when he was first listed as a helper at Maclean and an agent for \textit{The New South Wales Aborigines Advocate}.\textsuperscript{67} No evidence has been located about his education or professional qualifications. From Maclean, Fryer perceived a divine call to full-time missionary service. In 1907, he studied at Angas College in South Australia where under the guidance of Reverend Lockhart Morton, he learned through personal experience about the faith mission principle of trusting God for his physical needs.\textsuperscript{68} After his induction as an accredited missionary in November 1908, William Fryer served in the Northern Rivers region of New South Wales.\textsuperscript{69} It was through a shared vision of the conversion of the Aboriginal people of Australia that his relationship to Ethel Hamer flourished. Ethel and William were both thirty-one years of age at the time of their marriage, but while Hamer described her occupation as a missionary, William wrote that he was a missionary teacher.\textsuperscript{70} \textit{The Australian Aborigines Advocate} gave an extended report of the wedding, which described the bride

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{66} Ibid, 56-57.
\item \textsuperscript{67} \textit{NSW Aborigines' Advocate}, October 1906, 2.
\item \textsuperscript{68} Morton, \textit{Drifting Wreckage}., 316.
\item \textsuperscript{69} \textit{The Australian Aborigines' Advocate}, November 1908, 1 & 5.
\item \textsuperscript{70} “New South Wales Register of Births Deaths and Marriages,” Marriage Records.
\end{itemize}
dressed in her missionary uniform. Such was the devotion of the couple to their missionary calling that a missionary meeting immediately followed the wedding service.\footnote{71}{The Australian Aborigines' Advocate, August 1911, 4.}

In addition to the report on their wedding, the August 1911 issue of \textit{The Australian Aborigines Advocate} included two reports written by Ethel and William respectively. Ethel’s report was under the heading “A word from Mrs Fryer.”\footnote{72}{Ibid, August 1911, 8.} Ethel Hamer had a new identity and as “Mrs Fryer,” she was entering a new phase of her missionary service. She was full of thanks to God and her supporters and eager to get back to Nymboida.\footnote{73}{Ibid.} William Fryer provided a very short report on Nymboida and in his reserved manner did not refer to his recent marriage, but probably had it in mind when he suggested that since his last report “many and varied have been our experiences”.\footnote{74}{Ibid, August 1911, 7.} For the first two years of their marriage, the Fryers continued to work at Nymboida and Ethel wrote most of the monthly reports from Nymboida for the AAM publication. William had been working at Nymboida since March 1911. By December that year Ethel Fryer reported with some satisfaction that with the assistance of some older boys her husband had almost finished their house, which suggested that their first home at Nymboida was either in her former Gunyah or in the partially completed house.\footnote{75}{Ibid, December 1911, 8.}

In September 1911, \textit{The Australian Aborigines Advocate} named Ethel Fryer as one of twenty AAM missionaries while William Fryer was included in a list of eight missionary teachers.\footnote{76}{Ibid, September 1911, 2.} This information established there were two categories of missionary within the AAM, with eight missionaries who were being paid as teachers by the Aborigines Protection Board (APB) rather than living according to faith.
principles. Nymboida became an official APB Station in 1911. William Fryer was appointed to Nymboida during that year and since he was described as a missionary teacher by the AAM he was evidently one of the eight missionary teachers appointed by the APB. Although selected by the APB, the Department of Education paid most of the salary and the fact that such teachers were permitted to teach only at Aboriginal schools, because of their lack of teaching skills or training, suggested the likelihood of an inferior quality of schooling. Goodall wrote that the APB sought to appoint Christian manager/teachers believing the teaching of Christianity would assist control. Her interviews with Aboriginal people informed her that the imposition of resident managers was greatly resented because of the intrusive power they had vested in them.

The account of Jimmie Barker provides additional confirmation. Jimmie Barker was born in 1900 in south-west Queensland, his father was German, and his mother descended from the Murawari people. In 1912, Barker moved with his mother and brother to Brewarrina Mission on the Barwon River in northern New South Wales, and he explained that although it was called “The Mission” it was really a government settlement. Visiting preachers conducted services in the school and Barker was forced to attend. Barker recalled that it was from the male preachers that he learned he was heathen, inferior to white people, and needed to accept the Christian religion. The family lived in a one-room timber slab hut with a dirt floor and no windows or chimney, and received what Barker described as a starvation diet. Sanitation facilities were communal and not regularly disinfected, contributing to the high death rate. Barker

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77 Goodall, "A History of Aboriginal Communities in New South Wales, 1909-1939", 83.
78 Ibid, 82-84.
79 Ibid, 84.
81 Ibid, 52.
82 Ibid, 59.
83 Ibid, 52, 554-55.
84 Ibid, 55-56.
also described the brutality of managers, including one who punished children and adults using a stockwhip.85

Coupled with Barker’s specific memory of the APB station at Brewarrina, Goodall’s general analysis implied that when the Fryer’s took up the managerial and paid position at Nymboida they were in danger of compromising their relationship with the Kumbaingeri people by aligning themselves with the powerful government board. It appeared that supporters of the AAM challenged this practice not because of that concern, but because it breached the faith principles of the mission for in April 1912, *The Australian Aborigines Advocate* published a defensive article on faith principles, which included the following restatement of clause eight of the constitution:

> The Mission is supported entirely by the freewill offerings of those who wish to aid the work. The needs of the Mission are laid before God in prayer – no personal solicitations or collections being authorised. No more money is to be expended than is thus received, going into debt being considered inconsistent with entire dependence upon God. The Council seeks faithfully to distribute the funds available to meet the needs of the Mission and its workers, but no promise or guarantee of any fixed amount of support is given in any case, and each Missionary and Worker is expected to recognise that his or her dependence for the supply of every need is upon God, who has called him or her to labour, and not upon any human organisation.86

The AAM denied that missionaries were employed by the APB and assured supporters that missionaries trusted God for the provision of their needs, apart from those employed by the government as teachers.87 This explanation by the AAM appeared to be intentionally misleading.

Teaching was a secondary concern for William Fryer in his managerial role. In September 1912, Ethel Fryer reported that William had been busy with the assistance of two of the men rebuilding her “Gunyah” to be used as a ration store, and splitting posts

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85 Ibid, 57.
86 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, April 1912, 3.
87 Ibid.
for new fencing around the school and home gardens.\textsuperscript{88} The highlight of the month was the annual picnic of which Fryer wrote: “Our school girls looked very neat in their new white dresses they had been making at school for the occasion.”\textsuperscript{89} Neatness was important to the missionary, for whom Christianity was aligned with living according to respectable western custom. Her comments also revealed that although Ethel Fryer had no teaching qualification she shared the teaching role with her husband, but continued to be designated as a missionary, while William was listed as a missionary who was teaching. Her contribution was submerged into that of her husband.

The requirement to write a monthly report to maintain interest among supporters was a challenge, particularly when life was non-eventful. At the beginning of her report for November 1912 Fryer quoted Rev J. H. Horsburgh from China: “A missionary’s life is more ordinary than is supposed. Plod rather than cleverness is often the best missionary equipment.”\textsuperscript{90} Such plodding was certainly the essence of their lives as the Fryers were caught up with the routine of school that included practical lessons like cultivating their vegetable gardens. William Fryer had given two lantern entertainments in the school that month, but there was no mention of any church, CE or evangelistic activities. The Annual Report of the AAM for 1912 did not name Ethel and William Fryer and they took no leadership role in the Annual Conference.\textsuperscript{91} They certainly attended because Ethel Fryer included in her January 1913 report her appreciation of the opportunity to attend.\textsuperscript{92} The couple seemed to have lost their evangelistic zeal since William’s role had changed when he accepted the managerial position.

Fryer’s short report in September 1913 referred only to the work at the school and described how the girls were busy sewing and the boys learning to make furniture

\textsuperscript{88} Ibid, September 1912, 8.
\textsuperscript{89} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{90} Ibid, November 1912, 8.
\textsuperscript{91} Ibid, January 1913, 3-5.
\textsuperscript{92} Ibid, January 1913, 8.
and grow vegetables, implying that the skills being taught followed gender stereotypes for the working class of western society. Fryer did not refer to Aboriginal culture in her reports, however in his thesis, “The Ethnohistory of the Clarence Valley”, Nigel Sabine included evidence of an informant who had been initiated into the Kumbaingeri group in 1912. This showed that the traditional culture still survived in the early twentieth century in the Nymboida region, although the Fryers did not appear to recognise it at all.

Across in Western Australia, Catherine and Eustace Radford resigned from their positions at the AAM Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage in Victoria Park in December 1913 and Ethel and William Fryer were appointed to fill the vacancy. They left New South Wales in January 1914, following the Annual Conference. AAM Missionary Bertha Telfer, suffering from malaria in the north-west, and her colleague Annie Lock at Katanning in the Great Southern Region of Western Australia, had been recalled to Dulhi Gunyah during the vacancy and they were both unwell at the time the Fryers arrived. The sea voyage to Western Australia from New South Wales, and their arrival in the heat of a Perth summer, left Ethel and William also suffering health problems. Mission secretary, Mary Fox-Angelo, reported in The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate that the Fryers were unwell at the “At Home” held at Dulhi Gunyah during March 1914 to welcome the new missionaries. The following photograph taken at Dulhi Gunyah in 1914 may have been from that occasion, although the details are not clear enough to distinguish the missionaries from the crowd of supporters.

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93 Ibid, September 1913, 8.
95 The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, December 1913, 1 & January 1914, 1.
96 Ibid, February 1914, 1.
97 Ibid, March 1914, 4.
98 Photograph courtesy of Elaine Mullins, granddaughter of Mr Manning.
The gathering of people included the Dulhi Gunyah girls dressed in their best white dresses, and supporters of the children’s home. The writing was added later by a member of the Manning family and referred to the position of Grandfather Manning in the photograph. Mr J. D. Manning was elected vice-president of the Western Australian Council of the AAM in February 1914, and he would have been present to welcome Ethel and William Fryer. Manning’s granddaughter Elaine Mullins told of the practical support the Manning Family gave to Dulhi Gunyah through the supply of fruit, milk and eggs. In her oral history, former child resident Isobel Bropho recalled Manning’s Dairy near the old Causeway Bridge in South Perth, and that two girls would walk there and be given milk to carry back to Dulhi Gunyah. She also recalled occasions such as the one depicted in the photograph when church people would visit and have tea under the trees, organise races and games for the children, and most importantly, bring cakes.

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99 The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, February 1914, 4.
100 Elaine Mullins, Interview by A. Longworth (Perth: 2003), 2.
101 Bropho, Interview with R. Jamieson, 9.
In this new setting the Fryer’s inattention to Indigenous culture continued. On the site of the orphanage was the huge gum tree, which stood beside the home, and was known to Nyungar people as the “Lookout Tree”.\footnote{Percy Mofflin, "A Brief History of the Methodist Children's and Werribee Boys' Homes condensed from all available minutes and notes - February 1985," (1985). The Minutes of the Methodist Church of Australia, Western Australian Conference held in February 1921 reported the former Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage had been bought as the site for the Methodist Home for Children.} During an interview with the writer in 2004, the Nyungar Willie Pickett described a lookout tree as a hiding place behind which people would keep watch on the surrounding area.\footnote{Willie Pickett, \textit{Interview by A. Longworth} (Perth: 2004).} The reports from Dulhi Gunyah contained no reference to the Lookout Tree. It appeared that the mission staff saw the tree every day, but had no knowledge of that surviving link with traditional Nyungar land and culture, nor did they show any interest.

Since the time of her marriage in 1911, Fryer had written most of the reports published from Nymboida in \textit{The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate}, but after the couple arrived at Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage William wrote the reports, and Ethel Fryer’s voice became largely absent from the written record. William Fryer presented his first report one month after their welcome to Dulhi Gunyah.\footnote{\textit{The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate}, April 1914, 4-6.} In this new position the Fryer’s were once again living under the faith mission principle of trusting God to supply all material needs, but William was concerned about the need of an additional dormitory and the lack of finance to build it. Craft items made by the children were being sold to raise funds, and letters were sent by the children to Christian Endeavour groups in New South Wales informing them of their need. Reliance on the work of children to fund their own sleeping quarters was a sign of the lack of resources within the AAM, and the minimal support received from the Evangelical churches in Western Australia and from the Western Australian Government. The Congregational Churches of Victoria Park, Queens Park and North Perth together with Lake Street Church of Christ and Bayswater Baptist had sent gifts that month such as pillows and pillowcases, and produce from
their Harvest Festivals, but although these kinds of gifts helped with housekeeping expenses, they were certainly not sufficient to fund a dormitory.\textsuperscript{106}

William Fryer submitted the Annual Report for the year ending 30 June 1914 to the Aborigines Department.\textsuperscript{107} Reporting only on the children for whom government maintenance was received, Fryer listed twelve girls and four boys, ranging in age from one month to fifteen years. Fryer named the districts from where the children had come, showing that they came not only from the Perth area, but from throughout the state. Six children had come from Katanning when Annie Lock was relieving at Dulhi Gunyah and these children had since returned with Lock. An additional five children were from Busselton, two were from Albany, one was from Fremantle, an infant was found abandoned in Kings Park, Subiaco, and one came from Onslow in the north-west. William Fryer’s report indicated that the children in care at Dulhi Gunyah were predominantly from the Nyungar cultural group, and included some who spoke only their Indigenous language on arrival.\textsuperscript{108} There was no suggestion of the missionaries learning the language of the children nor was there any indication that any language other than English was used. Since the children came from various parts of Western Australia they would have represented more than one language group, making an Indigenous lingua franca an unlikely option, however the resulting difficulty with communication added to the stress of both children and missionaries. Fryer reported one death and that four children had been admitted to hospital, but were now recovered.

Lynda Upham had been appointed as teacher, paid by the Education Department to teach the twenty-four school age children on the roll. The schooling of the children was segregated, conducted in the mission building, which was inconvenient but necessary, since the Department provided a teacher, but no access to the local state

\textsuperscript{106} Ibid, April 1914, 5.
\textsuperscript{107} "AN 1/3, Acc 652, File 2463/14, Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage Report for year ending 30th June 1914," in \textit{Aborigines and Fisheries Department, SROWA}, Microfiche.
\textsuperscript{108} Ibid.
school. Fryer reported that the Western Australian AAM Council planned to increase the industrial side of teaching in the future. Since this brought some income to the home, his report showed that the education was not standard curriculum, but designed to concentrate on skills that would lead to labouring and domestic work only.

William Fryer signed the report as Missionary in Charge. The imbalance of power between the male and female missionaries came to the fore here for Ethel Fryer was a fully accredited missionary, but as the wife of a missionary she was not acknowledged in that annual report. Bertha Telfer was also unnamed, although she had returned to Dulhi Gunyah during the vacancy and assisted the Fryers in their early months in Western Australia. Both women in fact were fully accredited missionaries with responsibility for the day-to-day care of children. The task of caring for children separated from their family, culture and language group, and who were often suffering poor health would never have been easy. Coupled with the responsibility of providing adequate food, clothing, and shelter, the missionaries lived each day with an overwhelming task. Probably the female missionaries did more of this than William, making their omission in the report more surprising. William Fryer seemed reticent about acknowledging his wife’s work in public reports.

Lynda Upham reported to the AAM in July 1914 of her visit to the Parkerville Children’s Home to research their schooling methods. 109 Established in 1903 by the Anglican nun, Sister Kate Clutterbuck, of the Sisters of the Church, this institution was considered innovative for its time in that rather than segregated dormitories Sister Kate insisted children be cared for in a cottage home environment and she placed a high priority on education. 110 Western Australia had a poor record in the area of caring for children. Baby farming of illegitimate children had been a common practice until the

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109 The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, July 1914, 5.
110 Vera Whittington, Sister Kate: A Life Dedicated to Children in Need of Care (Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press, 1999), 1, 429.
Children’s Protection Society was formed in 1906 and introduced a foster parent system, but it was not until the Scadden Labor Government was elected in 1911 that government funding was allocated. It was Sister Kate’s concern about the inadequate welfare of babies and children that led her to establish the Parkerville Homes in 1903.

The childcare practised by Sister Kate was a potential model for Dulhi Gunyah. Secretary Mary Fox-Angelo reported in February 1915 that the AAM Council had approved the cottage system, as funds became available, and the building of the first cottage had started. William Fryer however described the new building as a dormitory, connected to the house by a corridor. The AAM attempted to improve the conditions at Dulhi Gunyah by following the vision of cottage homes as advocated by Sister Kate, but the mission faced a constant financial struggle. Government maintenance payments were received for only some of the children and limited support came from the small local Evangelical community. Isobel Bropho recalled that children slept in bunk beds under the pine trees, which kept off the rain, until the dormitory was built. There was obviously a gap between the report of the orphanage secretary and the reality of the orphanage, and there was an urgent need of better facilities. In 1915, the AAM committee aimed to follow best practice of their time, but they were clearly hindered by lack of resources.

February 1915 was the first anniversary of the Fryers’ arrival in Western Australia and “An Open Letter” from Ethel was published in *The Australian Aborigines Advocate*; it was written from Waverley Private Hospital in Perth to her fellow Christian Endeavourers and was the first published report she had written since coming to Western Australia. Fryer wrote:

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112 Whittington, *Sister Kate: A Life Dedicated to Children in Need of Care*, 74-75.
113 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, February 1915, 6.
114 Ibid, February 1915, 5.
As one who has been trained in the ranks of Christian Endeavour, my heart is still with you and I am always happy when among Christian Endeavourers... We live such a busy life among our large family that I deeply regret not being able to keep in touch with many Christian friends and workers of the East, who have rendered such a great help on the various Mission Stations where I have laboured, in assisting to build churches, buying organs, etc... Out loving Father has seen fit, through illness, to set me aside for a time from active service, and I wish to take this opportunity of telling you all a few facts, which so many of you wish to know.¹¹⁶

Fryer’s letter was her personal acknowledgement of her formation within the Christian Endeavour movement and she was clearly hoping to raise awareness and support among the Christian Endeavour members throughout Australia for the AAM work in Western Australia. No personal information was provided regarding the reason for her stay in hospital. The suggestion that her life was so busy looking after the children that it required a stay in hospital to find time to write was a sign of the pressure of overwork placed on this woman who had written such optimistic reports in her years as a single missionary in New South Wales.

Fryer revealed a lapse of the faith mission principle of not entering into debt when she provided information that Dulhi Gunyah was in debt:

We have 35 children in the Home... to be fed, clothed and taught. We have a fairly large residence, with 12 acres of land, which will become mission property in time. There are two dormitories, one for girls, the other for boys with beds arranged one above the other, in ship fashion. These are only temporary as they are not large enough, nor yet waterproof and we have long been praying for a new dormitory. To comply with the regulations of the Board of Health, some kind friends have taken the matter in hand, and building operations have commenced. We believe God will honour our faith, and the cost about £250, will be supplied – pray that it will be so. Our children have been doing their part, praying and working to assist the fund.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, February 1915, 7.
¹¹⁷ Ibid.
It was seen in the previous chapter that three of the committee members had purchased Dulhi Gunyah with an overdraft. In addition to that debt, the AAM had taken the risk of commencing the new dormitory, trusting God to provide the required finance. In what was clearly a difficult time for her personally Fryer continued by writing of the need to rise to the occasion with a spirit of self-sacrifice. Written during the era of the First World War, Fryer used the image of soldiers ready to die for king and country as an example to Christian Endeavourers also called to serve Christ, their King. The letter was signed E. M. Fryer (nee Hamer) for it was under her maiden name that Ethel was so well known and supported in New South Wales and she was desperately seeking their support for the work in Western Australia.

Although the Council expressed its concern that Ethel Fryer was unwell, William did not refer to his wife in his report that month. He was preoccupied with the practical concerns facing Dulhi Gunyah and his words displayed an impatience with the faith principles of waiting on God to provide the needs of the home.

In this wee portion of God’s vineyard, we do not only ask God to supply our needs, but we do much to supply our own. The water supply has been much out of order since coming here. The whole concern was pulled up and relaid. We found some good friends in Mr Holland, Mr Day, Mr Bunkle, Mr Frape and Mr Fowler. These men gave up their Saturday afternoons and came and set things in order. Mr Fowler gave piping and a new pump for the wind mill. This is practical Christianity, if you like.

With no school report from Lynda Upham since the school was in recess over the summer, William also reported on the children:

What a time it was for five weeks, with the full contingent around us. They were not too bad. I think the children were eager to be back at their lessons once more.

118 See pages 127-128 & 157.
119 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, February 1915, 5.
120 Ibid.
121 Ibid.
Irrespective of any eagerness on the part of the children, his words suggested that William was relieved when the children were no longer on holiday for they distracted him from the task of maintaining the property. Finally, William assured AAM supporters of continuing spiritual activities such as Sunday School, and other week night meetings, where the children were taught gospel songs and stories. A comparison of their reports that month showed that while Ethel Fryer continued to trust God to provide the needs of the orphanage William was increasingly frustrated with the financial constraints, suggesting the possibility of tension between husband and wife over their commitment to living under faith mission principles.

Ethel was in hospital for two weeks and William was still concerned about the health of his wife in March 1915, when he reported that she was convalescing with friends although, in what was a rare expression of personal feelings, he wrote that her illness had seemed at first more than they could bear. The fact that the government subsidy for Dulhi Gunyah had just been greatly reduced together with the cost of the new dormitory added to the pressure experienced by the missionary couple. From November 1914, Rufus H. Underwood was responsible for Aboriginal Affairs in the Western Australian government and he was strongly opposed to missions and reduced their subsidies. From

The official opening of the new dormitory on Easter Monday, 5 April 1915, was the occasion for a picnic at Dulhi Gunyah and attracted two hundred people. The new building was referred to as a cottage dormitory, which suggested that while the vision was for cottage homes, the reality was a dormitory built economically and quickly to shelter the children from the coming winter storms. The report included the following

122 Ibid, March 1915, 5.
123 Ibid.
124 Haebich, For Their Own Good, 151.
125 The Australian Aborigines' Advocate, April 1915, 5.
paragraph contrasting the warm response of the audience with the candid if tactless remarks of William Fryer.

Mr Fryer, Missionary in charge, was warmly received, and during a detailed account of his daily duties, gave those present some straight talk. *Inter alia*, he said that it was regrettable that not a single West Australian had offered for work in this Mission. If his remarks seemed to hurt, he could only state that work at the Mission House was one of unceasing toil, and he and Mrs Fryer could not have accomplished what was required from day to day, but for Divine help and blessing on theirs and their fellow Missionaries’ labours. 126

In his criticism of the lack of response from West Australians Fryer overlooked the presence at Dulhi Gunyah of Miss Taylor who was listed as a probationary missionary from November 1914. 127 When she completed her probationary period in August 1915, Taylor was welcomed as the first Western Australian to join the faith mission. 128

Notwithstanding Taylor’s case, the AAM continued with a small support base into the period of the First World War. Arthur Meyer recognised that the CE movement went into a decline during the First World War. 129 This decline would have contributed to the financial difficulties of the AAM in Western Australia, for it was seen in Chapter Four that the mission looked to the Christian Endeavour movement for support. 130 William Fryer would have had mixed emotions to see the gathering of Christian people enjoying the picnic occasion while he was coping with financial worries and a sick wife. His abrasive comments to visitors assembled for a celebration confirmed the Fryers were under considerable stress, and William at least was disillusioned by the experience of living under faith principles. In an effort to smooth over the awkward outburst Baptist minister W. T. Dormer responded to William with an assurance that he would

126 Ibid.
127 Ibid, November 1914, 2.
128 Ibid, August 1915, 7.
130 See page 117.
find some young men to assist with a pick and shovel, and F. C. Barrett, State Superintendent of Junior Christian Endeavour, expressed his satisfaction at hearing Fryer’s acknowledgement of donations to the Dulhi Gunyah by the Junior CE societies. Considering the difficult situation, these responses were inadequate because the AAM needed more than offerings from children to provide for the needs at Dulhi Gunyah. Given William’s outspoken criticism, it seemed likely that the Fryers already knew of a new opportunity that was to be taken up by them later that month, following the appointment of a new Chief Protector of Aborigines and new government policy.

Aubur Octavius Neville was appointed as the new Chief Protector of Aborigines and he took up his position in May 1915, on a reduced yearly salary of £312, compared with his predecessor Gale at £528 per year, and due to wartime restraints he had instructions to run the department more economically.\textsuperscript{131} Neville began by focusing on the growing numbers of people of mixed descent in the south of the state. Neville and Underwood developed their plan to establish native settlements to be run by the state rather than missions. Anna Haebich drew attention to the contradiction of the scheme. It was planned to segregate the Nyungar people out of the towns of the south-west, and then separate children of mixed descent from their parents, and yet had the eventual intention of preparing Aboriginal people for assimilation into the general community.\textsuperscript{132}

The first of these government settlements was established in 1915, at Carrolup River, twenty-one miles from Katanning, and was to impact on many Nyungar people, including those from the Katanning district who had already moved there with Annie Lock. In March 1915, Lock had reported from Carrolup that the people had been building the Mission house and it was an indication of the oppressive conditions that Lock wrote “they call it the house that the “hungries” made.”\textsuperscript{133} In her research into the

\textsuperscript{131} Jacobs, \textit{Mister Neville: A Biography}, 59-60.
\textsuperscript{132} Haebich, \textit{For Their Own Good}, 149, 157.
\textsuperscript{133} \textit{The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate}, March 1915, 5.
forced removal of Aboriginal children Haebich wrote of the hunger experienced in many institutions, and Carrolup was one example.\textsuperscript{134} The opening of Carrolup was to change the lives of Ethel and William Fryer, when William was appointed as the first Superintendent of Carrolup Native Settlement from 16 April 1915 and Ethel Fryer was appointed as the Matron.\textsuperscript{135}

Following William’s arrival at Katanning the local newspaper, \textit{The Great Southern Herald}, reported that he was confident in the task ahead of him because of his six years experience managing and teaching at stations in New South Wales prior to coming to Dulhi Gunyah. In addition, he would have the support of his wife who would share the task of teaching the children, leaving him free to teach the boys and men skills in agriculture, to enable them to gain employment as farm labourers.\textsuperscript{136} It has been seen earlier that Ethel and William both had experience in this type of work in New South Wales, but it was unlikely either had training.\textsuperscript{137} Their appointment to Carrolup again showed the low priority given to the education of Aboriginal children by the Western Australian government.

Ethel Fryer was still recuperating at Armadale in June 1915 and her account of their farewell from Dulhi Gunyah was published in \textit{The Australian Aborigines Advocate}. It showed Fryer’s attachment to the children who had been in her care, in spite of the problems of the institution.

It is just a month since we said farewell to Dulhi-Gunyah, and we felt very much leaving the dear children…Since then I have spent my time among the lovely hills here in the country, and have been able… to speak in the interest of the Mission and display work done by the Orphanage children, which meets with ready sale, and is much admired… After seeing to the removal of the old huts at the Welshpool reserve, which material is to be used again on the new

\textsuperscript{135} “AN 1/3, Acc 652, File 725/1915, W. J. Fryer appointed as Manager-Teacher Carrolup Native Settlement,” in \textit{Aborigines and Fisheries Department, SROWA}, Microfiche 1 of 3.
\textsuperscript{136} \textit{The Great Southern Herald}, (Katanning, W. A.: Edwin Mitchell), 24 April, 1915.
\textsuperscript{137} See pages 176-178.
reserve, Mr Fryer went to Katanning last week, where I hope to join him as soon as some kind of temporary dwelling is erected. 138

As a single woman missionary in New South Wales Fryer had been prepared to camp in a tent when there was no house available, but after her illness she waited until at least temporary accommodation was complete. William Fryer wrote to the AAM from Carrolup that month, impatient to establish the temporary home so Ethel could join him as soon as possible. 139 He added that Annie Lock was unwell, suggesting that she was suffering a nervous condition from the workload and needed to rest. The AAM requested supporters to pray for the three workers that they would be granted the necessary tact and wisdom for their task. 140 This implied that the AAM anticipated that this combination of missionaries would be a difficult threesome. Ethel Fryer joined her husband in the mid-winter month of July when the conditions would not have been conducive to restored health. The following photograph of Ethel and William Fryer posed in front of their tent, with the new house behind and children in the foreground, suggested that initially conditions were basic for all residents of Carrolup. 141

![Ethel and William Fryer at Carrolup](courtesy Battye Library 67071P)

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138 The Australian Aborigines' Advocate, June 1915, 5-6.
139 Ibid, June 1915, 6.
140 Ibid, June 1915, 1.
141 Courtesy Battye Library 67071P
A plan of the Carrolup station was submitted by William Fryer to Neville in July 1915. It showed an area for “native” huts on the south east side of the Carrolup River while the manager’s residence, rations shed and school were to be enclosed within a fenced area to the north western side and Annie Lock’s residence was to the south.\(^{142}\)

His experience as a faith missionary had taught Fryer to be frugal. He wrote to Neville on 25 August 1915 suggesting that by making bricks with the local clay he could use the iron intended for the school to make a dining and cooking area for the six children and two old women who were already living with Annie Lock.\(^{143}\)

The Fryers were busy establishing the settlement at Carrolup and did not attend the Dulhi Gunyah Anniversary in Saint Andrews Presbyterian Hall, Perth, in August 1915, but Annie Lock was present, and on her return to Carrolup her letter to the AAM drew attention to the stress of the Matron.

> We found Mrs Fryer busy, looking quite worn out with the strain of the work. Several of the people have been ill… We are kept busy night and day… Mr Fryer and the men have finished the ration shed sufficiently to permit of its being used for school and church services and it is a great comfort to have our services inside… Mrs Fryer has started school teaching, and the children are coming on splendidly.\(^{144}\)

On 8 October 1915, Neville informed William Fryer that if he applied to the head teacher at the Katanning School he could arrange to collect the material and equipment from the Aboriginal School that had closed when the Nyungar people from Katanning had been moved to Carrolup.\(^{145}\) Neville reported to Underwood on 25 January 1916 that the Manager’s house had been built by William Fryer with the assistance of a carpenter, and that the temporary accommodation of tent and iron shed could now be used for sleeping quarters for children until the urgently needed

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\(^{142}\) [AN 1/3, Acc 652, File 1089/15, Carrolup Reserve Rough Sketch Showing position of buildings, roads etc," in Aborigines and Fisheries Department, SROWA, f3-4 Microfiche.](#)

\(^{143}\) [AN 1/3, Acc 652, File 1271/15, Proposal to send Half-caste children to Carrolup Reserve - Buildings and equipment," in Aborigines and Fisheries Department, SROWA, Microfiche.](#)

\(^{144}\) [The Australian Aborigines' Advocate, August 1915, 5 & October 1915, 4.](#)

\(^{145}\) [AN 1/3, Acc 652, File 1370/15," in Aborigines and Fisheries Department, SROWA, Microfiche.](#)
dormitories could be built. These would have cement or concrete floors and be constructed of bush timber and canvas. He recommended that two hundred sheep be purchased, a fifty-loaf oven, a boiler and a sewing machine be provided, and that the AAM missionary receive rations, as did the Manager and Matron, and that a carpenter be engaged to hasten the completion of the building.\footnote{146}

The following photograph is a picture of the completed weatherboard house, with curtains hanging in the windows and the Fryers looking across the verandah, through the fence that separated their living quarters from the rest of the settlement.\footnote{147}

![Manager’s House, Carrolup (courtesy Battye Library 67072P)](image)

The next scene shows the settlement buildings and Nyungar residents at Carrolup, with what appeared to be one of the dormitories, made of concrete floor, bush timber and canvas walls, to the right of the photograph.\footnote{148} The two photographs established there was a distinct contrast between the standard of facilities offered to the Matron and Manager, and the Nyungar residents.

\footnote{146}{“AN 1/3, Acc 652, File 1271/15, Proposal to send Half-caste children to Carrolup Reserve - Buildings and equipment,” Microfiche.}
\footnote{147}{Courtesy Battye Library 67072P}
\footnote{148}{Courtesy Battye Library 67053P}
Living at Carrolup Native Settlement was a difficult experience. Lock informed Neville in November 1915 that she was exhausted and was taking three months furlough and she expressed her concern at leaving Ethel Fryer. It was January 1916 before Neville wrote to William Fryer informing him that Mrs Saunders, a member of the AAM Council, had offered to assist Ethel Fryer during Lock’s absence. Neville wrote to William Fryer again in May after Saunders had left and acknowledged that Ethel Fryer was experiencing real difficulties with no woman to assist her. Lock did not return to Carrolup until July 1916, and for the six months of her absence there were no reports from Carrolup in the AAM publication. Following her return, Lock again reported that Fryer was worn out and with some disappointment she informed AAM supporters that her welcome back had to be cancelled due to Fryer’s illness, although Fryer and her baby had since recovered. This was the first reference in The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate that Ethel Fryer was now a mother, although birth records showed that her son David Winston Fryer was born three months earlier on 7 April 1916, at the

149 “AN 24, Acc 752, File 304/1921, Carrolup River Native Settlement Missionary,” in Colonial Secretary’s Office, SROWA, f1-2.
150 Ibid, f6.
151 The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, July 1916, 6.
Brockhurst Hospital, Katanning. The absence of Lock during those months of Ethel’s pregnancy and childbirth, with Saunders present for only part of that time, meant that Ethel would have continued her role as matron at Carrolup with little support as she approached the birth of her first child. The fact that the birth was not announced by the AAM until after Lock’s return showed that the Fryers were becoming more distanced from the mission hierarchy.

Meanwhile, tensions were escalating between the Carrolup staff. William Fryer wrote to Neville in August 1916, complaining that Lock had been difficult to get on with since they had first arrived and in addition, she did not keep good health, would stay up all night looking after the sick, and then not be able to do any work during the day. William also described the pressure Ethel Fryer faced caring for the baby on top of conducting school for children who were difficult for her to control, and dealing with the tension of her relationship with Lock. A contributing factor was that sickness was at epidemic proportions at Carrolup among the Nyungar population, for example ten deaths were reported by Lock in November 1916 due to an epidemic of measles.

That month Ellen Roach, secretary of the AAM in Western Australia, wrote to Neville to request the transfer to Carrolup of two nine-year-old boys and one eleven-year-old boy who could not be controlled by the staff at Dulhi Gunyah. Neville was prepared to do this with the proviso that subsidies for three children at Dulhi Gunyah would no longer be paid, to compensate the Aborigines Department because two of the three children had previously been financially supported by the AAM. In this way, the Aborigines Department could economise, with the cheaper costs associated with

152 Western Australian Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages: Birth Records.
153 “AN 24, Acc 752, File 304/1921, Carrolup River Native Settlement Missionary.” in Colonial Secretary’s Office SROWA, f16
154 The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, November 1916, 6.
155 “AN 1/3, Acc 652, File 498/16, Australian Aborigines Mission Maintenance Returns,” in Aborigines and Fisheries Department, SROWA, f49-50 Microfiche.
156 Ibid, f51.
Carrolup. William Fryer informed Neville that he would accept the boys.\textsuperscript{157} Since Ethel Fryer was already stressed by her responsibilities on top of caring for her own baby the arrival of these three children would only add to her problems.

Ethel Fryer had difficulty controlling the children in the compound and William argued in a letter to the Aborigines Department on 25 November 1916 that this was because the children were often on their own, since neither he nor Ethel could be with them all the time, and he pleaded for additional staff.\textsuperscript{158} He resorted to corporal punishment, prompting Neville to send instructions that a record of punishments was to be kept detailing the name, age, nature of offence and punishment inflicted.\textsuperscript{159} In December 1916, punishments were imposed for tearing the canvas of the boys dormitory, and a fourteen-year-old girl was reportedly given a “good strapping” for hitting Mrs Fryer.\textsuperscript{160} Neville heard from an undisclosed source that that incident was actually a fight between Ethel Fryer and the girl. His response was to give instructions for a cane to be forwarded to William Fryer as a more appropriate form of punishment.\textsuperscript{161} Earlier in her role as a single faith missionary Ethel Hamer had spoken of the necessity to maintain discipline, but under-resourced and under-staffed at Carrolup the couple resorted to violence in an attempt to retain control. As Matron and Manager at Carrolup, the Fryers were in a position of power over the Nyungar residents and would have been resented by them, compromising any spiritual role they might have anticipated at the settlement.

The AAM categorised Ethel and William Fryer in January 1917 as “missionaries who were teaching”.\textsuperscript{162} Annie Lock wrote the reports to the AAM from Carrolup since

\begin{footnotes}
\item[157] Ibid, f56.
\item[158] "AN 1/6, Acc 1326, File 261/1921, Carrolup River Native Settlement Regulation 11, Reports Re Inmates Dealt with under," in \textit{Chief Secretary's Office, SROWA}, f4.
\item[159] Ibid, f6.
\item[160] Ibid, f7.
\item[161] Ibid, f7-9.
\item[162] \textit{The Australian Aborigines' Advocate}, January 1917, 2.
\end{footnotes}
her role there was recognised to be in the spiritual area and she continued to live according to the faith principle. Although the Fryers were still recognised as missionaries by the AAM, William Fryer was paid by the Aborigines Department and the couple were not living according to the principle of a faith mission of trusting God to provide one’s physical needs. In April 1912, the AAM had defended the practice of differentiating between missionaries living on faith principles and missionaries who were teaching and paid by government sources. In 1912, they assured supporters that missionaries trusted God for the provision of their needs, apart from those employed by the government as teachers, an explanation that appeared to be misleading.\(^{163}\) When the AAM categorised the Fryers as missionaries who were teaching in 1917 this seemed to be equally misleading. The Fryers received rations as part of their payment and Ethel was not paid for her role as matron, but financially supported by her husband. Rather than fulfilling the task of evangelism their work was focused on the management and development of the settlement, and the care and training of the residents to take their place in the wider society. They were, in fact, employees of the Aborigines Department.

Neville visited Carrolup in May 1917, bringing with him staff to relieve Ethel and William Fryer who had not had leave in fifteen months.\(^{164}\) This visit enabled him to assess the situation between Lock and the Fryers and decide the necessary action. The tension between the Fryers and Lock may have been a personality clash, but seemed likely to be related to the fact that Lock continued to live according to the faith principles while William Fryer was being paid by the government. That month, after Neville’s visit to Carrolup, AAM Secretary Ellen Roach wrote to Lock, asking her to leave Carrolup and look for another place in which to work.\(^{165}\) Knowing the

\(^{163}\) Ibid, April 1912, 3.
\(^{164}\) Ibid, May 1917, 4-5.
\(^{165}\) “AN 24, Acc 752, File 304/1921, Carrolup River Native Settlement Missionary.” in Colonial Secretary’s Office SROWA, f20.
independence of their worker, the AAM Council made no suggestions about a possible alternative, but indicated their support of any new work that she might initiate.

On 18 July 1917, the eighth anniversary of the Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage was celebrated by the AAM in Saint Andrews Presbyterian Hall in Pier Street, Perth, and was attended by the Governor, Sir William Ellison Macartney and the Colonial Secretary H. P. Colebatch.\textsuperscript{166} The continuing role of Colonial Secretary was a connection with the colonial past. When the Swan River Colony received responsible government in 1870, the position of Colonial Secretary assumed greater importance due to the reduced power of the Governor. When self-government was granted in 1890, Aboriginal Affairs remained under the direct oversight of the Governor due to British concern over the poor record of the colony in this regard.\textsuperscript{167} Even following Australian Federation in 1901, the Colonial Secretary continued to hold the portfolio for Aboriginal Affairs in Western Australia, and Hal Colebatch held the position in July 1917.\textsuperscript{168} The name was changed to that of Chief Secretary in 1923.\textsuperscript{169} The attendance of the Governor and the Colonial Secretary showed that although the AAM was still a small organisation in Western Australia at that time, Aboriginal issues were on the political agenda and the AAM was one of the few non-government organisations in the field.

The annual report of the AAM stated that another four children had been transferred from Dulhi Gunyah to Carrolup.\textsuperscript{170} Colebatch attempted to allay concerns about the government policy to establish native settlements. He stated that about seventy people were living at Carrolup with the expectation this would rise to two

\textsuperscript{166} \textit{The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate}, July 1917, 6.
\textsuperscript{169} Ibid, 73.
\textsuperscript{170} \textit{The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate}, July 1917, 6.
hundred and he acknowledged that outstanding progress had been made at very little
cost.\(^{171}\) As the inaugural manager William Fryer had played a significant role in this
 economy, but neither Ethel nor William Fryer were named in the mission report,
another indication that the Fryers were becoming distanced from the AAM. This was
confirmed in January 1918, when *The Australian Aborigines Advocate* announced that
Ethel and William Fryer were no longer associated with the AAM although they were
still working at Carrolup, but no acknowledgement was given to the work of Ethel and
William Fryer at the completion of their ten years of service with the AAM.\(^{172}\)

AAM missionary Edith Fisher arrived at Carrolup in March 1918 after serving at
the Bomaderry Children’s Home in New South Wales, and she reported that the Fryers
were very kind to her, but Ethel Fryer was unwell.\(^{173}\) While the Nyungar adults lived in
camps outside the fence and some distance away, Fisher described her very comfortable
stone house, built by William Fryer, and how she loved being at Carrolup. Four girls
from Dulhi Gunyah had recently been sent to Carrolup and were useful in the sewing
room where Ethel Fryer was in charge. The girls were not so happy however, and Fisher
reported that they broke down at the trauma of moving to this new place. Already
separated from their families and culture, the children experienced a second disruption
to their lives when they were separated from friends and carers at Dulhi Gunyah and
taken to Carrolup. As a missionary, Fisher visited the people in the Carrolup camp,
where she was attacked by dogs, and she struggled to maintain order when she led
worship.\(^{174}\) Ethel Fryer assisted Fisher in conducting a song service one Sunday evening
in July 1918, indicating Fryer had not lost her Evangelical commitment and was acting

\(^{171}\) Ibid.
\(^{172}\) Ibid, January 1918, 2.
\(^{173}\) Ibid, May 1918, 6.
\(^{174}\) Ibid, June 1918, 4.
as a mentor for the young missionary. William Fryer, however, did not appear to have been involved at all in the missionary activities at that time.

William Fryer tendered his resignation as Superintendent of Carrolup on 25 June 1918. His resignation was preceded by a report from the Katanning Police Court, which appeared in The Great Southern Herald newspaper on July 1918. In an action instigated by William Fryer against an Aboriginal man whom Fryer claimed had enticed a young female resident from Carrolup, a story emerged that the girl had been chained by the neck to a bed from a Saturday to Monday to prevent her leaving the settlement. Fryer asserted that the chaining was not the reason the girl had left and that his actions were an attempt to follow instructions to prevent girls leaving the settlement only to return pregnant, or with a child. The Justices of the Peace not only reprimanded Fryer, but also recommended that the Protector of Aborigines make more suitable arrangements than the use of such a cruel practice to enforce regulations. In his Annual Report for the year ending 30 June 1918, Neville admitted there was a problem with older girls escaping from Carrolup. He explained that these girls had only recently come in from the bush, and something more substantial than huts with canvas walls would be needed to prevent them returning to the freedom of their previous life. Neville reported that he was taking action to improve the accommodation.

William Fryer may have resigned to avoid being sacked, but no charges were laid against him. It seems likely that his resignation was at least influenced by the fact that Ethel was not coping from the ongoing situation at Carrolup. William wrote again to Neville on 31 July 1918, as he had still no news of a successor. Ethel Fryer was by that time so distressed that she was confined to her room and he asked that something be

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175 Ibid.
176 "AN 1/3, Acc 652, File 725/1915, W. J. Fryer appointed as Manager-Teacher Carrolup Native Settlement.” in Aborigines and Fisheries Department SROWA, f62 Microfiche 2 of 3
177 The Great Southern Herald, 6 July, 1918.
done at once. William was concerned that the work in the sewing room was not being done, children were in need of clothing and the workload was impossible for one woman to do. The situation at Carrolup, and within the Fryer family, appeared to be one of chaos and despair.

Neville blamed Ethel Fryer for the resignation of her husband in a memo circulated to Western Australian Government Departments seeking another position for William, which stated that his resignation was because Fryer was unsuitable for the position of matron. Perhaps Neville recognised that the Aborigines Department bore some responsibility for the disturbing situation at Carrolup, and by suggesting Ethel was the problem he hoped to procure a new public service position for William. No position was offered to William Fryer. In a memo dated 10 August 1918 Neville asked the Under Secretary to arrange for him to be paid in full before the sixteenth of the month, including eighteen days annual leave owing, as it was uncertain where the Fryers would be after that date. John B. Blake was appointed from 3 August 1918, as Superintendent of Carrolup River Aboriginal Reserve and Settlement, and he had no connection to the AAM.

From this unhappy history it has emerged that in their role as the first Matron and Manager at Carrolup, Ethel and William Fryer were part of a system that was dehumanising for Aboriginal residents. As people employed at Carrolup the Fryers were diminished by the methods they used to maintain control. The Fryers returned to New South Wales and to secular life, but they did not sever their links with the AAM. William Fryer spoke during the Annual Conference of the AAM in January 1920 when missionary Hope Malcolm was farewelled from New South Wales before leaving to

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179 “AN 1/3, Acc 652, File 725/1915, W. J. Fryer appointed as Manager-Teacher Carrolup Native Settlement.” in *Aborigines and Fisheries Department SROWA*, f110, Microfiche 1 of 3
180 Ibid. f88 Microfiche 1 of 3
181 Ibid, memo 10 August 1918, Microfiche 1 of 3.
182 *Government Gazette of Western Australia*, (Perth: Government Printer), 9 August, 1918, 1107.
replace Fisher at Carrolup Native Settlement. Malcolm will be the subject of the next chapter.

More heartache was experienced by the couple when their second son Edwin John Fryer was born in February 1921 and then died from gastroenteritis at the age of nine weeks on 14 April, 1921. William’s occupation was listed on the child’s death certificate as poultry farmer and the family were living at Mona Vale, near Sydney. The following month, through *The Australian Aborigines Advocate*, Ethel and William acknowledged the sympathetic support they had received from members of the AAM. Within a year, another son, Arnold Keith Fryer, was born at Mona Vale on 22 February 1922. The photograph below portrays Keith as a happy toddler looking out towards the camera, but the shadow across Ethel Fryer does not completely hide the face of a woman aged beyond her years.

![Ethel Fryer and son Keith c1924](courtesy Wendy Simes)

183 *The Australian Aborigines' Advocate*, January 1920, 3.
184 "New South Wales Register of Births Deaths and Marriages," Death Records.
185 *The Australian Aborigines' Advocate*, May 1921, 1.
186 Photograph courtesy of Wendy Simes.
The shadow across her face was a foreshadowing of further sorrow, for Ethel died from pneumonia on 24 December 1928 at the age of forty-nine years.\textsuperscript{187} Her death certificate indicated that she left a thirteen-year-old son David and six-year-old Keith. In February 1929, \textit{The Australian Aborigines Advocate} included the following “In Memoriam” to Ethel Fryer:

Mrs Fryer passed away on Xmas Eve, under trying circumstances, Mr Fryer not being able to be with her, as he himself was laid aside with 'flu. Mr Fryer says: “Never since I have been here have I known such a time, but our Father knows all these things. I would not wish my dear wife back to suffer further; our loss is her gain. Our trust is in God. We will always have a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.”\textsuperscript{188}

When William Fryer wrote of his continuing trust in God even through experiences of sickness and grief he gave the AAM reading public what they wanted to hear. He wrote of turning for comfort to the faith that Ethel and he had both shared when they first offered themselves for missionary service among the Indigenous people of Australia. Apparently, William maintained contact with at least one AAM associate following his resignation, for when his eldest son, David Fryer, was married in 1938, the officiating minister was Ernest Telfer, former AAM missionary and at that time a Baptist minister in New South Wales.\textsuperscript{189}

The 1939 history of the United Aborigines Mission, written by Ernest Telfer, described Ethel Hamer as a “loyal and faithful worker” and a “zealous servant of Christ” who had served at La Perouse, Roseby Park, Ulgundahi Island, on the Lower Clarence River and in Western Australia.\textsuperscript{190} William Fryer was described as a faithful worker who had served at Nucoorima, Coroki, Richmond River, Nymboida and Upper Clarence River all in New South Wales, and who was “ably assisted by his faithful

\textsuperscript{187} “New South Wales Register of Births Deaths and Marriages,” Death Records.
\textsuperscript{188} \textit{The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate}, February 1929, 60.
\textsuperscript{189} New South Wales Registrar of Births Deaths and Marriages, Marriage Records.
\textsuperscript{190} Telfer, \textit{Amongst Australian Aborigines}, 92-93.
wife” at Katanning in Western Australia.\textsuperscript{191} Their work at Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage was omitted by Telfer and in contrast to his description of Ethel Hamer as a faithful worker in her own right as a single woman, as Ethel Fryer she was analysed in her identity of wife and assistant rather than as an accredited missionary. The reality that Fryer did not cope with the responsibility of her role as Matron at Carrolup when this was coupled with the roles of wife and mother was omitted in this partisan mission history, and the unjust treatment endured by Nyungar people as a result of the mission’s involvement in the implementation of government policy was ignored.

This research into the life of AAM missionary Ethel Hamer/Fryer began with a young woman of limited education, but a personal Evangelical faith and strong leadership skills, learned through the Christian Endeavour movement. The chapter has established there were two distinct phases in her life as a woman missionary. As a single missionary Hamer was confident and optimistic, even in difficult circumstances, and she built relationships of mutual respect with the Aboriginal people among whom she worked. From the time of her marriage, and particularly following her arrival in Western Australia in 1914 to work at the Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage, Ethel Fryer was overshadowed by her husband, and her contribution was largely hidden in the missionary record. Although the AAM accepted women as missionaries, as a married woman Ethel Fryer was involved more in childcare and the teaching of children than fulfilling her vision of sharing the Christian gospel with the Aboriginal people of Australia. Within two years of giving birth to her first child, the family left their field of work with the Nyungar people of Western Australia. In Chapter Four, it was seen that Bertha Alcorn also resigned after the birth of her first child and she too was suffering

\textsuperscript{191} Ibid, 93-94.
health problems at the time.\textsuperscript{192} Juggling their missionary work and family responsibilities was detrimental to the health of each of these women and their families.

Apart from their time at the Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage, the material needs of the couple were met when William was paid as a public servant to manage the Nymboida and then Carrolup settlements, and Ethel was his unpaid assistant. Living under the faith mission principles at Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage was a story of ill health and overwork, accompanied by inadequate facilities and lack of support. As unpaid Matron at Carrolup Native Settlement alongside her Manager husband Ethel Fryer’s experience included stories of violence towards the Nyungar people. In Western Australia, the Fryers were involved in implementing government policy that separated Nyungar children from their families according to their race, at a time when those people were increasingly dispossessed from their traditional lands and confined to native settlements and reserves. This racist policy trained the Nyungar people to be subordinate workers for white society as farm labourers and domestic servants. The Fryers worked within that system rather than challenge the injustices. When a young girl at Carrolup was kept chained by the neck for three days to prevent her escape, Ethel Fryer was emotionally imprisoned by her involvement in an oppressive and violent system that was both patriarchal and racist. When Ethel Hamer joined the AAM in 1907, she had been warned to first count the cost, for she would be entering into a life of hard work, adversity and loneliness, and she would be required to trust God to meet her needs in sickness and in health. The contrast between the empathetic young missionary and the older woman who colluded with oppression was apparent. Ethel Fryer left Western Australia in 1918, broken in spirit and health, and it could certainly be said that it had been a costly exercise for her personally and for the Nyungar people among whom she had worked.

\textsuperscript{192} See page 155.
Chapter Six  Sister Wright comes home to Ngawu\textsuperscript{193} country.

Tuesday 13 January, 1920 was a “red letter day” according to \textit{The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate}.\textsuperscript{194} A violent summer thunderstorm over Sydney that evening reduced attendances at “Miss Malcolm’s” farewell service, but did not dampen the inspiring nature of the occasion. Hope Malcolm was leaving her position in New South Wales to serve as a faith missionary with the Australian Aborigines’ Mission (AAM) at Carrolup Native Settlement in Western Australia, and her story will be the focus of this case study. The chapter will begin by continuing the history of the Australian Aborigines Mission in Western Australia from the resignation of Ethel and William Fryer in 1918, until the arrival of Malcolm at Carrolup in 1920. It will then investigate Malcolm’s early life and formation leading to her joining the AAM in 1916, followed by an analysis of her service as a single woman missionary in New South Wales and Western Australia. An investigation into an intermediate stage from 1922 until 1925, spent in Melbourne due to an extended period of illness, will establish that developments within the Evangelical scene in Melbourne had repercussions for Malcolm and the Australian Aborigines’ Mission. A second phase of her missionary service began in 1926 when Malcolm married AAM missionary Hedley Wright and returned to Western Australia with her husband. The couple established the AAM Gnowangerup Mission in the Great Southern Region. This case study will evaluate the role of the Christian Endeavour movement in Malcolm’s life and analyse her understanding and adherence to the principles of a faith mission in each phase of her missionary service addressing how the issues of gender, race and class affected her vocation.

\textsuperscript{193} Southern Aboriginal Corporation, \textit{Nyungar Dictionary}, 8. Nguwa is the Nyungar word for mallee fowl.
\textsuperscript{194} \textit{The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate}, June 1920, 3.
When Ethel and William Fryer left the Carrolup Native settlement in July 1918, the remaining AAM personnel in Western Australia at that time were Annie Lock stationed at Sunday Island, E. and G. Floyd as Manager and Matron at Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage with the Misses Cox and Taylor assisting, while a Miss Philips worked alone at Guildford. Edith Fisher continued to provide an AAM presence at Carrolup. Following the Fryer’s return to New South Wales, a new manager, John B. Blake, was appointed to Carrolup, but he was not associated with the AAM. Out of seven AAM missionaries in Western Australia in 1918, women were strongly represented with five single women and one married.

Greater restrictions were being placed upon the Indigenous people. Some years earlier the Western Australian Parliament had introduced changes to the 1905 Aborigines Act through the 1911 Aborigines Amendment Act, which made the Chief Protector of Aborigines the legal guardian of illegitimate “half-caste” children and so increased his power to remove children from their families. Another change prohibited the supply of alcohol to Aboriginal people. The 1911 Act further limited the freedoms of Indigenous people and created discrimination in the provision of health and education services. Rufus Underwood held the portfolio for Aborigines in the Western Australian Parliament in 1918, and the Chief Protector of Aborigines was A. O. Neville. Underwood intended to reduce government subsidies to missions by transferring the children to government settlements like Carrolup or Moore River.

Underwood and Neville attended the Anniversary meeting of Dulhi Gunyah children’s home held in Saint Andrews Presbyterian Church Hall in Perth in July 1918.

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195 Ibid, June 1918, 2.
196 Ibid.
197 Government Gazette of Western Australia, 9 August, 1918, 1107.
199 Haebich, For Their Own Good, 123-127.
and Underwood presided over the meeting.\textsuperscript{201} He reassured the audience of his intention that “the natives would receive good treatment” during his term of office, while Neville diplomatically praised the AAM missionaries and stated that the Dulhi Gunyah girls who had been transferred to Carrolup were happy. This was in contrast both to Fisher’s report to the AAM in May 1918, when she told how the girls had wept when they arrived at Carrolup, and of the incident at Carrolup when William Fryer chained a young female resident as detailed in the previous chapter.\textsuperscript{202}

The 1918 annual report of the AAM Council in Western Australia revealed a decline in the work that year.\textsuperscript{203} The Guildford mission had closed, but no information was provided as to what happened to the people at Guildford, or to Philips after her three years work there. In addition, Lynda Upham had left Dulhi Gunyah after five years as the teacher and the number of resident children had been reduced to twenty. Ethel and William Fryer were not named in that report, although their resignation after ten years of service with the AAM occurred during that year. Further disappointment was evident when the AAM announced to its supporters in October 1918 that a change in government policy meant that Dulhi Gunyah would be closed.\textsuperscript{204} That month the AAM received news of a second death of a former Dulhi Gunyah child at the Carrolup settlement.\textsuperscript{205} When the AAM reported that Fisher had sent a cheerful report from Carrolup, comforted because the child was a Christian, it was apparent that the vision of the AAM continued to be conversion, narrowly understood. No concern was expressed about the cause of the deaths, or what steps could be taken to improve the health record, or conditions at Carrolup. The last of the Dulhi Gunyah children travelled to Carrolup

\textsuperscript{201} The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, July 1918, 4.
\textsuperscript{202} Ibid, May 1918, 6. See pages 200
\textsuperscript{203} Ibid, August 1918, 3.
\textsuperscript{204} Ibid, October 1918, 1.
\textsuperscript{205} Ibid, October 1918, 4.
by train on 14 March 1919.\textsuperscript{206} A school in Beverley had closed in 1918 and when the children’s homes including the AAM Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage closed in 1919 education was only available to Aboriginal children at government settlements.\textsuperscript{207} The AAM clearly had misgivings about this enforced closure, for that month a letter was published in \textit{The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate} from Neville, written as a response to AAM criticism of the government policy of establishing settlements. Neville vowed that children who had been in institutions would not go back to camp life, but they would be segregated from the camp dwellers and receive better health and training than they did at missions. With two deaths of former Dulhi Gunyah children since their arrival at Carrolup, these words were unconvincing. Neville admitted that a transition period with economic restraints due to Australia’s involvement in the First World War (1914-1918) had made it difficult to implement his plans.\textsuperscript{208} This confirmed that the settlement at Carrolup was far from achieving all that Neville had anticipated.

Writing from Carrolup in her first report for the year Fisher reminded her readers three times that “the time is short,” a reference to the premillennial belief in the imminent return of Christ and the urgent need to present the gospel to people who had not yet heard the Christian message.\textsuperscript{209} Fisher spent much of her time caring for sick and dying people at Carrolup, and four deaths in seven weeks contributed to the urgency the AAM missionary felt to convert the children.\textsuperscript{210} Fisher deliberately stated that these deaths were unrelated to the influenza epidemic.\textsuperscript{211} The Spanish Influenza epidemic had arrived in Australia with the return of the troops from the First World War and Neville established unpopular, but effective quarantine precautions, which reduced the spread of

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{206} Ibid, March 1919, 5.
\textsuperscript{207} Haebich, \textit{For Their Own Good}, 168-169.
\textsuperscript{208} \textit{The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate}, March 1919, 6.
\textsuperscript{209} Ibid, April 1919, 6.
\textsuperscript{210} Ibid, September 1919, 4.
\textsuperscript{211} Ibid.
\end{footnotesize}
the disease among the Indigenous people at Carrolup.  

Fisher left Carrolup in January 1920, prior to her marriage in March that year to a South Australian Methodist, Reverend Dixon, a brother of former AAM missionary Harold Dixon. Her resignation followed four years service as a faith missionary, first at Bomaderry Children’s Home in New South Wales then at Carrolup. Hope Malcolm was appointed by the AAM to replace Fisher.

Hope May Malcolm was born on 27 March 1896, in Warracknabeal, Victoria, and her parents were Amelia Harrop and Alexander Samuel Malcolm. They were married according to the rites of the Wesleyan Methodist Church on 6 February 1896 at Brikkle, in the Victorian Wimmera District, seven weeks before the birth of Hope. Many years later, after her marriage, but at an undisclosed date, Hope wrote a short history of the Harrop family and most of the information about Malcolm’s background comes from that source. Malcolm wrote that her grandparents, uncles and aunt travelled from South Australia to take up virgin land in Brikkle. Her grandfather built the farmhouse followed by a little church known as “Chipric Chapel” some three or four miles from the farm, which became the centre for community activities such as Band of Hope meetings, concerts and picnics. Malcolm wrote “It was in this little Chapel erected by Grandfather and his helpers that God first spoke to me regarding ‘service for him’”.

Malcolm’s early faith development confirmed Rosemary Seton’s finding that many women missionaries traced their call to their childhood and family influence.

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212 Haebich, *For Their Own Good*, 184-185.
213 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, March 1920, 5 & December 1920, 2.
216 State of Victoria Register of Births Deaths and Marriages, Birth Records.
217 Ibid, Marriage Records.
218 Hope May Wright, "The Harrop Story," (nd), 1.
219 Ibid, 4.
220 Ibid.
Since her parents were married according to the rites of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, this was probably a Wesleyan Methodist chapel and the reference to the Band of Hope meetings revealed similar temperance values that were taught to Bertha Telfer within the Band of Hope, the Methodist Church and the Christian Endeavour movement. In her account, Malcolm made no mention of her father and little of her mother, but described growing up with her grandparents and relating to her uncles and aunt as brothers and sister, so it seemed likely that her parents separated during her early childhood or her father died when she was young. Lois Quadesmith, daughter of Hope Malcolm, explained that her grandmother Amelia was blind from childhood.222 Amelia was often in Melbourne for long periods receiving treatment and was unable to look after her daughter. In her family history Malcolm went on to describe how a school was built about a mile and a half in the opposite direction to the chapel and a Miss Grace Smith taught the children privately until the Education Department supplied a part-time teacher.223 The Smith family belonged to the Church of Christ and held services in their home, and two of Malcolm’s uncles were baptised there, by immersion, using the baptistery they made themselves by digging a hole in the ground and filling it with water. Malcolm’s account of this incident revealed the resourcefulness that was so essential in a pioneering rural context. In addition, it showed that in a small isolated community Christian fellowship was more important than denominational differences among Evangelical Protestants. Not withstanding this rural upbringing, Malcolm wrote nothing to suggest an awareness of Indigenous people during her childhood.

The combination of the death of her grandparents and an uncle, drought conditions on the farm and frequent absences of her mother meant that Hope Malcolm had a lonely childhood. When the farm was sold, she went to live in the fruit-growing

area of Mildura with an aunt and uncle. It was not stated what age she was at that time, but Malcolm wrote that she was baptised in the Mildura Church of Christ in June 1913, when she would have been seventeen years of age.\textsuperscript{224} One month earlier, in May 1913, AAM missionary Lily Fowler left her work at the Bomaderry Children’s Home for Pooncarrie, on the Darling River, eighty miles north of Mildura, to visit her grandmother.\textsuperscript{225} Since Malcolm was living in the Mildura district it was possible that while Fowler was in the region Malcolm met Fowler, and heard about the AAM and specifically of the Bomaderry Children’s Home. At Malcolm’s induction in January 1917, Lily Fowler referred to her early acquaintance with Malcolm and this confirmed the likelihood that they met during Fowler’s visits to the Mildura region and that the older missionary had influenced Malcolm.\textsuperscript{226} No information has been located on Malcolm’s movements from 1913 until in May 1916, at the age of twenty, Hope Malcolm left Mildura for New South Wales to work as a missionary with the Australian Aborigines’ Mission.\textsuperscript{227}

Quadesmith believed her mother trained as a nurse at La Perouse with Reverend John Flynn of the Australian Inland Mission (AIM).\textsuperscript{228} There is some doubt about this as no reference to a hospital or the provision of nursing training was ever found regarding the AAM at La Perouse and no additional evidence has been found to confirm Malcolm trained as a nurse. It has been established that La Perouse was the site near Sydney where work began by Christian Endeavourers in 1893 among the Aboriginal people living there, and the two faith missions known as the Aborigines’ Inland Mission (AIM) and the Australian Aborigines’ Mission (AAM) grew out of that beginning.\textsuperscript{229}

The Presbyterian Reverend John Flynn, on the other hand, had a vision for ministry to

\textsuperscript{224} Ibid, 10.
\textsuperscript{225} The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, May 1913, 7.
\textsuperscript{226} Ibid, January 1917, 5.
\textsuperscript{227} Wright, “The Harrop Story,” 10.
\textsuperscript{228} Quadesmith, Interview with Lois Quadesmith, Interviewed by Yvonne Choules, 4.
\textsuperscript{229} See pages 53 & 83-84.
the isolated people living in outback Australia, and the Australian Inland Mission was launched by the Presbyterian Assembly in 1912. Two Australian mission organizations with the same initials and similar names could easily lead to confusion.

*The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, the monthly publication of the AAM, announced that Miss Malcolm arrived from Melbourne on Monday 26 June 1916 and took up her probationary position at Bomaderry Children’s Home in the Nowra district of New South Wales, under the supervision of Lily Fowler. Malcolm thus began her missionary service at twenty years of age nurturing Aboriginal children. The Bomaderry Children’s Home was established by the AAM in 1908, intended for Indigenous children who were deemed by the Aboriginal Protection Board to be “neglected,” and Miss E. Thompson was the first of many missionaries, mostly single women, who cared for the children. In his mission history, Ernest Telfer quoted from minutes of a meeting held in August 1908 when the women missionaries were described as “our sisters”. Sisterhoods of laywomen had grown within Methodism in Australia in the late nineteenth century, with a training home for Sisters of the People established in Sydney in 1884. October 1916 was the first noted use by the AAM of the title of “Sister”, given to Sister Fowler and Sister Fisher serving at the children’s home, while Malcolm as a new worker was named that month as “Miss” Malcolm. No acknowledgement was given of prior nursing training for any of these three, as had been done when Nurse Catherine Mantell joined in January 1911. It therefore seems unlikely that the AAM used the term “sister” to refer to a nursing qualification.

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231 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, June 1916, 1, 6 & July 1916, 1.
233 Ibid.
236 Ibid, January 1911, 6.
Early in the twentieth century AAM women missionaries wore a uniform of a cape worn over a white dress and a bonnet tied with a large bow, which was similar to the cape worn by a nursing sister, and this may have contributed to the perception of Quadesmith that her mother was a trained nurse. Male AAM missionaries did not wear a uniform, only women, suggesting that the uniform gave a professional identity to women who had no professional qualifications and yet were challenging the traditional home environment for women. Since men apparently did not need a uniform to affirm their missionary status, the uniform was actually a sign of ongoing gender inequality. The following undated photograph of Hope Malcolm shows her wearing the dress uniform of the AAM women missionaries.

Hope Malcolm in AAM uniform (courtesy Lois Quadesmith)

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237 See page 147 for a photograph of Bertha Telfer in her mission uniform.
238 Photograph courtesy of Lois Quadesmith.
The goal of conversion of Aboriginal people to Christianity was certainly applied to children. The annual report for 1916 stated that of the twenty-nine resident children, eight had made a Christian commitment during that year.\textsuperscript{239} Another role of the children’s home emerged however, when the AAM explained that the children in care were being trained in domestic and other duties.\textsuperscript{240} While missions enabled women missionaries the opportunity to rise in professional status, the children in their care were being prepared for employment within the servant class.

As Malcolm began her missionary service, \textit{The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate} celebrated its fifteenth year of publication and looking back over those years with a note of self-congratulation wrote: “hitherto hath the Lord helped us.”\textsuperscript{241} However, it was ironical that the AAM also reported at that time that the debt on the Bomaderry Children’s Home was a matter for prayer. Never entering into debt was a strongly held faith principle of the earlier New South Wales Aborigines’ Mission (NSWAM) and this was clearly stated in their principles and practices as follows: “No more money is to be expended than is thus received, going into debt being considered inconsistent with entire dependence upon God.”\textsuperscript{242} When the NSWAM changed its name to the Australian Aborigines’ Mission (AAM) in 1908, this was not a sign of changed principles, but a change of geographical focus from New South Wales to include other states of Australia. This was verified in \textit{The Principles and Practices of the Australian Aborigines’ Mission} where the faith principle was restated.

The mission is supported entirely by Free-will offerings of those who wish to aid the work. The needs of the Mission are laid before God in Prayer, no collections being authorised. No more money is to be expended than is thus received, going into debt being considered inconsistent with entire dependence upon God.\textsuperscript{243}

\textsuperscript{239} \textit{The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate}, October 1916, 7.
\textsuperscript{240} Ibid, December 1916, 5.
\textsuperscript{241} Ibid, June 1916, 3.
\textsuperscript{242} “A Short History of the New South Wales Aborigines Mission,” f1, 13-14.
\textsuperscript{243} “Box 95 South Australian Head Office, File: Correspondence Re: Schenk 1941,” in \textit{United Aborigines’ Mission Archives} (Melbourne), f19.
The AAM, therefore, by 1916, was failing to keep this principle when it entered into debt on the children’s home.\textsuperscript{244} No perception of the inconsistency of this was evident in the monthly mission publication.

Malcolm passed her probation period successfully and her induction service was held in the Petersham Church of Christ during the AAM annual conference of January 1917.\textsuperscript{245} It was an impressive occasion and the mission publication gave the following glowing report.

The meeting was the best of its kind ever held in connection with the mission… Miss Malcolm told the story of her conversion and call to the work with a calm consciousness that told of her being in the place where God desired her to be.\textsuperscript{246}

When Malcolm told her conversion narrative, she followed an Evangelical tradition that Virginia Lieson Brereton traced to the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{247} D. Bruce Hindmarsh suggested the genre emerged even earlier in the eighteenth century and developed within the context of western Christendom in which there was a certain amount of personal religious freedom within a society based upon traditional Christian moral values and belief.\textsuperscript{248} Both writers outlined a typical pattern of relating early life experience and an increasing sense of sinfulness, the conversion itself concluding with an account of involvement in Evangelical pursuit.\textsuperscript{249} No details of Malcolm’s conversion narrative were provided by the AAM, but it seemed likely to have fallen into this pattern. When missionaries such as Malcolm called Aboriginal children to conversion, it was not only a call to adopt the Christian faith, as understood by the missionaries, but also to identify with western Evangelical culture.

\textsuperscript{244} \textit{The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate}, June 1916, 1.
\textsuperscript{245} Ibid, January 1917, 3.
\textsuperscript{246} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{247} Brereton, \textit{From Sin to Salvation: Stories of Women’s Conversions, 1800 to the Present}, 3-4.
\textsuperscript{249} Brereton, \textit{From Sin to Salvation: Stories of Women’s Conversions, 1800 to the Present}, 3-4. & Hindmarsh, "Patterns of Conversion in Early Evangelical History and Overseas Mission Experience," 73.
Following her induction, Malcolm was stationed at Noocoorilma, near the town of Inverell.\footnote{The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, January 1917, 2.} She was entering the country of the Kamilaroi people.\footnote{David Horton and Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies., The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander History, Society and Culture (Aboriginal Studies Press for the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, 1994), volume 2, 945-947.} In May 1917, Malcolm reported that a Christian Endeavour society had been formed among the children.\footnote{The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, May 1917, 8.} This was the first evidence of Malcolm’s involvement in that movement and her formation of a group suggested an earlier familiarity with the Christian Endeavour movement and a commitment to its principles. The methods of this organisation were therefore continuing to be used by the AAM as a tool for training the children in the Christian faith and in developing leadership skills.

Malcolm began her report in August 1918 with the words that had become a slogan, “hitherto hath the Lord helped us.”\footnote{Ibid, August 1918, 7.} She had returned to Noocoorilma after several months absence for surgery, and praised God not only for her return to health, but because her missionary colleague, Jim Jago, had made improvements to her mission house in her absence. To add to her joy the Inverell mission council had provided her with a horse.\footnote{Ibid.} Malcolm had prayed for a horse, but this answer to prayer created the need for chaff. When a neighbour invited the young missionary to come to his property with her horse and sulky any time she needed more chaff Malcolm believed the offer came in answer to her prayer. Trusting God to provide her needs was clearly a positive experience for Malcolm at this point in her career. Perhaps her youth and obvious commitment to her calling prompted generous support by the local community.

Conversion of the Aboriginal people continued to be paramount and Malcolm reported in September 1918 that her prayers were again answered when a man from
Noocoorilma “gave his heart to the Lord.”\(^{255}\) In addition, a small Christian community within the settlement had conducted their own house fellowship during the missionary’s sick leave. While there were signs of a genuine commitment to the Christian faith among the Kamilaroi people of the area, there was no evidence in her reports at that time that Malcolm showed a reciprocal interest in their culture or spirituality.

Malcolm completed her third year of service in July 1919 and her reflection on her experience was published in *The Australian Aborigines Advocate* that month.\(^{256}\) To the rhetorical question: “Is it worthwhile?” Malcolm answered “If nothing else is accomplished during my ministry among the dark people, I shall feel it was more than worthwhile to have witnessed the dying, and heard the testimony of these souls.”\(^{257}\) Death seemed to be commonplace on the mission station and made conversion to Christianity all the more urgent. It was evident that her work was appreciated when a Christian convert presented the missionary with a gift of money, while others chopped wood for the fire and left it at Malcolm’s door. The gift of money was not a traditional gift and so it was another sign that the people were becoming westernised. Malcolm concluded her reflection by challenging her readers to consider their response to the urgency of the missionary task.

Reader, there’s a call comes ringing from various camps in Australia – “Send the Light! Send the light!” Think of those dwelling in darkness with no one to tell them the good news – living without Christ and without hope unless someone comes to their aid. Can you not hear their call for help, if so, will you not say, “Here am I, send me.”\(^{258}\)

While Malcolm reflected on her three years service Edith Fisher prepared to leave her position at Carrolup Native Settlement in Western Australia before her

\(^{255}\) Ibid, September 1918, 7.
\(^{256}\) Ibid, July 1919, 4.
\(^{257}\) Ibid, July 1919, 4-5.
\(^{258}\) Ibid, July 1919, 5.
wedding early in the New Year. Hoping that Chief Protector Neville would permit the AAM to send a replacement missionary, AAM federal secretary Harriet Baker wrote to Neville on 13 October 1919 with a very positive recommendation of Hope Malcolm for the position.

She has been resident in a large inland station for some time where a Government Manager and his wife have been in charge; she has proved herself a tactful worker, and has endeared herself to all concerned. Our Council has no hesitation in recommending her, for she is young, strong, energetic, musical, used to young people, accustomed to conducting services among adults and thoroughly Missionary hearted.

In light of the earlier difficult relationship between Annie Lock and Ethel and William Fryer, as described in the previous chapter, Baker chose her words carefully to emphasize Malcolm’s tactfulness and skill. The fact that Baker did not include nursing skill among Malcolm’s attributes is further indication that professional nursing training was not part of the formation of the young missionary. On the other hand, Malcolm was experienced in conducting adult worship.

As recommended by Harriet Baker, Malcolm was appointed as the AAM representative to the Carrolup Native Settlement in Western Australia. Malcolm attended the annual mission conference in Sydney in January 1920 and her valedictory service was held at the Petersham Church of Christ Tabernacle. William Fryer, former AAM missionary and inaugural manager at Carrolup, participated in the service. Although the Fryers left Carrolup under a cloud in July 1918, Fryer was invited to speak and he gave his positive and biased account of the work achieved at Carrolup. Malcolm testified that her three years as a faith missionary were the happiest

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259 Ibid, February 1920, 3.
260 Harriet Baker to A. O Neville, 13 October 1919, "AN 24, Acc 752, File 304/1921, Carrolup River Native Settlement Missionary."
261 See pages 197-198
262 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, January 1920, 3.
263 Ibid.
264 Ibid.
of her life, and given the difficult circumstances of her childhood, this was probably an accurate assessment. The young missionary told the gathered audience that she had experienced many instances of God’s provision for her and she asked people to continue to remember her in prayer. A not so hidden agenda in that request was that through their prayers people would be constrained to provide financial support.

Malcolm travelled to Western Australia by the trans-continental railway. Promised to the isolated state of Western Australia at the time of Australian Federation in 1901, the railway was completed in 1917 as a wide-gauge line connecting the goldmining town of Kalgoorlie in Western Australia with Port Augusta in South Australia.265 The railway crossed more than one thousand miles of sparsely vegetated country including the treeless country of the Nullarbor Plain. In her book, *The Passing of the Aborigines*, Daisy Bates wrote of her experience when she lived in a tent at Ooldea Siding on the trans-continental line in September 1919, and she described the many Aboriginal people who were camped at the sidings along the railway, often suffering from disease and begging from the train passengers.266 Malcolm had been working in New South Wales with Aboriginal people who were becoming westernised and so her rail journey across the continent in 1920 provided the young missionary with her first encounter with people who retained a traditional culture and yet had lost their independence with the coming of European civilisation. The following extract from Malcolm’s report of that journey revealed her assumption of the superiority of her western culture:

> Each native had a weapon of some kind. Their clothing consisted of but a few rags, their hair was tangled, and their faces looked as if water had never been used. One came up to me eating a lizard; another a portion of some other animal. What I saw made me shudder… I

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cannot explain how I felt to see such poor neglected uncared for heathen…

Even in this brief encounter, the missionary did not forget her vocation. In spite of the culture and language barrier, Malcolm wrote of her attempt to proclaim the story of Jesus to people she classified as “heathen.”

They did not know what a missionary was, so I tried to explain that I lived among their people, to teach them good things. I asked them if they had ever been told the story of the good man Jesus, who loved them so much that he died for them.

Her efforts on this occasion arose from Malcolm’s premillennial belief that the situation of these people was without hope unless she proclaimed her message. This Evangelical concern was in contrast to other passengers, whose antics roused her indignation.

The white passengers began teasing the natives, pretending to carry off their spears, which irritated them greatly. They became so cross that I deemed it unwise to go near them again. I was so sorry, and felt very much annoyed with my fellow passengers.

Her righteous anger distanced the missionary from the other passengers and foreshadowed that the cost of identifying with the plight of Aboriginal people could bring marginalisation from the non-Aboriginal Australian community. Malcolm’s report of her journey confirmed that the long journey to Western Australia provided new experiences that confronted her own cultural assumptions. In her publication on women missionaries, the importance of the journey was recognised by Lavinia Byrne when she identified the journey as a transition period of self-discovery. The outcome of Malcolm’s transition experience will be analysed later in the chapter.

267 The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, February 1920, 4.
268 Ibid.
269 Ibid.
Immediately prior to Malcolm’s arrival at Carrolup in Western Australia tension between the management and missionary staff had continued to trouble the settlement after the Fryer’s departure. Superintendent Blake had written to Neville on 17 December 1919 to express his dissatisfaction with AAM missionary Edith Fisher and to state his preference that the new missionary not arrive until after Fisher had left, so that he could instruct the newcomer in his preferred way of operation without interference from Fisher. This request was considered unreasonable by Neville and Hope Malcolm arrived at Carrolup on 28 January 1920 in time to hear Fisher’s views first-hand before her departure.

AAM President Colebrook and his wife had presented Malcolm with the book *The Doctor at Home and Nurses Guide Book* prior to her coming to Carrolup in 1920. This would have proved invaluable to the young missionary, for on her arrival Malcolm was immediately involved in caring for a family dying from tuberculosis. When a former resident of the Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage died in March 1920 it was the second death of a child witnessed by Malcolm in her short time at Carrolup, and another child was not expected to survive. Even with so much sickness at Carrolup, Malcolm bonded with the children in the compound and her description of playing with them and telling stories each evening provided the children a very different experience to that of Ethel Fryer when the settlement was first being established.

The work of the AAM in Western Australia had declined with the closure of Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage and when Malcolm arrived at Carrolup in 1920, her only colleague in the state was Annie Lock at Sunday Island. Unlike Bertha Telfer and

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271 B. Blake to Chef Protector, 17 December 1919 "AN 24, Acc 752, File 304/1921, Carrolup River Native Settlement Missionary."
272 Deputy Chief Protector to Superintendent of Carrolup River Native Settlement, 24 January 1920, Ibid.
273 Lois Quadesmith, Personal Correspondence to A. Longworth. April 2004.
274 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, February 1920, 4.
275 Ibid, March 1920, 6.
276 Ibid.
277 Ibid, February 1920, 4.
Ethel Fryer who were often unnamed in reports written by William Radford or William Fryer, Malcolm and Lock wrote their own reports for publication in *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate* and were therefore more visible in the mission record.²⁷⁸ Both women were serving at isolated places far from Perth and their reports apparently were sent direct to Sydney for publication rather than through the committee in Western Australia. Malcolm began her first report from Carrolup by quoting lines from the Fanny Crosby hymn:

> All the way my Saviour leads me –
> What have I to ask beside?²⁷⁹

The young woman seemed the very model of a faith missionary at this stage. Malcolm displayed a very optimistic personality when she went on to explain that she had heard God’s call to leave New South Wales and, trusting God’s guidance, she was content in her new placement. In addition to her work with the children, Malcolm visited the people living outside the compound in their camps and described them as different from the people she had encountered in New South Wales who were already westernised. Like the people she had encountered on the trans-continental railway line, many of the Nyungar people at Carrolup spoke little English. It was still less than a century since European settlement had begun in Western Australia in 1829, and the Indigenous people at Carrolup retained more of their traditional culture and language than those in New South Wales.

Carrolup was substantially developed by June 1920, and Malcolm’s report that month created a very different picture to the earlier years of Carrolup when buildings were temporary and inadequate.²⁸⁰ Malcolm described the settlement, some twenty-two miles from the town of Katanning, as a village with a hall used for church and school,
dormitories, a hospital, dining room, bake house, sewing room, store, butcher’s shop and staff quarters. The buildings were made of locally quarried stone and bricks made on site. One of the former Dulhi Gunyah girls worked as the assistant teacher and Malcolm particularly noted the artistic talent of the children. Young women from the compound sewed clothing that was distributed to Aboriginal people throughout the state, and others made the bread. Malcolm also described the traditional bark and bag homes called mia-mias in the camp area and, although she did not elaborate, she referred to many Nyungar stories in which she recognised beliefs similar to Christianity.281 Her reports at this time did not question the practice of keeping the children in the compound and separated from their families, but Malcolm did portray a growing knowledge of Nyungar culture, the first of the female missionaries investigated in this research to do so.

The rail journey across the Nullarbor Plain, and her encounter with the Aboriginal people at the railway sidings there, appeared to bring about a remarkable change in Malcolm. From her recent western-centric superiority, she now displayed an appreciation of Nyungar culture and the need to learn the language in order to communicate effectively. Malcolm wrote to mission supporters “I have mastered a few words and how pleased they seem when I address them in their own language.” 282 In Chapter Two it was seen that identification with the local culture and language was one of the principles of the China Inland Mission, but Malcolm is the first of the AAM missionaries investigated in this research to have attempted to do that.283

An invitation to attend a corroboree showed that the traditional culture was still maintained at that time. It was also a sign that Malcolm was accepted by the Nyungar people in the Carrolup camp and when she responded to the challenge to learn one of

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281 Ibid.
283 See page 64.
the songs, it was clear that Malcolm was relating cross-culturally and not just imposing her faith and culture upon the Nyungar people. She attempted to write down their encouraging words, in a combination of Nyungar and Aboriginal English\textsuperscript{284} in her report in April 1920, explaining that Chooken was the Nyungar word for sister: “That’s good, Chook. Chooken learns him noonghi quick fellow alright”\textsuperscript{285}

Malcolm’s cross-cultural education continued as she learned to make fire by rubbing two sticks together and in May 1920, she again attempted to write Nyungar words in her report to the AAM when she wrote:

After rubbing desperately for some time, and seeing no result, I was tempted to give up in despair, but was encouraged by the onlookers shouting “Keep going, Chook, you get him soon; I see smoke coming.” Their faith was greater than mine. Finally, when my hands were almost too sore to give another turn, fire came. Much cheering followed, while King said, “That the first wedgelar yoak (white woman) I see make noonghi (native) fire yet.”\textsuperscript{286}

In spite of the advance Malcolm had made in cross-cultural learning she still betrayed her western bias when she expressed her opinion to AAM supporters that the Indigenous Christians in eastern Australia were only different from the Nyungar people because of the teaching and civilising they had received from Christian missionaries. She still equated western civilisation with Christianity and the goal of conversion to her version of Evangelicalism was still her motivation.\textsuperscript{287}

Malcolm commenced a Christian Endeavour society at Carrolup and she reported in May 1920 that fifty-four children were taking an active part in the meetings.\textsuperscript{288} The Christian Endeavour movement had been active in the Great Southern Region since 1900, when the Great Southern Railway Baptist Christian Endeavour

\textsuperscript{284} Eric G. Vaszolyi, Aboriginal Australians Speak. An Introduction to Australian Aboriginal Linguistics (Perth: Aboriginal Teacher Education Program. Mount Lawley College of Advanced Education, 1976), 46-50. Vaszolyi defined Aboriginal English as a dialect of Australian English, influenced by the speaker’s linguistic background and with diverse phonemic patterns and restricted grammar and vocabulary.

\textsuperscript{285} The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, April 1920, 4.

\textsuperscript{286} Ibid, May 1920, 4.

\textsuperscript{287} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{288} Ibid.
Union was formed and at least by 1906 Christians from other denominations were among the members. On his visit to Australia in 1904, the founder of the movement, Frances Clark, held CE meetings at Narrogin and Albany, both towns on the Great Southern Railway Line. Although the First World War resulted in a decline in Christian Endeavour, the movement revived at the conclusion of conflict. When Malcolm asked supporters to pray that the children would become “true” Endeavourers it was a sign that she continued to value the principles of that movement herself.

Malcolm wrote sparingly concerning her physical needs or of their provision. This may have been because rations had been provided for the AAM missionary at Carrolup since Annie Lock had served there. Although Malcolm received basic food rations in payment for her work at Carrolup, she continued to uphold faith principles, trusting God for the provision of resources for herself and her work. For example, in November 1920 the missionary received a parcel of books from supporters in Perth that included Bibles, Sankey’s hymnbooks and story books which she intended to use to create a library for the Christian Endeavour members. The opportunity to attend a CE meeting in the town of Katanning was welcomed by Malcolm. She revealed her sense of isolation when she disclosed that she missed attending the council meeting at Inverell in New South Wales and she expressed her longing that someone could help her lead the CE meetings at Carrolup.

The 1920 Annual Report of the AAM acknowledged that in Western Australia both Hope Malcolm and Annie Lock were continually pleading for additional workers in that state. Newly accredited AAM missionary Rod Schenk was appointed in March

290 Ibid, 3-4.
291 "AN 24, Acc 752, File 304/1921, Carrolup River Native Settlement Missionary." in Colonial Secretary’s Office, SROWA, f11.
293 The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, January 1921, 5.
294 Ibid, February 1921, 5.
1921, and he intended working in the Laverton region of the Western Australian goldfields.\textsuperscript{295} In his article on Schenk, published in 2000, historian Ian Duckham described him as the first AAM missionary doing evangelistic work in Western Australia.\textsuperscript{296} Duckham failed to recognise that the vision of early female AAM missionaries, including Annie Lock, Catherine Mantel, Bertha Telfer and Ethel Fryer at Dulhi Guyah Orphanage was the conversion of the children to Christianity. Moreover, he completely ignored the evangelistic work of these women whose evangelistic work among the Nyungar people was prior to the arrival of Schenk. Neither was Schenk the first male missionary of the AAM for that position had been taken by Ernest Telfer and his Wongutha assistant, Peter Wandy.\textsuperscript{297} The arrival of Schenk did extend the evangelistic work of the AAM into the goldfields region. The location of each missionary was far apart, precluding opportunities for mutual support. In the Great Southern Region at Carrolup, Malcolm was disappointed at not being able to attend the AAM annual conference in Sydney, although she reported in April 1921 that travelling to Perth for the Western Australian AAM council meeting had compensated to some extent.\textsuperscript{298}

The contact Malcolm had with the other staff at Carrolup was not always easy. Isolated from family and colleagues Malcolm looked forward to receiving her copy of \textit{The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate} each month and when an article detailed the provision of needs at the Bomaderry Children’s Home, she described how she had wanted to show it to all the secular workers at Carrolup. Malcolm wrote that she was “usually looked upon as ‘queer’ because she depended upon God to supply needs” and

\textsuperscript{295} Ibid, March 1921, 1 & April 1921, 2.
\textsuperscript{297} See pages 113-114.
\textsuperscript{298} \textit{The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate}, April 1921, 7.
she hoped that the article would convince the secular staff at Carrolup that the faith mission principle of trusting God to supply one’s needs was not so strange after all.299

Such personal concerns were soon overshadowed by a decision of the Western Australian Government. A report in the daily newspaper *The West Australian* on 10 June, 1922, stated that the Carrolup Native Settlement was to be closed and all the residents were to be moved to the Moore River Native Settlement.300 The reason for the closure was the considerable economic saving to be gained by operating only one settlement. It was some days after the press report before the AAM Council in Western Australia received a letter from the Colonial Secretary, F. T. Broun, dated 14 June 1922, informing them of the decision to close Carrolup.301 The AAM immediately organised a deputation to protest to the Colonial Secretary at the lack of consultation, but this had no effect except to delay the decision by one week, to allow representations by the AAM and Katanning residents.302 No consultation with the Nyungar people of Carrolup was undertaken by the government, an omission which Charles Hall loudly protested in his letter to *The West Australian* newspaper that was also published in *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*.303 The AAM recognised the inappropriateness and injustice of taking the already dispossessed people away from their traditional country, and predicted that rather than go to Moore River Nyungar people from the Great Southern region would drift back to Katanning and other southern towns.304 The decision was clearly traumatic for Malcolm who lamented “It seems like a horrible nightmare, and sometimes I wonder how I shall live through it all… My poor, poor people – torn apart from home and all their connections. Poor, dear, helpless souls.”305 This sentiment

299Ibid, August 1921, 2.
300 *The West Australian*, 10 June 1922, 8.
301 Colonial Secretary to AAM, 14 June 1922 "AN 24, Acc 752, File 304/1921, Carrolup River Native Settlement Missionary."
302 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, June 1922, 5.
303 Ibid.
304 Ibid, June 1922, 6.
305 Ibid.
pointed to Malcolm having a more empathetic level of identification with the Nyungar people than she had exhibited earlier towards the Kamilaroi people in New South Wales.

Malcolm and the Nyungar residents were powerless in the face of the government decision and by July, the move to Moore River was accomplished. Two days before the departure, the Katanning Baptist Minister, Reverend Heard, baptised thirty-five children in the pool in the Carrolup River. Malcolm reported to AAM supporters that the baptisms were conducted at the request of the children and it was a beautiful sight. Isobel Bropho was one of those baptised in the river at Carrolup before moving on to Moore River and her recollection was more down to earth. Bropho referred to the numerous leeches in the river and since the “priest” was up to his waist in the water during the baptisms, she supposed that he had tied the legs of his trousers to protect himself.

As Chief Protector of Aborigines Neville’s policy had been to remove Aboriginal people to settlements, but following the closure of Carrolup in 1922 many people drifted back to town camps and while the Aborigines Department and local roads boards debated whose responsibility it was to maintain the camps, minimal facilities were provided. Malcolm remained at Carrolup until the Salvation Army officers from Katanning provided hospitality and she developed her plan of an itinerant ministry to the Nyungar people living along the Great Southern Railway line. Malcolm appeared to receive little guidance from the AAM during this difficult transition, but she decided that the town of Gnowangerup, some fifty miles south of Katanning, would make a suitable base due to the significant number of Nyungar people who identified with that

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306 Ibid, July 1922, 1 & 7.
307 Bropho, Interview with R. Jamieson, 21.
308 Haebich, For Their Own Good, 229-242.
309 The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, August 1922, 2.
place as their country. Willie Pickett, a Nyungar man who grew up in Gnowangerup, stated in an interview with the writer in 2004, how the town was named after the ngawu, the Nyungar name for the mallee fowl, because the country around Gnowangerup was a favourite habitat of that bird. The destruction of their natural environment to make way for farming left the ngawu a threatened species. Malcolm understood that Nyungar people had also lost their land because of European settlement and she requested the Lands Department to allocate land for a reserve. The Gnowangerup Reserve 18078 was gazetted on 15 September 1922.

The plan to establish a mission on the reserve collapsed however, when in December 1922 Malcolm needed urgent surgery for appendicitis. Following surgery in Katanning Malcolm returned to the home of her mother in Melbourne, from where she apologised to mission supporters for her ill health and wrote of her disappointment at her “nervy condition.” Malcolm asked supporters to pray that she would be able to return to Western Australia within a month. Her experience as a faith missionary had been costly, for Malcolm was suffering emotionally as well as physically. The months stretched into years and still she was not able to resume her work.

In spite of the closure of Carrolup and illness of Malcolm, the AAM annual report presented in January 1923 showed growth in Western Australia. Following the retirement of Sydney Hadley the AAM had assumed responsibility for the mission at Sunday Island. Gladys and Jim Jago were the incumbent missionaries with Annie Lock on furlough after six years service and a Mr and Mrs Whitney soon to arrive. Rod and

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310 Ibid, November 1922, 2.
314 *Government Gazette of Western Australia*, 15 September, 1922, 1,872.
315 *The Australian Aborigines' Advocate*, December 1922, 7.
316 Ibid, March 1923, 5.
317 Ibid, August 1923 & July 1924, 1.
Mysie Schenk were at Mount Margaret assisted by Will Collier.\textsuperscript{318} With Malcolm convalescent in Victoria, the situation of the AAM in that state needs to be addressed to explain Malcolm’s continuing connection with the AAM through her long illness and eventual recovery.

The Victorian Council of the AAM had formed in 1921, following the visit of the mission president, Thomas Colebrook, when he had spoken of the AAM at the Upwey Convention.\textsuperscript{319} The first Upwey Convention was held in 1918 under the auspices of the Melbourne Gospel Crusade and Hervey Percival Smith was the leader of both for many years.\textsuperscript{320} Smith had been the Prayer Meeting Convenor in Melbourne for the Reuben Torrey and Charles Alexander evangelistic mission in 1902 and yet he regarded this crusade as the time when he was truly converted to Christianity.\textsuperscript{321} Torrey was a leading figure in the rise of fundamentalism.\textsuperscript{322} His influence on Smith contributed to the fundamentalist theology of the Melbourne Gospel Crusade and the Upwey Convention.

The Upwey Convention was in the tradition of the Keswick Conventions established many years earlier, in 1875, at Keswick in England.\textsuperscript{323} When Colebrook went to speak at the Upwey Convention he was following the example of Hudson Taylor who attended the Perth and Mildmay Conferences in Scotland and England in 1865 to appeal for support for the China Inland Mission.\textsuperscript{324} Colebrook would have appreciated the Bible readings each morning, given each year by the Reverend Clifford Nash, founding principal of the Melbourne Bible Institute (MBI).\textsuperscript{325} In his biography of Nash, Darrell Paproth described how the 1920 formation of the MBI emerged out of

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{318} Ibid, January 1923, 4.
\item \textsuperscript{319} Ibid, January 1921, 1.
\item \textsuperscript{320} \textit{The Keswick Quarterly}, February 1948, 20.
\item \textsuperscript{321} Ibid, February 1948, 19.
\item \textsuperscript{322} Marsden, \textit{Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism}, 40-41.
\item \textsuperscript{323} \textit{The Edifier}, (Melbourne: E. J. Daly), Friday, 23 December, 1938, 3.
\item \textsuperscript{324} Taylor, \textit{A Retrospect}, 55.
\item \textsuperscript{325} \textit{The Keswick Quarterly}, May 1926, 9-10.
\end{itemize}
Nash’s membership of the Melbourne branch of the China Inland Mission Council and was a sign of his commitment to interdenominational missions. Paproth described Nash as a Conservative Evangelical rather than a fundamentalist. Nash was an Anglican Evangelical educated at Cambridge, and Paproth discerned in Nash a pastoral approach and desire for unity that he argued was very different to aggressive fundamentalism, although he admitted the theology was very similar. In his history *Australian Christians in Conflict and Unity* Frank Engel did not differentiate between fundamentalist and conservative Evangelicals, but he interpreted the conservative position as the “traditional” view. He named Clifford Nash as one who opposed the use of modern translations of the Bible and strongly defended the traditional view of the Bible against new interpretations. Not surprisingly, Engel found that the MBI was one of several strong centres promoting the traditional point of view. In spite of Paproth’s reticence to apply the label of fundamentalist to Nash, Stuart Piggin certainly recognised that fundamentalism was a dominant force within Evangelicalism in the 1930s.

By April 1921, the AAM Victorian Council was established with Thomas Graham as president. Graham was a member of the Spring Street Mission Hall and his obituary published in *The United Aborigines’ Messenger* in 1939 portrayed him as a prominent figure in the Melbourne Gospel Crusade and the Upwey Convention. In May 1921, the AAM informed readers that copies of the monthly mission publication were available from a “Mrs Wills” of Normandy House, 62 Gatehouse Street, Parkville,

327 Ibid, 181.
328 Ibid, 184-185.
331 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, April 1921, 1.
332 *The United Aborigines’ Messenger*, March 1939, 6.
“Mrs Wills” was Malcolm’s mother who had married Arthur Edward Wills in 1912, and although she had been largely absent during Malcolm’s childhood, Amelia now supported her daughter and the AAM. In August 1923, Malcolm disclosed in a letter to the AAM that she was both “disgusted” and “discouraged” by her health problems, and she rarely left the house. Malcolm appeared to be suffering from a nervous condition. This impression was strengthened when AAM missionary Annie Lock visited Malcolm in 1924 during her furlough and reported that Malcolm was “not at all herself.”

While in Melbourne, Lock informed the Evangelical community of the work of the AAM. She met Victorian council members of the AAM, spoke of her work to the Melbourne Gospel Crusade, and addressed the students at the MBI. A George Stephen Bush wrote to The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate in March 1924 to report that he had first heard Lock speak of her work in the marquee of the Upwey Convention and it was through Lock that he knew of Hope Malcolm and her desire to return as a missionary to Western Australia. Perhaps it was Annie Lock who informed the students from the MBI of the convalescent young faith missionary from Western Australia who was in need of visitors. Lois Quadesmith told of a young MBI student from Tasmania, Hedley Wright, who came to visit one Sunday afternoon and was so attracted to Malcolm that he continued to visit week by week. On completion of his studies, Hedley Wright joined the AAM and by November 1925, he was at Mount Margaret in Western Australia serving among the Wongutha Western Desert people,

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333 The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, May 1921, 2.
334 State of Victoria Register of Births Deaths and Marriages, Marriage Index.
335 The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, August 1923, 5.
336 Ibid, March 1924, 5.
338 The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, March 1924, 6.
339 Quadesmith, Interview with Lois Quadesmith, Interviewed by Yvonne Choules, 6.
alongside AAM missionaries Rod and Mysie Schenk and Herbert and Hilda Reichenbach.340

Malcolm had finally regained her health and while Hedley served his probation in Western Australia, in March 1926 she was occupied with deputation work for the AAM throughout the state of Victoria.341 Her recovery seemed related to her burgeoning relationship with Hedley and when he joined the AAM, Malcolm resumed her own missionary career. According to Victorian marriage records, Hope Malcolm married Hedley Wright on 10 April 1926, with Nash in the role of officiating minister.342 The bride was thirty years of age and the groom twenty-eight and both stated their occupation as missionary. Unlike Ethel Hamer who was married in her missionary uniform, Hope was dressed as a bride. *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate* reported missionary talks and choruses replaced the usual wedding toasts, a sign of the commitment of the couple to their vocation.343 The wedding photograph shown on the following page, revealed a thin and fragile bride.344

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340 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, November 1925, 1 & December 1925, 4-5.
341 Ibid, March 1926, 2.
342 State of Victoria Register of Births Deaths and Marriages, Marriage Record.
343 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, May 1926, 6.
344 Photograph courtesy of Lois Quadesmith.
Wedding photograph of Hope Malcolm and Hedley Wright, 1926 (courtesy Lois Quadesmith)  

Malcolm had begun her missionary service at the age of twenty and although the experience had resulted in chronic health problems, she now entered a second stage as a married woman. After a short honeymoon, the couple were present at the annual public meeting of the AAM in Victoria held one week later.\(^{345}\)

A letter from Hope Wright written from Victoria was published in *The Keswick Quarterly* in May 1926. Wright revealed her continuing deep concern about the Nyungar people at Gnowangerup when she wrote

… oh the pathos of their condition – no spot which they could call home, hunted as animals from one place to another, despised by all, and their continued request was “Oh, “Chookien”, do start a Mission, find us a home. Do stay with us always. We need a friend.”\(^{346}\)

\(^{345}\) *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, June 1926, 2.

\(^{346}\) *The Keswick Quarterly*, May 1926, 38.
This report established that following the closure of Carrolup in 1922 some Nyungar people preferred the establishment of a mission in their home country to the alternative option of removal to the government-run Moore River Native Settlement to the north of Perth. Malcolm’s effort to learn the language and participate in camp activities would have contributed to the respect she received and was contrary to the suggestion by historian Peter Biskup that the typical attitude of AAM missionaries was the breakdown Aboriginal culture.347

Hope and Hedley had returned to Western Australia by July 1926. Hope wrote their first letter to the AAM which highlighted the experience of living by faith principles and listed the various gifts of money they received to cover the cost of the journey from Perth to Katanning.348 Wright informed Colebrook that the couple had been provided with a four-roomed cottage, rent-free and about one mile from the reserve. Hedley had made some furniture and was using bush timber to erect a building to use for school and worship.349 Wright omitted to say the reserve where they were building the school/worship centre was also close to the rubbish tip and sanitary depot. In her history of Gnowangerup, Merle Bignell acknowledged the smell was unpleasant and the site unattractive, but a positive outcome was the free supply of recyclable material from the tip.350 Neither wrote of the health hazard for both the Nyungar people and the missionaries.

The first report from Gnowangerup was published in *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate* and was attributed jointly to Hope and Hedley Wright. It gave the impression that the Nyungar people were genuinely pleased by the return of the missionary.351

Nyungar Elder, Alma Woods, was born in 1926 and lived at various times of her

348 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, July 1926, 5.
349 Ibid, August 1926, 5.
351 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, September 1926, 7.
childhood and adult life at the Gnowangerup Mission. Woods was critical of Hedley Wright when she recalled

> Brother Wright used to talk about christian ways and do things like white people did. They never wanted us to talk Noongar language or culture. He was a good man though, but just not interested in Noongar things. 352

Woods did not refer to Sister Wright even though she had attempted to learn the Nyungar language. Hedley was the more dominant of the two missionaries and his negative attitude towards Nyungar language and culture was remembered more than the cultural identification of Hope.

Lois Miriam Wright was born on 10 January 1927. 353 Hope and Hedley welcomed her birth and in February 1927 announced their happiness to the mission supporters. 354 That month they also welcomed Tom Street as a probationary missionary at Gnowangerup and reported that Street had commenced a school in February 1927 with fifteen children, because access to education at the state school was denied to Nyungar children. In this climate of racism and discrimination and with limited resources, the AAM struggled to provide basic education and, in August 1927, Street wrote of the need for a qualified teacher to teach the increasing numbers of children wanting to attend the mission school. 355 Sydney Coyne went to school in the Gnowangerup Mission School and he described it as a bush shed with sidewalls of tea tree bush and a tin roof, kerosene boxes for desks and the tins as seats. 356 Coyne suggested that little learning happened at the school, but the church and school kept the children out of trouble. When Coyne stated that he continued to visit the Wrights for the

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352 Morgan and Tjalarminu, Ngalak Ngarnk Nidja Boodja, Our Mother, This Land, 31.
353 Quadesmith, Interview with Lois Quadesmith, Interviewed by Yvonne Choules, 11.
354 The Australian Aborigines' Advocate, February 1927, 2.
355 Ibid, August 1927, 2.
rest of their lives because he recognised that they were good people, it was apparent that
the Wrights eventually earned respect and friendship within the Nyungar community.

As in other parts of the state, the Nyungar people of Gnowangerup experienced
racial discrimination in the provision of healthcare. In August 1927, the tent that was
used by the Gnowangerup Hospital for Aboriginal patients was donated by the hospital
committee to the AAM, for use as a hospital on the reserve. When Street reported the
donation to mission supporters as evidence that God was working in the district, it
appeared that although the missionaries were concerned about the education and health
of the residents of the reserve they did not lobby for equality. This was despite the
obvious disparities between the health care available to the two cultural groups.

While they worked within the racially segregated, small town community of
Gnowangerup, the Wrights were part of the larger scene of the Australian Aborigines’
Mission. In November 1927, the AAM listed forty missionaries nationally. Five were
listed as missionaries who were teaching and would therefore not be living according to
faith mission principles. The record was confusing in that three of these were also
included in the list of missionaries. The gender break up showed women remained in
the majority with fourteen single women, four single men and eleven married couples
while three single men were listed as probationary missionaries. The three native
helpers included two women and one man, with none of these in Western Australia.
Missionaries served in isolated places around the nation. Tom Street completed his
probation at Gnowangerup and he was inducted as a fully accredited missionary at a
service in the Lake St Church of Christ, Perth, in November 1927. Street was then
transferred to Meekatharra. In January 1928, veteran AAM missionary Annie Lock was
serving in central Australia, living in a tent at Harding Soak, while Will Wade and R.

357 The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, August 1927, 2.
358 Ibid, November 1927, 8.
359 Ibid, December 1927, 5.
M. Williams had returned from their five-month long exploratory trek through desert country in South Australia across to the border of Western Australia, assessing the need for a mission station in that region.\textsuperscript{360} R. M. Williams became legendary in Australia as a manufacturer of bush clothing such as riding boots, moleskins and oilskins, but from 1926 for the next three years, he travelled with Wade in Central Australia.\textsuperscript{361} Reg Williams and Will Wade were both inducted as AAM missionaries in March 1927 and Annie Lock was among the speakers.\textsuperscript{362}

Despite this modest growth in missionary numbers, theological controversy was about to overshadow the pioneering work of the mission. An address given by the Victorian Baptist minister J. S. Harrison and published in \textit{The Aborigines' Interceder}, informed readers that at an undisclosed date in 1927, Schenk and AAM missionary Dave Drysdale had reported to the Victorian committee that modernism was “rampant upon the now departed Perth Executive.”\textsuperscript{363} No names were mentioned in that report, but during that year the Methodist minister J. E. Stone, who had been the president of the Western Australian council, had resigned, and in November 1927, the Baptist minister, Carment Urquhart, temporarily filled the position, suggesting that Stone had resigned due to the controversy.\textsuperscript{364} Schenk and Drysdale urged the Victorian Council to support them.\textsuperscript{365} The Victorian Council were already dissatisfied that the AAM Constitution had not adapted itself to cope with the growth of the mission into other states. During 1927, the Victorian council had drawn up a new constitution, canvassed it with the South Australian and Western Australian councils, and proposed a national conference. Harrison wrote that the New South Wales committee resisted the idea of a

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{360} Ibid, January 1928, 2.
\bibitem{361} R. M. Williams, \textit{A Song in the Desert} (Sydney: Angas & Robertson, 1998).
\bibitem{362} \textit{The Australian Aborigines' Advocate}, March 1927, 5.
\bibitem{363} \textit{The Aborigines' Interceder}, (Melbourne: The Gospel Mission to the Australian Aborigines), May 1928, 4.
\bibitem{364} \textit{The Australian Aborigines' Advocate}, February 1927, 8 & November 1927, 8.
\bibitem{365} \textit{The Aborigines' Interceder}, May 1928, 4.
\end{thebibliography}
national conference, and suggested that it was because the new draft constitution retained the fundamental doctrine of the original constitution, as opposed to modernism, which denied the “full inspiration of the Gospel.”  

The efforts of the Victorians to reduce the authority of the New South Wales committee appeared to be related to the strong fundamentalist theology of the Victorian council and the fear that some council members in New South Wales did not adhere to fundamentalism.

The first item on the doctrinal statement read “The Inspiration and Authority of the Scriptures,” but Schenk clearly interpreted that to mean verbal inspiration. Margaret Morgan wrote of Schenk’s belief that there were people on the AAM council in New South Wales who did not adhere to the doctrines of the virgin birth, verbal inspiration of the scriptures, everlasting punishment and the resurrection of the body. Schenk expressed his definition of a modernist in a report from Mount Margaret published in full in *The Keswick Quarterly* in November 1927, when he stated that a modernist applied reason to understand the scriptures, whereas a fundamentalist like himself applied the words to the heart, for they were “the incorruptible Word of God.”

The doctrinal conflict was on the agenda of the annual conference in New South Wales in January 1928, where the principles and practices of the mission were discussed at length, and the decision taken that every missionary and councillor must confirm in writing their acceptance of the doctrinal statement. The doctrinal standard of the mission was republished.

1. The Inspiration and Authority of the Scriptures.
2. The Trinity.
3. The fall of man, his state by nature, and his need of regeneration.
4. The Atonement.
5. Justification by Faith.

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366 Ibid, May 1928, 4-5.
368 *The Keswick Quarterly*, November 1927, 49-50.
369 *The Australian Aborigines' Advocate*, January 1928, 5.
6 Resurrection of the body.
7. Eternal punishment. 370

These seven points were identical to the doctrinal standard of the earlier New South Wales Aborigines’ Mission and candidates had always been required to accept these doctrines.371 The new aspect introduced from 1928 was that council members were also required to accept the doctrinal statement.

The monthly publication of the AAM had always portrayed a very positive view of mission personnel and their work, but the theological conflict was so bitter that grievances went into print. Following the conference, President Thomas Colebrook and executive chairman Henry Bush wrote to the Victorian Council on 27 January 1928 and this was published in The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate.372 The letter revealed that the Victorian Committee had distributed a pamphlet during December 1927 proposing to establish themselves as “the true Australian Aborigines’ Mission.” Colebrook and Bush’s letter informed the Victorian committee that their action was illegal and expressed regret that they did not allow time for the doctrinal issue to be dealt with according to the amended constitution.373 This suggested that the Sydney Council were equally concerned about doctrinal matters, but seeking a less confrontational solution. However, in February 1928, the AAM referred to the pamphlet circulated by the Victorians and accused the Victorians of contemplating theft.374

The Victorian Council supported Schenk and on 18 February 1928, Secretary Mr S. V. Cain wrote to Harriet Baker confirming that the Victorians were severing their connection to the AAM and would continue as an independent mission.375 The new faith

372 The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, February 1928, 5.
373 Ibid.
374 Ibid, February 1928, 4.
375 Ibid, February 1928, 5.
mission was named the Gospel Mission to the Australian Aborigines (GMAA). The first edition of *The Aborigines’ Interceder* appeared in March 1928 and informed their supporters of the AAM allegation that the Victorians were acting illegally in trying to assume control. The doctrinal statement of the GMAA contained the same seven points as that of the AAM, but it asserted that it took a definite stand against “Modernism”.

What lay behind this division of the AAM in 1928 was a much wider controversy between fundamentalism and modernism in Evangelical revivalism. In the years leading up to the First World War western Christians were challenged by the advance in scientific knowledge and the development of higher criticism of the Bible. While liberal theologians adapted their beliefs to the modern age, fundamentalists held aggressively to traditional beliefs as was evident in the intensity of the conflict within the AAM.

The Victorian AAM council became the council of the GMAA. Four women and nine men formed the GMAA Council with no women on the executive and no missionaries given a place on the council. In contrast, the AAM Council in Sydney in January 1928 had fifteen male and nine female members on the council, plus all fully accredited missionaries. Since there were twenty-four female missionaries and fifteen males in November 1927, this meant that women were in the majority on the council although only Harriet Baker was on the executive. Initially, the GMAA did not know which missionaries would leave the AAM and join the new mission, but it never listed missionaries as members of the council. This suggested that the GMAA Council were

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376 *The Aborigines’ Interceder*, March 1928, 1.
377 Ibid, March 1928, 3.
378 Ibid, March 1928, 2.
380 *The Aborigines’ Interceder*, March 1928, 2.
381 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, January 1928, 3.
382 Ibid, November 1927, 8.
determined to be in control and that the rise of fundamentalism would not only cause conflict, but would diminish the leadership role of women. AAM missionaries from Mount Margaret in Western Australia, Hilda and Herbert Reichenbach, were on furlough in Victoria during the conflict and their response revealed how divisive the conflict would be among Evangelical Christians.

We thank God Victoria is united in Fundamentalism, and we, after prayer and definite guidance from the Word, join you in your Gospel Mission to the Aborigines. We could not work with anyone who wilfully held or shielded those who held Modernist views.  

The separatist element even reached Hope and Hedley Wright in Gnowangerup and became apparent in their correspondence to Clifford Nash. Hedley wrote on 16 April 1928, contrasting his student days at MBI with the present situation where “The devil is manifesting himself as an Angel of Light amongst the churches and white people, and as a roaring lion among the dark folk.” His descriptive language revealed the strong feelings the conflict generated. Hope completed the letter and referred to their confusion over the AAM conflict. She admitted fault on both sides, but stated they were waiting to hear of the decision of the Perth Council before making a decision about their allegiance.

The sudden death of the AAM federal president, Thomas Colebrook, was the reason for the late publication of that April/May edition of *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*. Colebrook had been involved with the New South Wales Aborigines’ Mission since 1895 and had been the president since 1902, when the decision was taken to adopt faith mission principles. In addition, he had been the editor of *The New

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383 *The Aborigines' Interceder*, April 1928, 12.
384 Hedley Wright to Clifford Nash, 26 April, 1928 "File 70 Hedley Wright," in *Melbourne Bible Institute Archives, Bible College of Victoria* (Melbourne).
385 Hope Wright to Clifford Nash, 26 April, 1928 Ibid.
386 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, April/May 1928, 2.
South Wales Aborigines’ Advocate since its inception in 1901. At the time of his death thirty years later, Colebrook was still the editor of The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate. The AAM was in such a state of crisis that the publication was not produced in June 1928, but it reappeared the following month with Henry Bush as the new editor and carrying the strong allegation that Colebrook’s death had been hastened by the conflict, but the AAM was determined to continue. Readers were reassured that any modernist influence in the New South Wales committee was greatly exaggerated by the Victorians, and only those members who had signed the doctrinal statement remained on the committee. There were no changes to the executive committee listed each month in the mission publication, apart from the vacant position of President, and so it was assumed that the alleged modernists were unlisted honorary members of the council. By August 1928, the depleted AAM listed twenty-six missionaries, including ten single women missionaries and eight married couples with four native helpers and one probationer. That month the GMAA named sixteen missionaries, three probationers and two voluntary helpers. Six missionaries and a voluntary helper were at Morgans (Mount Margaret), a married couple with a voluntary helper was at Sunday Island and another three missionaries were at Derby. Others were on furlough or preparing to begin their missionary service, except Reg Williams who was on a Gospel Camel Expedition in Central Australia. This clarified that the GMAA had a Victorian base, but its missionaries in the field were based in Western Australia where Rod Schenk was a strong advocate for fundamentalism.

387 Telfer, Amongst Australian Aborigines, 42.
388 The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, July 1928, 2.
390 Ibid, August 1928, 16.
391 The Aborigines’ Interceder, August 1928, 4.
The Western Australian Council decided to remain with the AAM, but there was a change to the executive. The Baptist layman, Frank Holland, became the new president and Presbyterian Rev George Tulloch and Baptist minister Edward Hogg were both on the council. These men were also associated with the Perth Bible Institute (PBI), which commenced on 2 July 1928. Tulloch and Holland were founding members on the PBI council and Carment Urquhart was the founding principal. Tulloch relinquished the PBI position when he became moderator of the Presbyterian Church in 1929, and Edward Hogg assumed the positions of PBI president and lecturer. The PBI revealed its premillennial theology when it stated its aim was to prepare its students for mission, in order to hasten the return of Christ. The fundamentalist theology of these men would be evident in August 1929, when Tulloch organised public meetings in St Andrews Presbyterian Church where Urquhart defended the Bible from Higher Criticism, Darwinism and Science. The fact that these men continued to support the AAM, rather than the GMAA, showed they were satisfied that the AAM was fundamentalist in theology and suggested that the conflict was not only theological, but was a bid for power from the dissenting faction. No report from the Western Australian Council was printed in the mission publication at that time and so it is not possible to determine if the missionaries were part of the decision-making process.

*The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate* of August 1928 clarified that in partnership with the Western Australian mission council, Hope and Hedley Wright and the new Gnowangerup worker Miss Pulley remained loyal to the AAM. Hedley wrote to Clifford Nash on 3 August 1928, and requested that a correction be made to the MBI

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392 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, April/May 1928, 8.
394 Ibid, 25.
395 Ibid, 53.
396 Ibid.
397 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, August 1928, 1.
newsletter listing the Wrights as belonging to the GMAA.\textsuperscript{398} Hedley spoke for both himself and Hope when he stated that they believed they should remain with the AAM, but the theological turmoil meant that the couple were now isolated from the Methodist Church at Gnowangerup with Hedley no longer invited to preach, due to the influence of modernism on that denomination. The AAM continued to state that it was undenominational, that its vision was the evangelisation of Aboriginal Australians and it did not solicit funds, assuring supporters that the controversy had not affected the faith mission principles.\textsuperscript{399} The theology did however narrow the support base of the Wrights in Gnowangerup and it compromised the interdenominational aspect of the faith mission.

The disunity was evident in October 1928, when Perth was the host city for the seventeenth Australasian Christian Endeavour Convention. Henry Bush attended the convention and as the new editor of the AAM mission publication, he came with the authority of the AAM to seek a peaceful resolution between the two conflicted faith missions, but he reported that the GMAA representatives at the convention refused to meet with him and there appeared to be a stalemate.\textsuperscript{400}

Baptist minister and pioneer missionary Ernest Telfer agreed to fill the role of president of the New South Wales council of the AAM in November 1928.\textsuperscript{401} Telfer called members of the AAM to let go of personal grudges and in a forgiving spirit seek unity with other Christians.\textsuperscript{402} His efforts to bring about reconciliation included a trip to Melbourne to meet with the GMAA council members.\textsuperscript{403} The Victorian-based Methodist lay preacher Charles Sandland had accepted the role of assistant secretary to

\textsuperscript{398} Hedley Wright to Clifford Nash, 3 August 1928 "File 70 Hedley Wright." in Bible College of Victoria Archives
\textsuperscript{399} The Australian Aborigines' Advocate, August 1928, 16.
\textsuperscript{400} Ibid, November 1928, 34.
\textsuperscript{401} Ibid, November 1928, 35.
\textsuperscript{402} Ibid, December 1928, 42.
\textsuperscript{403} Ibid, February 1929, 1.
the GMAA in May 1928 and he encouraged that council to unite with the AAM.404 Telfer’s diplomatic mission led to a gathering between the two faith missions in Melbourne during Easter 1929 when the conference delegates successfully negotiated an amalgamation of the two missions.405

The reunited mission was named the United Aborigines’ Mission (UAM) and the first edition of *The United Aborigines’ Messenger* was published, from Melbourne, in May 1929.406 The new federal council was based in Melbourne and the officers comprised the former GMAA council with Thomas Graham as President, plus Ernest Telfer from New South Wales in the position of vice-president.407 Of the twenty-four members on the federal council, representatives were from the four states of Victoria, New South Wales, Western Australia and South Australia, but only three were women.408 This gender imbalance between women and men was the same as the situation of the AAM in January 1929, since no women served on the Western Australian council and the only women on the executive were Harriet Baker in New South Wales and Violet Turner in South Australia.409 Nothing suggested that missionaries had a place on the UAM council and neither was there Aboriginal representation. The UAM described itself as interdenominational and assured supporters it would not solicit funds, but would rely on freewill offerings. This established that the UAM would operate as a faith mission in the same way as its predecessors. The fact that Hedley Wright was no longer preaching at the Methodist Church in Gnowangerup suggested that from this time the interdenominational aspect of the faith mission only applied to fundamentalist churches. The following statement was published outlining the theological basis.

405 The United Aborigines’ Messenger, May 1929, 3.
406 Ibid, 2.
407 Ibid.
408 Ibid, May 1929, 16.
409 The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, January 1929, 56.
In a day of widespread apostasy, we maintain a definite testimony against Modernism and require Missionaries and councillors to subscribe heart allegiance to the Doctrines of:

1. The Inspiration and Authority of the Scriptures.
2. The Trinity.
3. The Deity and Incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ.
4. The fall of man, his consequent moral depravity,
   and his need of Regeneration
5. The Atonement
6. Justification by faith
7. Resurrection of the Body
8. The Eternal Life of the Saved and Eternal Punishment of the Lost
9. The Second Advent of our Lord Jesus Christ.410

Like the earlier AAM doctrinal standard, the UAM statement gave primary place to the inspiration and authority of Scripture. The statement did not explicitly include the literal inspiration and veracity of the Bible, however it has already been established that Schenk and Harrison certainly understood it in that way.411 The UAM doctrine included all the AAM points, but gave added emphasis on the Deity and Incarnation of Jesus Christ and the Second Coming of Christ, probably because modernists questioned a literal understanding of the virgin birth and the resurrection. Where the earlier statement spoke of eternal punishment, the UAM included eternal life for the saved. The doctrinal statement reflected the premillennial emphasis on the imminent Second Coming of Christ. The subsequent urgency for missionary activity was stated in the vision that “the 70,000 Aborigines … shall be quickly brought the Gospel of Salvation through the Precious Blood of our Eternal and Adorable Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ”.412

The formation of the UAM coincided with the centenary of the foundation of the Swan River Colony in 1929. In his 1972 publication A Fine Country to Starve In historian Geoffrey Bolton described Perth in 1929 as a prosperous and yet small and isolated city with a strong sense of community, a rising unemployment rate and with a

410 The United Aborigines’ Messenger, May 1929, 2.
411 See page 240.
412 The United Aborigines’ Messenger, May 1929, 2.
population who knew little about the Indigenous people. Western Australia was not isolated from worldwide economic trends however, and when the stock market collapsed in New York in October 1929, the economic depression accelerated. Bolton stated that Western Australia was not divided by class hostility in this period and that the closeness to the pioneering era contributed to a resourcefulness that enabled people to cope with the hardship of depression. In his 1994 edition, Bolton did acknowledge that the apparent absence of class antagonism was not the case for everyone, particularly recently arrived immigrants, although he maintained that it was the perception of the majority. His neglect of the status of Indigenous Australians through the Depression of the 1930s maintained the silence referred to by the anthropologist W. E. H. Stanner in the Boyer Lectures of 1968 in which Stanner attacked historians for their neglect of Aboriginal history. Twenty years later Anna Haebich reflected the changing emphasis when she documented the experience of Aboriginal people in the south-west of the state during the years 1900 to 1940. Haebich established that the Nyungar people faced greatly reduced employment opportunities during the 1930s Depression and were reliant on government rations, which were less than those received by the European population. Hope and Hedley Wright continued to serve as faith missionaries with the Nyungar people in Gnowangerup through those difficult years of the depression.

In 1930, an unnamed visitor taught for a short time at the Gnowangerup mission school and her very detailed letter was published in The United Aborigines’ Messenger in December 1930. The visitor was probably Mary Bennett, for an article in The Dawn, the monthly publication of the Women’s Service Guilds of Western Australia, in

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414 Ibid, 268.
416 Haebich, *For Their Own Good*, 286-292.
417 *The United Aborigines’ Messenger*, December 1930, 9-11.
December 1930, confirmed that for some weeks Bennett had taught the Nyungar children at Gnowangerup to spin and weave, before moving to Forrest River Mission. Feminist historian Marilyn Lake suggested that feminism flourished in Australia between the wars and she cited Mary Bennett as a feminist because she wrote of the plight of Indigenous women and hoped to teach them to be self-supporting. Since Bennett was with the Wrights at Gnowangerup during 1930, and from 1932 taught for ten years at the UAM Mount Margaret Mission, it seemed likely that her concern for Indigenous women arose from her Christian commitment as much as from a feminist ideology, but that connection was not made by Lake.

Bennett claimed that the school begun by the Wrights was the only school for Indigenous children in the south-west of the state. She was unaware of the mission school commenced that year by UAM missionary Mary Belshaw, and her voluntary assistant May McRidge, at Badjaling, in the southern wheat-belt. Both schools were founded with minimal resources by untrained UAM missionaries in response to the Western Australian government neglect of the education of Nyungar children, apart from those children residing at the Moore River Native Settlement.

Bennett described the appalling conditions in Gnowangerup where the town rubbish was deposited on the catchment area of the dam that provided water for the people camped on the reserve. She went on to explain how an investigation into complaints by white settlers had revealed that the stench in the area was not from the reserve, but the town rubbish tip and nearby sanitary depot. Hedley Wright had constructed a school from salvaged material and Hope Wright and the Nyungar women sewed sheets and pillowcases for the tent “hospital” that had been used for surgery and maternity cases, with Hope and the Nyungar women acting as midwives. Included in

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418 The Dawn, (Perth: Women’s Service Guilds of Western Australia), Wednesday, 17 December 1930.
419 Lake, Getting Equal: The History of Australian Feminism, 9, 14, 91.
420 The United Aborigines’ Messenger, December 1930, 9.
Bennett’s report was information that Hedley Wright had been appointed as a local protector of Aborigines and distributed rations to people who were sick or destitute, but he always encouraged people to be independent. Bennett concluded the lengthy report expressing the hope that a more suitable location could be found where the Nyungar people could be self-sufficient.422

A letter from Hope Wright and published that December, underlined the terrible consequences of the economic depression, the unsanitary location and the stress endured by the missionary at that time.423 One hundred and twenty people were camped at Gnowangerup through the previous winter, and Wright described hungry or sick people who were constantly at her door seeking assistance. The death from diphtheria of one of the children meant everyone who had been in contact with the deceased was quarantined, including the voluntary school assistant, Miss Pulley, who was confined to the classroom. Four-year-old Lois contracted the disease and was admitted to the Gnowangerup hospital and placed in isolation. In September 1931, Hope Wright gave birth to a son, Alwin Hedley Malcolm Wright, who was born with clubfeet.424 Through this difficult year, Wright continued to write the reports from Gnowangerup with no sign of her earlier chronic nervous illness. She had returned to the strength of her younger years and continued her missionary work alongside her family responsibilities.

In 1933, Mary Bennett wrote a paper entitled *The Aboriginal Mother in Western Australia in 1933* and this was read at the British Commonwealth League Conference in London.425 The publicity generated by Bennett about the conditions of Western Australian Aboriginal people contributed to what Chief Protector of Aborigines, A. O.

422 The United Aborigines’ Messenger, December 1930. 10.
423 Ibid, December 1930, 11.
424 Quadesmith, Interview with Lois Quadesmith, Interviewed by Yvonne Choules, 12.
425 M. M. Bennett, *The Aboriginal Mother in Western Australia in 1933* (Sydney: K.A. Wood, Printer, 1933).
Neville referred to as “the shadow of a royal commission” hanging over his head.  

Henry Moseley was appointed as the Royal Commissioner and in the section of his report focused on Gnowangerup, he agreed with the Wrights, the Chairman of the Road Board and the local doctor that the present site was unsuitable and he recommended the UAM be encouraged in their desire to purchase a new site at Gnowangerup.

On behalf of the UAM, Hedley purchased land in 1935, one hundred and ninety acres two miles from the town of Gnowangerup. The land had a boundary fence and it was proposed that each family would be allocated a portion for their house and garden. By September 1935 a mission store, garage and living quarters for a single missionary were completed and work had started on the mission house. The school and hospital were to be dismantled and re-erected on the new site. The official opening was held on 30 October 1935. Hope Wright shared her belief that this day was the fulfilment of the promise she had made to find a home for the Nyungar people when Carrolup was closed in 1922. The following year it emerged that the property had been financed with a deposit and regular instalments and these were being processed through gifts to the Wrights for that purpose. The faith mission principle of not going into debt was disregarded in order to secure the new property.

Wright continued her involvement with Christian Endeavour, and the *West Australian Golden Link* announced in 1937 that Hope and Hedley Wright were among the oldest of fifteen Western Australian CE members working as missionaries among the Aboriginal people. The Half-Yearly Rally of the Great Southern CE Union was held in Gnowangerup in March that year. The Presbyterian minister, James Thrum, led

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426 *The United Aborigines’ Messenger*, November 1933, 3.
430 Ibid, June 1936, 4.
431 *West Australian Golden Link*, March 1937, 10.
the first meeting, which was addressed by the assistant pastor from Mount Hawthorn Baptist Church, James Wilson Brown.432 The following day Trevor Diggins,433 Presbyterian home missionary at Broomhill, led the open-air service while Hedley Wright addressed the afternoon meeting.434 All the speakers and leaders were male, even though the Christian Endeavour movement expected all members to participate in every meeting. Hope Wright, who had begun the CE in Gnowangerup, was given no speaking role in this gathering. Although Wright worked alongside her husband at the Gnowangerup Mission, and was the leader of the Gnowangerup CE group, gender continued to limit leadership opportunities for women.

Reports from Gnowangerup were irregular in The United Aborigines’ Messenger and family pressures may have contributed to this. The year 1938 was a trying year for Wright and her son Alwin, who spent eight months of that year with his legs in plaster.435 The school year ended on a high note however, when two students from the mission school, Maisie Loo and Bertie Coyne, won first prizes in the national John Batman Weire essay competition and the silver cups were presented at a ceremony attended by members of the Gnowangerup Road Board, the local government authority for the district.436 Bertie was thirteen and in standard four at the mission school. His winning essay was entitled “King George VI”, while ten-year-old Maisy wrote on “Queen Elizabeth and the Princesses” and both essays were published by the Aborigines Uplift Society in their publication Uplift.437 Even in the isolation of the Gnowangerup AAM mission, the Nyungar children had been taught about the wider world, however it seemed incongruous that Indigenous children refused entry to state schools should be
taught loyalty to the throne and the British Empire. The following photograph portrayed Bertie Coyne holding his prize.\footnote{Photograph from the Coyne family collection courtesy Harley Coyne and Glenda Williams.}

![Bertie Coyne holding his John Batman Weire Essay Competition silver cup \textit{(courtesy Coyne Family and Glenda Williams)}](image-url)

This mission schooling that combined western culture and Christianity was discontinued in September 1939 when the teacher, a Miss Rushton, returned to Victoria after two and a half years, to care for her aged mother.\footnote{The \textit{United Aborigines' Messenger}, September 1939, 9.} With no replacement forthcoming, by April 1940 Hope Wright assumed the role.\footnote{Ibid, May 1940, 11.}

A critical perspective of the Gnowangerup Mission was presented in the report of Acting Commissioner of Native Affairs, F. Bray, following an official visit with A.A. M. Coverley, Minister of Native Affairs and A. Watts, Member of the Legislative Assembly, in September 1940. Although mission buildings had been constructed, the report was unfavourable because little had been done to provide better camps for the
Nyungar people. The store operated by Hedley Wright was alleged to benefit the mission rather than the people they were there to serve. The presence of “light-coloured children” was noted and the intention was to remove them to the re-opened settlement at Carrolup. Any Nyungar people who did not support themselves were also to be sent to Carrolup. The visitors later met with the Road Board where they discerned that the farmers were supportive of the mission, but the town business people were hostile, believing that Hedley was taking business from them because he controlled the rations, which were spent at the mission store rather than in town. The report expressed concern about the conflicted personalities. The decision was taken to appoint the police constable as the senior local protector, with Hedley continuing to administer rations and welfare. Hope Wright was not named in the report; although she was a fully accredited missionary, her husband was recognised as the missionary in charge. The report identified that the Nyungar people continued to live with the possibility of the removal of their children. No dormitories existed at Gnowangerup during the Wright’s era and Averil Dean, who was born in the Gnowangerup Mission Hospital in 1939, acknowledged the efforts of Hedley Wright to keep the Nyungar children with their families, even when government policy was to remove the lighter coloured children. Dean failed to acknowledge the role Hope Wright played in keeping families together.

Hope Wright continued her evangelistic work at Gnowangerup, particularly among the Nyungar women and children. She led a women’s group known as Daniel’s Band and six members of that group were baptised on Easter Day 1942. In June 1943, Wright was once again teaching at the mission school. She recalled people had

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441 "AN 1/25, Acc 1733, File 869/40,” in *Department of Native Welfare, SROWA*, f34.
442 Ibid, f35.
443 Ibid, 37.
444 Morgan and Tjalaminu, *Ngulak Ngarnk Nidja Boodja, Our Mother, This Land*, 34.
predicted she would not last as a missionary, but she remained totally committed to her role and after twenty-seven years of service she wrote:

“The Education Department say our school is too large for one teacher; two are required. There is no one available, so the old horse must pull a little heavier in the collar, and add to an already full programme.”

The load became too heavy for Wright however and another breakdown in health in 1944 meant the missionary was absent in Perth for five weeks for an operation and convalescence, and when she returned to Gnowangerup she was not able to work as she had previously.

UAM missionaries Tom and Beryl Street returned to Gnowangerup during 1946 and they reported in September 1947 that few Nyungar adults were attending the mission church except for special occasions. They inferred that although missionaries had been in Gnowangerup for twenty years, there was little sign of conversion to Christianity. The report included news that the closure of small schools in the district meant Street’s own children were being taken by bus to school in Gnowangerup. The mission school continued to provide for the Nyungar children with the assistance of UAM missionary Melvina Langley, even though she had left school at the age of fifteen and had no teaching qualification. Here was a further example of inequality in the education of children in Western Australia. The non-Indigenous children of missionaries attended the state school while the Nyungar children on the mission were denied the same opportunity.

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446 Ibid, June 1943, 10.
447 Ibid, April 1944, 6.
448 Ibid, September 1947, 12.
449 Rowley, Interview by A. Longworth, 4. Langley was known as Melvina Rowley following her marriage in 1956.
The Christian Endeavour movement was still part of the life of Hope Wright. In May 1948, the monthly CE publication in Western Australia informed its members of Hope Wright’s illness and the work at Gnowangerup.\textsuperscript{450} Her membership over so many years was evidence of her commitment to that Evangelical movement and the support provided by CE members to the missionary.

By September 1948, fifty-five years of combined service by Hope and Hedley Wright was acknowledged by the UAM. Hope had been unwell for more than a year and the Western Australian Council of the UAM had decided the Wrights should take twelve months furlough before finding another place of service.\textsuperscript{451} Quadesmith gave a different perspective when she suggested that her father was asked to resign by the UAM when a conflict emerged over tobacco.\textsuperscript{452} She recalled that as the distributor of government rations, Hedley was expected to issue tobacco, but this was contrary to UAM policy and Hedley found himself caught in the middle.\textsuperscript{453} Melvina Langley wrote the report from Gnowangerup in September 1948, but avoided writing about any conflict.\textsuperscript{454}

A possible further cause of contention emerged when a change of policy at Gnowangerup was announced in December 1948. Eight children were already in the care of the mission and supporters were asked to pray for a suitable home as a matter of urgency.\textsuperscript{455} Tom Street had assumed the role of missionary in charge at Gnowangerup and by February 1949, he was engaged in a building programme to provide accommodation for extra children. He intended building up the Nyungar church and using Gnowangerup as an evangelistic centre.\textsuperscript{456} His report implied that he thought

\textsuperscript{450} West Australian Golden Link, April 1948, 12.
\textsuperscript{451} The United Aborigines’ Messenger, September 1948, 8.
\textsuperscript{452} Quadesmith, Interview with Lois Quadesmith, Interviewed by Yvonne Choules, 29.
\textsuperscript{453} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{454} The United Aborigines’ Messenger, September 1948, 9.
\textsuperscript{455} Ibid, December 1948, 5.
\textsuperscript{456} Ibid, February 1949, 12.
these aspects had been neglected in previous years. Considering Hope and Hedley’s opposition to the removal of children from their families, it seemed likely that this new policy to take children into mission accommodation was connected to the resignation of the couple.

In spite of their resignation, Hope and Hedley did not leave Gnowangerup. The home of the ngawu/mallee fowl had become their home too. They moved from the mission property into the town and from August 1948 until January 1956, Hedley was the pastor at the Baptist Church.\(^{457}\) The couple never lost their contact with the Nyungar people, but the transition time was not easy. When Hedley continued to exercise control over a number of supervised child endowment cases this was seen to be undermining the authority of the new UAM superintendent.\(^{458}\) In September 1948 the Commissioner of Native Affairs, S. G. Middleton asked Hedley to return all the child endowment order books.\(^{459}\)

When Sister and Brother Wright left the UAM in 1948, Hope was fifty-two and suffering poor health. Hedley retired from the Baptist Church in 1956, but the couple remained in Gnowangerup. Willie Pickett remembered visiting the Wright’s home as a child in the 1960s.\(^{460}\) He recalled Brother Wright conducted an opportunity shop from his garage, where the Nyungar people would buy and sell all sorts of items. Again, Sister Wright seemed invisible and the Nyungar people were doing business with Hedley. The friendship with the Nyungar people remained strong, but Quadesmith concluded “There was so much antagonism, not only from the varying authorities that they had to do with, but also with the local people, that I think it made them very

\(^{457}\) Richard K Moore, ‘All Western Australia is my parish’: A Centenary History of the Baptist Denomination in Western Australia, 1895-1995 (Perth, WA: Baptist Historical Society of Western Australia, 1996), 306.
\(^{458}\) “AN 1/7, Acc 993 File: 720/41, Child Endowment Scheme Gnowangerup Mission,” in Department of Native Affairs, SROWA, f6.
\(^{459}\) S.G. Middleton to Hedley Wright, 29 September 1948 Ibid.
\(^{460}\) Pickett, Interview by A. Longworth, 2.
Her words revealed that as missionaries among the Nyungar people, Hope and Hedley Wright were on the margin of the Gnowangerup community. Emotionally this was a costly experience. The couple may have been disillusioned in their later years about their experience, but that did not apply to their marriage. In July 1973, Hope Wright wrote to her daughter, declaring that after forty-seven years of marriage she still believed she had made the right choice in her marriage partner.462

Hope Wright died from heart disease on 15 March 1975, at the age of seventy-eight years and she was buried in the Baptist portion of the Gnowangerup Cemetery.463 The Baptist Union of Western Australia acknowledged she had served her Lord and the Aboriginal people of Gnowangerup and districts for many years.464 Hedley remained in Gnowangerup until he died on 16 February 1984. Following his death the UAM acknowledged the years of service given by Hope and Hedley Wright in Gnowangerup and that “they were well known to generations of Aboriginals as well as white people in the district.”465 That guarded tribute was not surprising given the earlier conflict between the missionary couple and the faith mission.

This case study of Hope Malcolm began with a young woman from a rural background who joined the AAM in 1916 at the age of twenty. In July 1919, when Malcolm reflected on whether the lifestyle of a faith missionary was worthwhile, she found it to be so when people responded to the Christian message.466 As a young single woman Malcolm was a model faith missionary who recognised the importance of learning the culture and language of the people she came to convert to Christianity. The Christian Endeavour movement was significant throughout her missionary career although at Gnowangerup, Hope Wright’s involvement was in a CE group at the Baptist

461 Quadesmith, Interview with Lois Quadesmith, Interviewed by Yvonne Choules, 42.
462 Hope Wright. Personal correspondence to Lois Quadesmith, 2 July 1973
463 Western Australian Registrar of Births Deaths and Marriages: Death Records.
464 Contact, (Perth: Baptist Union of WA), April 1975, 3.
466 See page 218.
Church, rather than at the mission. The fact that Hedley did not share her recognition of the value of culture and language was a likely hindrance to the growth of an Indigenous church. After marriage, Wright maintained her professional identity as a missionary while fulfilling family responsibilities. It seemed likely that her opposition to the separation of Indigenous children from their parents grew out of her own experience as a child separated from her mother. During an era of oppressive government policies affecting Nyungar people, Hope Wright combined her fundamentalist theology with her yearning to secure a place where Nyungar people could live together on their own land, with their children. Her missionary service brought ill health and very few material comforts. She experienced antagonism from government officials, the non-Indigenous residents of Gnowangerup and the UAM itself because of her identification with the Nyungar people. Yet it was Hedley, not Hope, who was remembered by the Nyungar people. While UAM critics saw minimal evidence of the conversion of the Nyungar people in Gnowangerup prior to 1948, the fact that Sister and Brother Wright recognized the importance of place and family earned respect from the Nyungar people, and perhaps that made it worthwhile.
Chapter Seven    Mary Jones becomes a warrior for God.

Mary Jones was twenty-four in 1929, the year she travelled with her father, stepmother and siblings from Victoria, to live in Kalgoorlie, Western Australia. Her arrival coincided with the eve of the Great Depression, the Western Australia centennial of the settlement of the Swan River Colony and the formation of the United Aborigines’ Missions (UAM). The following year Jones joined the UAM. This case study will begin with an investigation of the early life and formation of Jones. Jones served as a faith missionary with the UAM from 1930 until 1943. She then entered a transition period from which she emerged in April 1945 as an independent faith missionary with the Nyungar people, first at Northam and from 1949 at Brookton. Jones remained at Brookton until her retirement in 1971, when she handed over her mission to the World Presbyterian Mission. Subsequent to a study of Jones’ formation, the chapter will investigate the three periods of her missionary service, following a thematic rather than a chronological approach, looking at Evangelicalism, cultural revision and the role of women.

Mary Leitch Graham Jones (1905 - 1977) was born in Lanarkshire, Scotland, on 12 April 1905, the first child of Albert Edward Jones and Janet Torrance Brewster.1 Jones was born into a devout Presbyterian family and her earliest memory was in Scotland, when visits to her grandparents always included family worship around the meal table.2 The family increased when Emily was born in 1907, and John in 1909, before Albert migrated to Australia, and when he had built a home in Box Hill, Victoria, the family followed in 1910.3 After the family were reunited in Australia, another two children were born, Albert Brewster in 1912, and Janet Torrance Brewster in 1916.

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3 Living Water, (Bassendean, Western Australia: Evangelical Presbyterian Mission Inc.), September 1971, 1. & Johnston., 23 May 2003
Tragedy struck the family, when on 30 June 1916, Janet Jones died from pneumonia, leaving a grieving husband and five children ranging in age from eleven-year-old Mary to six-month-old Janet.\(^4\) In her testimony written for the World Presbyterian Mission newsletter in 1967, when Jones was preparing to retire and hand over her work to that organisation, it was apparent that her parents played a significant role in Jones’ faith development.

My father was a Presbyterian minister and sound Evangelical. Under God, I owe everything to him and the influence of my godly mother, who passed away when I was eleven years old. I do not know the hour or day that I came to know the Lord, I only know that I do. My father led me into real assurance… At about the age of twelve years of age, the Lord called me into missionary service and I never at any time doubted this. So I believe, not only in child conversion but in children being called at an early age.\(^5\)

Although Jones could not provide an actual date for her conversion to Christianity, she regarded the occasion when her father led her to an assurance of her faith as confirmation of the reality of her conversion. This emphasis on her conversion experience confirmed Jones as an Evangelical, as personal conversion was a defining characteristic, according to Bebbington’s definition.\(^6\) Jones went on to explain that her mother had wanted to be a missionary in China. Since Jones’ sense of call to become a missionary followed within a year of her mother’s death, a desire to fulfil her mother’s vision appeared to be a factor.

Within six months of her mother’s death, on 16 January 1917, Albert remarried and Jones acquired a stepmother, May Boase, a thirty-six-year-old domestic worker.\(^7\) Jones did not refer to her stepmother in her writing, suggesting that her birth mother and father remained the primary influences in her emotional and spiritual development. Following her primary school education at Box Hill, Jones attended the Essendon High

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\(^4\) State of Victoria Register of Births Deaths and Marriages, Death Records.
\(^5\) Jones, *Mary Graham Jones: Testimony* ([cited]).
\(^6\) Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 3.
\(^7\) State of Victoria Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages, Marriage Certificate.
School and then trained for secretarial work at Stotts College in Melbourne. Mary Jones was seventeen years of age in 1922, when Albert Jones became a Home Missionary with the Presbyterian Church of Australia. By 1923, Albert was serving in Stanley, Tasmania, where he remained until 1928, when he was appointed to Collingwood in Victoria. In April 1929, Jones still did not appear to have taken steps to become a missionary in China, for she travelled with the family across the continent by train to Western Australia, where Albert was ordained and inducted into the Presbyterian Church in Kalgoorlie on 21 November 1929.

That journey on the transcontinental railway was significant for Jones, as it had been for Hope Malcolm. It provided Jones’ first sight of Aboriginal Australians and was a point of revelation for the young woman who wrote:

As the train stopped at one place in the centre of Australia we met the Australian natives for the first time and my heart went out to them as I tried to talk with them. They only knew a few English words and I nothing at all of their language so we did not get very far, but a longing to reach them for Christ was born that day. In Kalgoorlie we met more native folk and I realised there was no need to cross the seas, there was a Mission field right at one’s door.

Although this journey was to accompany her father to his new parish, it enabled self-discovery when Jones recognised her potential avenue of missionary service among the Indigenous people of Australia.

Kalgoorlie was the centre of the Western Australian goldfields and gateway to further goldfields to the north and east. Jones assumed the role of leader of the Christian Endeavour (CE) group in the Presbyterian Church in Kalgoorlie. Her leadership there

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8 Mary Graham Jones, Mary Graham Jones (Presbyterian Church in America Historical Centre, [cited 1 March 2003); available from http://www.pcanet.org/history/biography/jonesmg.html.
9 The Year Book of the Presbyterian Church in Australia, (1922), 109, Archives, Presbyterian Church of Victoria, Melbourne.
11 “Rev Albert Jones J/K Presbyterian Church Persons File.”
12 See pages 220-221.
13 Jones, Mary Graham Jones: Testimony ([cited).
was recognised by the Missionary Department of the Christian Endeavour Union of Western Australia when it stated in a 1931 report, “I am sure we feel that Miss Jones very much belongs to us”. Like the previous case studies, Jones’ involvement in that movement was part of her missionary formation.

From Kalgoorlie, Jones learned that the UAM Mount Margaret Mission, near the mining town of Morgans, was only about two hundred miles further north, and she arranged to visit the centre located in the traditional land of the Wongutha people. Various spellings are used for this group of people, for example, *The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia* used “Wangkathaa.” This research will adopt the form of Wongutha, as used by May O’Brien, a Wongutha Elder from the Mount Margaret Mission.

Biographical information published on the website of the Presbyterian Church of America Historical Centre stated that Jones was educated at the Perth Bible Institute. The Perth Bible Institute (PBI) began in July 1928 with evening classes and correspondence courses, but the first fulltime student intake did not commence until February 1931. When Mary Jones came to Western Australia in 1929, she did not live in Perth, and so it seemed unlikely that she would have attended lectures. In addition, in 1946 the PBI Students Magazine did not include Jones among its list of ex-students who were working among Aboriginal Australians. If she enrolled in correspondence lessons during 1929, no records have been located to confirm that possibility. Mary Jones was accepted as a missionary on probation by the UAM in 1930 and she began

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14 *West Australian Golden Link*, January 1931 5.
15 Horton and Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies., *The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander History, Society and Culture*, 1148.
18 *Spice, Carment Urquhart and His Vision: The Perth Bible Institute*, 21, 39.
her missionary service at Mount Margaret. This was one year before the first fulltime student intake at the PBI.

In September 1971 *Living Water*, a newsletter of the Evangelical Presbyterian Mission, referred to Jones’ “chronic poor health” which as a young woman held her back from overseas missionary service. This seemed unlikely for no reference was made to early health problems in the UAM sources. The following undated photograph of Mary Jones was found in a photograph scrapbook held in the UAM Archives.

Mary Jones c1930 (courtesy UAM Archives)

Jones was not wearing the mission uniform, which had contributed to the professional status of women missionaries in the earlier Australia Aborigines’ Mission. It was not until the 1932 federal conference of the UAM that it was decided the uniform of female missionaries would be a belted coat, the colour to be decided by each state council, and

20 *The United Aborigines’ Messenger*, May 1930, 10-11.
a navy hat, with the mission badge worn on the lapel of the coat.\textsuperscript{23} The mission badge would be a smaller version of the Australian Aborigines’ Mission (AAM) badge, that is, a boomerang with the letters UAM included within it. No photograph of Jones wearing that uniform has been located and this suggested that in Western Australia it was not adopted, perhaps due to the economic depression of the 1930s. Another factor may have been the diminished role of women in the UAM as compared to the AAM.\textsuperscript{24} From 1930, the UAM federal leadership was based in Melbourne and part of a larger group of Evangelical businessmen influenced by Clifford Nash, principal of the Melbourne Bible Institute. Evangelical historian Stuart Piggin described this group as a “male club”.\textsuperscript{25} With this strong male power base, the leadership opportunities for women at federal council level were minimal. While women continued to serve in the field, their professional status was not promoted. Mary Jones joined the UAM in that era of dominant male leadership and she may not have known the earlier history of the role women played in the formation of the work at La Perouse.

The recent history of bitter doctrinal division over fundamentalism and modernism in 1928, and then reunion in 1929, meant that when Mary Jones began her service as a faith missionary in 1930, adherence to the fundamentalist theology was considered essential.\textsuperscript{26} This was evident in 1930, when the UAM published an article on the qualifications required of a missionary and stated that “doctrinal soundness”, as it was understood by the UAM, was a priority.\textsuperscript{27} The article claimed most UAM missionaries were graduates from the Melbourne Bible Institute, a guarantee that the required spiritual qualifications were present in a candidate.\textsuperscript{28} This statement reflected

\textsuperscript{24} See pages 242 & 247 for detail of the changing role of women in the AAM and the UAM.
\textsuperscript{25} Piggin, \textit{Evangelical Christianity in Australia: Spirit, Word and World}, 144-145.
\textsuperscript{26} See pages 239-247 for details of the modernist/fundamentalist controversy within the AAM/UAM between 1927-1929.
\textsuperscript{27} \textit{The United Aborigines’ Messenger}, September 1930, 4.
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid.
the dominance of fundamentalists from Victoria within the management of the federal committee of the UAM. The theological controversy so dominated UAM thinking in 1930 that the article on qualifications of a missionary included nothing about the faith mission principle of trusting God to provide physical needs.29 Prior to 1930 vocational or Bible training was not required by the faith mission. Mary Jones was an exception to that predominance of MBI graduates within the UAM. Her name was certainly not included in the list of the first thousand students that was published in the 1942 Annual Report of the MBI.30 Her formation within an Evangelical Presbyterian family and her leadership in the Christian Endeavour society was apparently deemed sufficient evidence of her suitability for service in Western Australia.

As a UAM station, Mount Margaret Mission officially adhered to the faith mission principles. In his article on Schenk, historian Ian Duckham stated that faith missions expected missionaries to raise their own support.31 Certainly, UAM missionaries had no guarantee of financial support from the UAM council, however in spite of his attempt at an “empathetic contextual understanding” Duckham did not appreciate that the faith principle was not a matter of raising one’s own support, but relying on God to provide physical needs.32

Under the leadership of Rod Schenk, Mount Margaret Mission developed some unique qualities in the area of raising support which may explain Duckham’s analysis. For example, Jones was guided by Schenk as her superintendent missionary when she promoted a form of child sponsorship for the children from the Graham Home. Missionaries Mary Belshaw and May McRidge had established the Graham Home at Mount Margaret in 1928, during the divisive era when that mission was part of the

29 Ibid.
30 “The First Thousand' A Souvenir of Twenty-Two Years of Blessing Embodying the Annual Report for 1942,” in Melbourne Bible Institute Archives, Bible College of Victoria (Melbourne), 13-25.
32 See page 75-76.
Gospel Mission to the Australian Aborigines (GMAA). The home was named after Thomas Graham, the President of GMAA who became the first president of the UAM in 1929. In January 1931, and through the medium of the *West Australian Golden Link*, Jones informed Christian Endeavourers that it cost one shilling per week to provide a child with porridge and other healthy food, and she proposed that CE societies who supported a child each week could correspond with the child and receive a photograph and periodic reports. This was a form of soliciting funds and was a deviation from faith mission policy. Jones did not initiate this policy for it had begun at Mount Margaret in 1928 when friends of Belshaw and McRidge offered to support a child, but Jones certainly recommended it. In July 1931, six months after the CE published Jones’ letter, an edited version of the letter appeared in the children’s column of *The United Aborigines Messenger*. That version omitted all reference to Jones’ plan of child sponsorship, suggesting that although it was practised at Mount Margaret this form of sponsorship was not promoted by the UAM, possibly because it was contrary to faith mission principles.

The industrial work at Mount Margaret was controversial within the faith mission because of the financial gain. While missionaries continued to trust God for their support, the Wongutha people were taught to be self-supporting. From as early as May 1924, raffia craft work and tanned goat skin floor mats from Mount Margaret Mission were being sold in Melbourne. Although the desire was for the people to support themselves, the workers were not paid cash, but could purchase food and clothing at the mission store as payment. In his report of February 1931, Schenk explained that industrial work provided the reason for Wongutha people to settle at

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34 *The United Aborigines’ Messenger*, May 1929, 2-3.
37 *The United Aborigines’ Messenger*, July 1931, 10.
38 *The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate*, May 1924, 2.
Mount Margaret. Morgan acknowledged there was criticism from within the UAM of her father Rod Schenk, for this policy represented a departure from faith mission principles. She explained that Schenk believed he was right, because his priority was always to convert the Wongutha people to Christianity, and the industrial work enabled the Wongutha to be self-supporting while they were taught the Christian message.

In July 1940, Jones replied to a questionnaire from the UAM council about living as a faith missionary. Her response provided a more realistic picture than was published in the mission publication.

To have to receive gifts from individuals for my own private need and as it were “live on charity” when I had been used to earning my own living for years, was a very bitter pill to swallow and I know of others who have felt the same. It keeps me humble certainly and takes away all feeling of independence but I still do not think this should be.

Jones’ letter revealed the personal cost of living under faith mission principles. Of fifty-eight responses to the questionnaire, twenty-three missionaries reported “testing” times, including eight from Mount Margaret. The lack of support received by the Mount Margaret missionaries was associated with dissension within the mission membership which will be addressed later in the chapter.

The analysis will now turn to the cultural revision that was part of Jones’ experience at the Mount Margaret Mission. No evidence was found to suggest that Jones received cultural or language training to prepare her for cross-cultural work. Included in her responsibilities at Mount Margaret was teaching women and children, and caring for a baby in the Graham Home. This connected her with the

39 The United Aborigines’ Messenger, February 1931, 10.
40 Morgan, A Drop in a Bucket: The Mount Margaret Story, 125.
41 Mary Jones to Miss Sandland, 17 July 1940 “Box 49: Federal Council, File: Correspondence from Missionaries, 1940,” f72.
43 The United Aborigines’ Messenger, February 1931, 9.
implementation of government policy that separated Aboriginal children from their families. Morgan emphasised that children were only taken into the home with the consent of their parents.\textsuperscript{44} She revealed interrelated cultural and gender tensions, however, when she acknowledged consent was not given by the older Wongutha men, who objected to the Graham Home because they were denied access to the girls betrothed to them from early childhood.\textsuperscript{45} Morgan argued that the mothers did not agree with this custom and wanted their daughters in the home rather than given at puberty to older husbands, but some were afraid of the older men. Since the Chief Protector of Aborigines, A. O. Neville, preferred to send the children of mixed descent to the Moore River Native Settlement the Graham Home was preferable to the Wongutha people, as at least the children remained in their own land and could see their parents regularly.\textsuperscript{46}

Jones revealed her attitude to aspects of Wongutha culture in her reports. In August 1931, she wrote “We are at present passing through deep waters at Mt Margaret, and we would ask your prayers that all the assaults of Satan may be frustrated and our Lord Jesus Christ glorified.”\textsuperscript{47} Her words showed that day-to-day events were interpreted in terms of spiritual warfare between Satan and Christ. The deep waters referred to the death of two children from the children’s home. One of the deceased children, the youngest in the home, was a child Jones had been caring for, and therefore her death was a particular cause of grief to her.\textsuperscript{48} Jones explained the grief of the Wongutha parents was compounded by their fears that a curse had been placed on the children in the dormitory, and their desire to take the children out into the bush was seen by the missionaries as part of their spiritual struggle. Concern was also expressed in that report for one of the girls in the dormitory who was betrothed to an older man. The girl

\textsuperscript{44} Morgan, \textit{A Drop in a Bucket: The Mount Margaret Story}, 107.
\textsuperscript{45} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{46} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{47} \textit{The United Aborigines’ Messenger}, August 1931, 10.
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid, July 1931, 3.
was in love with a young man, but her betrothed husband would not relinquish his right to the marriage. Jones’ lack of cultural understanding was evident when she expressed surprise that the aggrieved man was a Christian convert, and his desire to continue to practice his cultural marriage laws was seen not only to be an abandonment of Christianity but also to have an evil intention.

Qualified teachers were not provided by the Education department in Jones’ time at Mount Margaret and although Jones had no teaching qualification in 1941 she assisted Mary Bennett and taught Standard One.49 May O’Brien (formerly Miller) was born during the 1930s to a Wongutha woman and an unknown white man and she lived in the Graham Home from 1938.50 O’Brien became a monitor in the mission school before moving to Perth in 1951 to study at Claremont Teachers’ College and she returned to Mount Margaret as a qualified teacher.51 The British Empire Medal was awarded to O’Brien in 1977 for her service in the field of education and she was appointed to the position of Superintendent of Aboriginal Education in 1985.52 O’Brien stated that her people had placed her at Mount Margaret to protect her from being taken away by the Aborigines Department, because she was classified as part Aboriginal.53 In an interview with the writer, O’Brien explained that since her people came from Cunderlee, on the Nullarbor Plain, she did not receive family visits and experienced a lonely childhood.54

O’Brien published books for both children and teachers that drew on her experiences at Mount Margaret Mission, including What Do You Say? which was published in 1994.55 It was one of a series of four, known as The Babadu Stories, and

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49 Ibid, July 1941, 9.
51 Morgan, A Drop in a Bucket: The Mount Margaret Story, 265-267.
54 O’Brien, Interview by A. Longworth, 8.
O’Brien dedicated the series to the caring missionaries whose names appeared in the stories. What Do You Say? was about a Wongutha girl named Burawan and her teacher “Miss Jones”. O’Brien confirmed that the narrative reflected her unhappy memory of her teacher Mary Jones. What Do you Say? addressed the cultural difference between the western teacher who expected the child to say thank you, and the Wongutha culture where everything is shared and no one is expected to say thank you. The book showed Burawan to be bilingual, but “Miss Jones” spoke only in English and it was an older Wongutha girl who informed the younger child that all the children had to learn this lesson. O’Brien recalled that she did not get on with her teacher Miss Jones and found her to be a hard disciplinarian. Jones’ report to the AAM in 1941 clarified not only that the teaching was in English, but also that her priority included practical preparation for life through a western education. It also revealed the difficulty Jones faced as an untrained teacher attempting to teach English as a second language to the Wongutha children.

Mrs Bennett still struggles bravely with the school. She urgently needs the help of a teacher to take the upper classes. We have 76 children now in kindergarten and big school. Please pray that we may have all the help necessary to fit these little children for this life and also for the life which is to come… I have been taking Standard I for Mrs Bennett in the afternoons… One of our difficulties is the children’s limited English vocabulary, and the many words in our language which sound alike but are spelt differently. We give them word building, and to test their knowledge of the word and its meaning they have to write the word and then illustrate with a drawing.

Several historians have included the issue of cultural revision in their research on the UAM at Mount Margaret. In his 1973 publication Not Slaves Not Citizens, Peter Biskup condemned the UAM at Mount Margaret because of the way missionaries tried

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57 O’Brien, Interview by A. Longworth, 1.
58 Ibid.
59 The United Aborigines’ Messenger, July 1941, 9.
60 Ibid.
to break down Wongutha customs. He suggested that children who had been educated in such fundamentalist missions were at a disadvantage when they moved out into the wider community.\textsuperscript{61} In 1988, John Stanton alleged missionaries hastened a disintegration of culture, however, he recognised that the Wongutha not only retained many of their traditional beliefs, but their western education achieved remarkable results.\textsuperscript{62} Through her year 2000 comparative research into mission among Indigenous people in the colonial world of British Columbia and South-West Australia, Peggy Brock also drew the conclusion that missionaries, including those at Mount Margaret, expected converts to relinquish aspects of their culture deemed incompatible with Christianity.\textsuperscript{63} In his 2004 thesis on Western Desert Missionaries in the period 1921 to 1973, Ian Duckham suggested that the Western Desert people willingly abandoned their nomadic lifestyle for mission life, but retained kinship obligations.\textsuperscript{64} He failed to recognise that prior to Schenk’s arrival in 1921 European settlement had already reduced access to land and water for the Wongutha people, threatening the continuation of a nomadic lifestyle and traditional culture. Contrary to the analysis of some western historians, and in spite of her memory of Mary Jones as a hard teacher, O’Brien was appreciative of her schooling at Mount Margaret Mission.

I owe what I am today to the work that the missionaries put in at Mount Margaret Mission. They gave us the best years of their lives. I will always be grateful to them including Miss Jones for what they did and the things that they put up with to come all that way out of their own culture to come to us the Wongutha people of the eastern goldfields so I will always be thankful to God for that.\textsuperscript{65}

\textsuperscript{63} Brock, "Mission Encounters in the Colonial World: British Columbia and South West Australia," 175.
\textsuperscript{64} Ian Graham Duckham, "Western Desert Missionaries, Their Collaborators and Critics: Assessments of Protestant Institutional Mission Work in Western Australia's Western Desert 1921-1973" (Ph.D., University of Western Australia, 2004), 206.
\textsuperscript{65} O’Brien, \textit{Interview by A. Longworth}, 7.
O’Brien was not the only Wongutha to have positive memories of their childhood spent at Mount Margaret Mission. Sadie Canning was also raised in the children’s home at Mount Margaret Mission. She not only became Matron of Leonora Hospital in 1956, but she was publicly recognised as a Member of the British Empire in 1963.\(^6\) Canning agreed that removal of Indigenous children from their families was government policy rather than mission policy and she was thankful for her experience at the mission, which had enabled her to achieve so much.\(^6\) In 1987, a reunion of former Mount Margaret mission girls, and daughters of former missionaries, met at the Kalgoorlie Peoples’ Church. The event attracted over sixty women, including Gladys Tapim and Dora Cotterill, Wongutha women who became UAM missionaries, and the previously mentioned Sadie Canning and May O’Brien.\(^6\) The Christian commitment of these women within an emerging Indigenous church was a sign that UAM missionaries at Mount Margaret, including Mary Jones, had some success in achieving their vision of the conversion of Indigenous Australians. The criticism of Biskup that education at a fundamentalist mission left Wongutha children disadvantaged in the wider community was unfounded in the case of these examples of women who retained their cultural identity, and were integrated within western society.

Mary Jones’ interest in the Nyungar people began in 1936, when Jones was part of the team that brought some Wongutha children to Perth for a holiday.\(^6\) She recalled that when the group travelled through the wheat-belt town of Kellerberrin on their return to Mount Margaret, she learned of the lack of schooling for Nyungar children in that community and her concern was aroused.\(^6\) During her furlough in 1938, Jones observed the work of CE members at Geraldton and Guildford. She reported CE

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\(^{66}\) One Hundred Women of the Eastern Goldfields, 5.
\(^{67}\) The United Aborigines’ Messenger, October-November 1985, 16.
\(^{68}\) Ibid, February-March 1987, 5.
\(^{69}\) Ibid, March 1936, 10.
members at Kellerberrin had commenced services and hoped to start a school for the Nyungar children.\textsuperscript{71} By May 1938, Jones had returned to Mount Margaret, but the plight of the Nyungar people of Kellerberrin continued to trouble her. She wrote that month to UAM supporters of “nearly white” children who were not allowed to attend the state school and she added that the local ministers were “praying that a missionary-hearted man will come forward to undertake, with native help, the necessary building”.\textsuperscript{72} By December 1939, Jones was herself working at Kellerberrin.\textsuperscript{73}

The UAM at Kellerberrin was established at a traditional campsite east of the town and while the mission reports referred to the work being at Kellerberrin, to the Nyungar people the camping area was known as Djurin.\textsuperscript{74} In an interview with the writer, Nyungar Elder Denzil Humphries told how his people built a bough shed for Jones, pitching her tent at the end of the bough shed so she could have a fire outside, just like the Nyungar people.\textsuperscript{75} He believed she could do it herself, but the Nyungar people did it for her out of respect and kindness. Humphries described the hostility of the Nyungar men to white men and believed it was in the wisdom of God that a single woman came as a missionary. He said of Mary Jones

\begin{quote}
She was a little, sprite little lady and she was white and she looked so helpless and so our people started to learn to love her and respect her and started to care for her, and of course in turn she told us about the Gospel of our Lord and that was a tremendous thing.\textsuperscript{76}
\end{quote}

His comment showed that although Jones was critical of Wongutha culture she adapted to the Nyungar community more easily, possibly because the people there were more westernised due to their earlier contact with Europeans. In addition, by 1939, Jones had ten years of experience working as a missionary and she was not working under the

\begin{footnotes}
\item[71] West Australian Golden Link, February 1938, 6.
\item[72] The United Aborigines’ Messenger, May 1938, 10.
\item[73] West Australian Golden Link, December 1939, 12.
\item[74] Morgan and Tjalaminu, Ngulak Ngarnk Nidja Boodja, Our Mother, This Land, 66-68.
\item[75] Denzil Humphries, Interview by A. Longworth (Perth: 2004), 2.
\item[76] Ibid.
\end{footnotes}
direction of a male superintendent at Djurin. Humphries’ description of Jones at the
Djurin camp, as a powerless and vulnerable single woman willing to camp with the
people, provided evidence of a cross-cultural relationship that lessened pre-existing
racial hostility. Issues of race and gender were clearly interrelated and therefore the case
study will now address the role of women within the UAM and Jones’ specific
experience as a single woman.

When Mary Jones joined the faith mission in 1930, the UAM described her as a
“daughter of the manse” and this identification as Albert Jones’ daughter was
recognised as part of her credentials.77 Apart from being identified as a minister’s
daughter, the only information given by the UAM about Jones when she joined the
UAM was that she had visited Mount Margaret and was aware of the situation there.78
Daisy Munro was a young single missionary at Mount Margaret in March 1930 when
she wrote of the hard life there, but to the question “Is it worthwhile taking the
Australian Aborigine the Gospel” her answer was a definite yes, when she saw evidence
of Christian converts among the Wongutha people.79 She asked supporters to pray for
more workers. By September 1930, Mary Jones was listed in the mission publication as
a missionary, one of seventeen single women at that time.80 Four single men and ten
married couples made up the total list, with women clearly in the majority. Apart from
Jones, missionaries stationed at Mount Margaret in September 1930, were Rod and
Mysie Schenk, two single women Daisy Munro and Marian Sandland, and two single
men Herbert Reichenbach and Hugh Watt.81

A very positive report on Jones appeared in a newsletter published in The United
Aborigines’ Messenger in February 1931.

77 The United Aborigines’ Messenger, May 1930, 10-11.
78 Ibid, May 1930, 11.
79 Ibid, March 1930, 11.
80 Ibid, September 1930, 12.
81 Ibid, September 1930, 12.
MISS JONES is Mrs Schenk’s right hand in the raffia room, and also in doing the typing etc. There are one or two hundred names, besides many other returns, to be typed out each month and quarter. As for the Raffia Room, sometimes it resembles a Creche as well as a workroom, and with 20 to 30 women workers is a big strain. Miss Jones is splendid with raffia, women and babies and thus has the special qualifications needed for this work. We now wonder how Mrs Schenk managed so long without such help. Miss Jones also helps in the care of baby Gertie in the Home”.

This report was part of Rod Schenk’s description of the area of responsibility of each missionary. The full report showed that missionary work at Mount Margaret was organised according to gender. Schenk, being the senior male was the administrator and led worship services in the church and the camp. Reichenbach distributed rations and carried out spiritual work in the camps and Watt looked after the medical and dental work, the boy’s dormitory, visited the Wongutha camps, and took religious meetings. Of the women, Munro taught the thirty children and Sandland managed the girls dormitory with the assistance of a new missionary, a Miss Joynes, who did mending and sewing, and visited the camp.

Jones’ report on the relationship between the missionaries that year was equally positive.

We are a happy band of workers here and we thank God too, especially through these difficult times for the capable and tactful leaders we have in Mr and Mrs Schenk. They do all that thoughtful love and kindness can do for the happiness and comfort of both workers and natives.

These reports established that with the senior male missionary in charge and supported by his wife, women missionaries at Mount Margaret were engaged in traditional roles for women of nurture and teaching women and children. Because of her secretarial

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82 Ibid, February 1931, 9.
83 Ibid.
84 Ibid, August 1931, 11.
expertise, Jones was different from the other female missionaries in that she also assisted Rod and Mysie Schenk in the office.

Jones revealed her ethnocentrism when she accepted the patriarchal nature of her western culture, but she was disapproving of the treatment of women in traditional Wongutha culture, especially the polygamous practice of child wives. In her report in August 1931 she wrote

The woman’s lot here, as among other heathen peoples, is indeed a hard one, especially where there are two or three wives. Young girls are given in marriage to men old enough to be their grandfathers in exchange for spears, boomerangs etc.85

Given her concern for the Wongutha women, Jones found an articulate ally in Mary Bennett when they worked together in 1933, teaching the women raffia work and sewing.86 Mary Montgomery Bennett was not listed in the UAM publication as a missionary, although Morgan acknowledged Bennett taught the Wongutha children from 1932 to 1942.87 This suggested she was recruited by Schenk rather than the UAM. Bennett would not have been acceptable to Schenk, or the UAM, if she did not adhere to the conservative doctrinal beliefs, but she remained an independent worker. Mary Bennett appeared before the Moseley Royal Commission into the conditions and treatment of Aborigines in Western Australia at Parliament House, Perth, in March 1934 and she cited her experience at Gnowangerup and Mount Margaret Missions as evidence of her suitability to address the commission.88 Bennett was outspoken in her criticism of the Aborigines Act, claiming that it was “framed with criminal carelessness and in many vital essentials ran counter to the spirit and practice of the law of the land” and her testimony was reported in *The West Australian* newspaper.89

85 Ibid, August 1931, 10.
86 Ibid, March 1933, 10.
88 *The West Australian*, 21 March, 1934
89 Ibid, 21 March 1934.
The Royal Commission visited Mount Margaret in June 1934, and while she did not appear before the commission as did her co-worker Bennett, Mary Jones reported on the visit and informed UAM supporters that the neighbouring squatters were lobbying for the mission to be moved.\footnote{The United Aborigines' Messenger, June 1934, 11.} In that report, it was evident that Jones recognised the injustice of this attempt to remove the Wongutha from their traditional land, and her attitude suggested that the Mount Margaret mission personnel supported Schenk and Bennett in the struggle for justice for the Wongutha people. Feminist historian Marilyn Lake described Bennett as a feminist, but not as a missionary, when she wrote of the contribution Bennett played in opposing the removal of Aboriginal children from their mothers.\footnote{Lake, Getting Equal: The History of Australian Feminism, 13-14.} In her history of AAM missionary Annie Lock, Catherine Bishop observed that feminist writers neglected women faith missionaries because they did not conform to feminist ideals.\footnote{Bishop, ""A woman Missionary living among naked blacks" Annie Lock, 1876-1943", 140-141.} Mary Jones may not have written her reports out of a feminist ideology, but at Mount Margaret, she certainly displayed a concern for the Wongutha women, albeit from the perspective of her western culture.

This attitude has aroused criticism. In her 1998 analysis of racism in Australia, Anne Pattel-Gray was hostile towards the western concern about gender when it ignored cultural issues, arguing that when the cultural difference was not addressed western women were mistaken in their assumptions about Indigenous women.\footnote{Anne Pattel-Gray, The Great White Flood: Racism in Australia (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 163.} Christine Choo drew attention to the decision of Aboriginal women from Roman Catholic missions in the Kimberley Region of Western Australia to stand in solidarity with Aboriginal men in their struggle against racism, experiencing that as a more powerful injustice than the oppression of women within Indigenous culture.\footnote{Choo, Mission Girls: Aboriginal Women on Catholic Missions in the Kimberley, Western Australia 1900-1950, xv.} The analysis of both these writers suggested that Jones and her colleagues within the UAM could be accused of racism,
when they allowed their concern for women to promote changes to marriage customs within Wongutha culture. On the other hand, May O’Brien argued that her childhood at Mount Margaret did not destroy her cultural identification. Wongutha culture was already adapting to European influence in 1938 when O’Brien was taken to Mount Margaret, but her success within the wider Australian context, and her adoption of the Christian faith, has not prevented her from continuing to identify herself as a Wongutha woman. Her different perspective highlights the fact that historical interpretation varies according to cultural context and personal experience.

Personal relationships between missionary staff and the Indigenous people were of concern to Moseley. In the report of the Royal Commission presented to the Western Australian Parliament in January 1935, he emphasised his opinion that on isolated mission stations where the staff included both women and men, it was essential that only married couples should be appointed. Although he found no evidence of improper behaviour, Mosley recognised the potential for it and his recommendation was designed to protect Indigenous women from the threat of sexual harassment and abuse.

Relationships between missionaries and mission councils could also be problematic. Conflict emerged among the UAM personnel over new regulations gazetted by the Western Australian government in 1938 associated with the Native Administration Act of 1936, which included the requirement that missions and mission workers were to be licensed. UAM missionary Tom Street wrote to the federal council to express the opposition of the Western Australian missionaries to this restriction. The Christian Endeavour society in Western Australia was equally concerned about this development. In his missionary column in the *West Australian Golden Link* in July 1938, Robert Powell asserted that the law of conscience and the call of God were

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97 *Government Gazette of Western Australia*, 29 April, 1938, 605-606.
98 *The United Aborigines’ Messenger*, August 1938, 12.
stronger than the law of the Western Australian government and he called on Christians to proclaim the Gospel even under threat of fines or imprisonment.\footnote{West Australian Golden Link, July 1938, 4.} In December 1938, \textit{The United Aborigines’ Messenger} informed readers that the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Presbyterian churches in Western Australia, had all protested against Chief Secretary W. H. Kitson’s accusations in the Western Australian Legislative Council that missionaries were breaking the law regarding the requirement of permits.\footnote{The United Aborigines’ Messenger, December 1938, 3-4.}

In spite of this widespread opposition to the regulations in Western Australia, UAM missionaries in the state did not receive the support they desired from the federal council, particularly from the secretary, Amy Sandland. An undated letter, signed by all the Mount Margaret Missionaries apart from Rod and Mysie Schenk, was sent to UAM President Rogers, protesting that Sandland had contradicted statements made in the Mount Margaret prayer-letter about the Western Australian government regulations.\footnote{Undated letter from Mary Jones and other Mount Margaret missionaries to President Rogers, "Box 49: Federal Council, File: Correspondence from Missionaries, 1940," f40-41.} Since Mary Jones was the first signature on the list, and she assisted with the administration work at Mount Margaret, this letter was probably written by Jones, with the support of all the missionaries.

Rogers replied to Jones and her fellow workers in a letter dated 14 September 1939. He suggested that the Mount Margaret missionaries should withdraw their complaint and continue in prayer.\footnote{Rogers to Mary Jones and fellow workers, 14 September 1939, Ibid, f42.} On 10 October 1939, Rogers again called on the Mount Margaret missionaries to pray, and stated he was not prepared to submit the protest letter to the federal council of the mission.\footnote{Rogers to Rod Schenk, 10 October 1939, Ibid, f45.} The Mount Margaret missionaries were united in feeling they were being treated unfairly, however Schenk replied that although they wanted an agreement from Sandland that she would make no judgmental
remarks about Mount Margaret in future, he decided to let the matter rest. The Federal Council of the UAM finally responded in November 1939 with a promise, supported by Sandland, that there would be no further criticism made against Schenk or the Mount Margaret Mission. This correspondence demonstrated that Mary Jones and her missionary colleagues at Mount Margaret supported Schenk in this dispute with Sandland and the UAM Federal Council. Apparently, the controversy widened to personal attack, however, and was a factor in Jones’ transfer to Kellerberrin in December 1939. This was revealed in a letter from Rod Schenk to Members of the Western Australian Executive in April 1941, when he admitted that in 1939, following conflict between Mount Margaret missionaries and the UAM Federal Council, Jones had decided to transfer to Kellerberrin, due to her concern that her friendship with Schenk could arouse suspicion.

Jones had been three months at Djurin, when Schenk wrote in *The United Aborigines’ Messenger* in February 1940 of his concern for the Mount Margaret missionaries who were exhausted, and he expressed the hope that Jones would return to relieve Mysie Schenk in the raffia room in order for Mysie and Rod to have a holiday. UAM missionary Christina Finlayson had arrived at Djurin by December 1939, and clearly, Schenk believed the work there could now continue without Jones. Jones acquiesced to Schenk’s request for in May 1940 Schenk acknowledged Jones’ return had enabled Rod and Mysie to spend some weeks camping on the south coast, at Esperance. He advocated regular holidays there for all missionaries who worked in the

104 Rod Schenk to Rogers, 19 October 1939, Ibid, f46.
106 Rod Schenk to Members of W.A. Executive, 10 April 1941, "Box 95 South Australian Head Office, File: Correspondence Re: Schenk 1941," f101-106.
107 *The United Aborigines’ Messenger*, February 1940, 11.
108 *West Australian Golden Link*, December 1939, 12.
goldfields, where the heat was extreme and missionaries were in danger of health breakdowns.109

Schenk’s invitation to Jones, and her subsequent return to Mount Margaret, was made in response to the health crisis of missionary staff, but it sparked further dispute. Minutes of a special meeting of the UAM Federal Council called on 30 January 1941, revealed Schenk was again in conflict with the mission leaders.110 Rumours were circulating about Schenk’s indiscreet relationships with women missionaries.111 Schenk suspected his earlier adversary Amy Sandland was spreading the rumours, and informed the Western Australian mission executive that the Western Australian council misunderstood his position. He asserted that his confession of once putting his arms around Jones was an admission of nothing more than a sign of closeness like that of a brother and sister, and he denied any other indiscreet behaviour.112 Mysie Schenk wrote to the Executive of the Western Australian Council on 15 April 1941, stating that she did not believe there was any need for Jones to leave Mount Margaret, although there may have been a reason earlier.113 Western Australian UAM President Edward Hogg was not convinced. His correspondence of 30 April 1941 to Amy Sandland stated that the Western Australian executive had lost confidence in Rod Schenk and wanted him to resign, but Schenk threatened legal action rather than relinquish his position.114 Litigation would have brought the allegations into the public arena and damaged the reputation of the UAM, and therefore the Western Australian council hoped to avoid such action.

109 The United Aborigines' Messenger, May 1940, 11.
110 "Box 95 South Australian Head Office, File: Correspondence Re: Schenk 1941,” f48-49.
111 Members of the Executive of the W.A. Council to Rod Schenk, 29 March 1941, Ibid, f99-100.
112 Rod Schenk to Members of W.A. Executive, 10 April 1941, Ibid, f101-106.
113 Mysie Schenk to Edward Hogg and Members of the Executive, 15 April 1941, Ibid, f59.
114 Edward Hogg to Amy Sandland, 30 April 1941, Ibid, f62-63.
In her partisan history of the Mount Margaret Mission, Morgan wrote “Calamity fell in 1941”.\textsuperscript{115} She highlighted the loyalty of the missionary team who had served with her parents Rod and Mysie Schenk over twenty years, and described the shortage of staff in 1941 when Dorothy and Lindsay Lovick went on furlough and Mary Bennett struggled with ill health.\textsuperscript{116} She illustrated further misfortune when Mysie collapsed and was flown to Perth by the Royal Flying Doctor Service, and spent months convalescing in Melbourne with her parents and three daughters, who were living with their grandparents and attending school in Melbourne.\textsuperscript{117} It seemed likely that the stressful situation contributed to the health breakdown of Mysie Schenk. Morgan avoided the conflict between Schenk and the federal and Western Australian mission councils. Rod Schenk wrote none of the Mount Margaret reports published in \textit{The United Aborigines' Messenger} during 1941, and his name did not appear in the 1940-1941 Annual Report so it was presumed he was with the family in Melbourne for the remainder of 1941.\textsuperscript{118}

The controversy was finally resolved when Schenk met with W. L. Wright in Melbourne in March 1942. Wright was a former President of the UAM Federal Council.\textsuperscript{119} He evidently continued to exercise influence in the mission council, as following that meeting Wright recommended that Schenk continue at Mount Margaret on a year-by-year basis, providing there was a change of staff.\textsuperscript{120} The 1941-1942 Annual Report of the UAM, published in March 1942, acknowledged there had been problems that year, but assured supporters that “It is with praise and thanksgiving that we record a happy spirit of co-operation has been maintained between the State and Federal Councils and the missionaries.”\textsuperscript{121} This was an example of the way the UAM

\textsuperscript{115} Morgan, \textit{A Drop in a Bucket: The Mount Margaret Story}, 257.
\textsuperscript{116} Ibid, 128, 256.
\textsuperscript{117} Ibid, 257-258.
\textsuperscript{118} \textit{The United Aborigines' Messenger}, April 1941, 3-6.
\textsuperscript{119} Ibid, March 1939, 6.
\textsuperscript{120} W. L. Wright to W. Rogers, 11 March 1942, "Box 95 South Australian Head Office, File: Correspondence Re: Schenk 1941," f111-112.
\textsuperscript{121} \textit{The United Aborigines' Messenger}, March 1942, 5.
presented a triumphant message to mission supporters, while hiding the struggles and conflicts. Amy Sandland wrote that annual report and made no mention of Schenk or Jones, but acknowledged that a child from the Mount Margaret mission school had won fourth place in the John Batman Weire Essay Competition. This demonstrated that Jones and her missionary colleagues had maintained their teaching standards that year, in spite of the difficulties.

The outcome of the episode was that there were changes in staff. The annual report stated Dorothy and Lindsay Lovack resigned for personal reasons. By August 1942, Rod and Mysie Schenk had returned, Mary Bennett left to return to England, but Fred and Elsie Jackson remained and Mary Jones continued to teach at the school, assisted by newly appointed missionary Preston Walker. In November 1942, Irene Spice joined the teaching staff. It seemed likely that Jones left after her arrival. The last mention of Jones at Mount Margaret was in the annual report for 1942-43, which stated that Matron Murray left to study at the Perth Bible Institute while Mary Jones left for personal reasons.

The silence about the controversy was in keeping with UAM policy. An undated copy of a paper entitled Rules For Missions Stations, stated emphatically that missionaries were not to publish threatening material in The United Aborigines’ Messenger or make charges against each other without evidence. It went on to state that missionaries were not to discuss grievances with each other, but go direct to the missionary in charge, and if the matter was not resolved there, it would be taken to the state and finally the federal council. Missionaries were not to let “the natives” think

122 Ibid.
124 Ibid, August 1942, 10.
125 Ibid, November 1942, 11.
126 Ibid, April 1943, 4.
127 Rules For Mission Stations, "Box 95 South Australian Head Office, File: Correspondence Re: Schenk 1941," f50-53.
there was conflict between them, but to remember they were expected to work in unity and peace.

Mary Jones maintained her silence until 1965, when she wrote to the World Presbyterian Missions about her work. In hindsight, her memory of that earlier troubled time recalled a modified version of the incident. Jones described a growing theological difference with Schenk, who was placing more emphasis on baptism, and she explained that she wanted to work independently, but within her Presbyterian heritage. ¹²⁸ Jones also stated that when she left in 1943, she needed a cooler climate for health reasons, and although she did not elaborate, the health concern was genuine. In her correspondence with the writer in 2003, Jones’ sister, Janet Johnston, confirmed that Jones was suffering from breast cancer and she left Mount Margaret because she required surgery. ¹²⁹

The episode proved to be a watershed experience for Jones. She entered a transition period as she came to terms with the crisis at Mount Margaret that left her without a missionary appointment, plus serious health issues that could force her retirement. Jones recovered from surgery and then entered into a long period of remission from cancer. She did not return to the UAM however. Her identity as a single woman missionary at the isolated mission station at Mount Margaret had contributed to the troubled relationship between the fiery Schenk and the UAM council. Jones now exercised her autonomy by choosing not to work again under the authority of a male superintendent. Mary Jones emerged from the episode as a stronger and experienced woman who was about to enter into the most significant period of her missionary service as an independent faith missionary among the Nyungar people.

It was during this transition period Jones recalled in 1960, that she developed her vision of female home missionaries.

¹²⁸ Jones, Mary Graham Jones ([cited]).
¹²⁹ Johnston. Personal correspondence to A. Longworth, 23 May 2003.
If there are people of any particular denomination in a town, what happened? A home missionary is sent out, a meeting place sought, and services commenced. Why not for the Natives whose need is more desperate? Often they have no one to whom to turn in time of need, or in difficulty, spiritual or material. This dream of seeing at least one woman worker in every town where there are natives grew, and I decided to be one such worker. With my bicycle as a means of transport I went to Northam.130

Jones wrote of women being like home missionaries, as her father had been prior to his ordination. The first woman to be ordained as a minister in Australia was the Congregationalist Winifred Kiek on 13 June 1927.131 It would be May 1974 before the Presbyterian Church in Australia agreed to the ordination of women.132 Jones’ vision of women ministering as home missionaries was not so radical as to challenge the mainstream denominations about the ordination of women, nor did Jones suggest welcoming Aboriginal people into established white churches. Her vision was focused on the development of Indigenous churches with a white woman leading.

Jones did not wait for a denomination or mission to catch her vision, but in April 1945, she moved to Northam and was able to buy a small cottage on three acres of land near the campsite of two large Nyungar families.133 The cottage was in a poor state of repair, but Jones saw potential in the large verandah. With a table, forms and a portable organ, the verandah became her church.134 This was probably the site referred to by retired Presbyterian minister Jack Hutchins. He recalled that as a young man, he helped Jones move to a more satisfactory site further along the Avon River, a few miles to the north-west of the township, and that she lived so simply that all her possessions fitted into one load of his utility. Hutchins wrote “There were no frills or fancies

131 West, Daughters of Freedom, 326.
133 Living Water, September 1971, 3.
about Mary. She was a soul completely sold out to Jesus Christ, her Lord and Saviour.”

Shirley Dowling met Mary Jones in Northam. Dowling remembered the summer of 1948, when she went to church, not at the Northam Presbyterian Church where both she and Mary Jones regularly attended worship, but out in the bush, on dusty land shaded by eucalyptus trees. Dowling sat with the Nyungar congregation as Mary Jones led worship. Dowling recalled

This little non significant lady, small in stature, old fashioned hair style pulled back for convenience but a very strong and loving face, came forward and spoke so earnestly of the love of her Saviour for not only herself but for all those listening to her.

Dowling was a new convert to Christianity at the time and the total commitment of Mary Jones made a deep impact, because a woman preacher was unusual in that era. Dowling was aware Jones experienced criticism and ridicule within the community, but she was impressed by this woman who lived among the Nyungar people on the outskirts of town, cared for them physically, mentally and spiritually and shared their grief in times of sorrow. Dowling recalled that most of the work was among the Nyungar women who were vulnerable when their men drank too much alcohol and often became violent. Jones’ concern for women and children, encouraged at Mount Margaret by Mary Bennett, continued in this new setting where Jones was the independent minister of a Nyungar congregation.

Although independent, Jones still had contact with UAM missionaries, for she wrote that when the missionaries at Kellerberrin offered to visit the Northam people and suggested she explore the possibility of working in Pingelly, she investigated that

135 Jack Hutchinson, “Mary Jones: Missionary to Indigenous People of W.A.,” (Bateman, Western Australia: nd). Personal communication, no date.
136 Shirley Dowling, Personal Correspondence to A. Longworth. 27 October, 2002
137 Ibid.
138 Ibid.
No suitable place was found in Pingelly, but towards the end of 1948, when Jones was forty-three years of age, she sold the Northam property and with financial assistance from her father, she bought the disused Church of Christ church and manse in Brookton.

Jones appeared critical of Wongutha culture at Mount Margaret, but she formed genuine relationships with Nyungar people, including Fred and Jean Collard (formerly Bennell) from Brookton. In an interview with the writer, their eldest daughter, Marie Taylor, shared a story about her birth in 1948 when the staff at Beverley Hospital wanted to put the young mother and newborn baby into a tent in the hospital grounds.140 Jones accompanied Fred Collard to the hospital and complained about the way the family was being treated, and the protest had partial success, for mother and child were relocated to the hospital verandah. Taylor spoke positively of Mary Jones.

…her love for my people up in Brookton was very, very special… She was responsible for bringing Nyungar people together to hear about the Bible, hear about what God had done for them and she was successful.141

Within days of moving to Brookton, Jones set out to improve the conditions endured by the Nyungar people. The appointment of S. G. Middleton as Commissioner of the Department of Native Affairs in 1948 saw the introduction of some reforms, for example, the inclusion of Aboriginal children in state education, but Jones recognised the need of further improvement.142 On 3 January 1949, she wrote to the Brookton Health, Vermin and Cemetery Board regarding the lack of public toilet facilities available to the Nyungar people in the town of Brookton, and they replied on 17 January 1949 that the Board was unable to assist as it was a matter for the Department of Native Affairs.

140 Marie Taylor, Interview by A. Longworth (Perth: 2004), 1, 14.
141 Ibid, 3.
142 Peter D Milnes, From Myths to Policy: Aboriginal Legislation in Western Australia (Perth: Metamorphic Media, 2001), 47.
Jones promptly enclosed their reply, with her letter of 25 January 1949, to the Commissioner for Native Affairs, S. G. Middleton. She explained that the church she had purchased had been closed for nine years, and had no toilets. Until she could overcome that problem, Jones believed the town should accept some responsibility, since Brookton benefited economically from the employment of Nyungar people within the district. Jones also made an urgent request that toilet facilities be provided on the reserve to replace the “bag structures” currently in use. Commissioner Middleton wrote on 28 January 1949 to Inspector L. O’Neill, Protector of Natives in Narrogin. That letter stated that the Department supported Jones who had been appointed a Protector of Natives for the towns of Brookton and Pingelly. O’Neill was asked to investigate. After visiting Brookton, the District Officer reported that the Railway Station toilets were locked, but a key could be provided when required, and since Jones would continue to allow the women and children to use her private facility, there was no need for any change. Nothing was said about the conditions at the reserve.

When Mary Jones was appointed as a Local Protector at Brookton and Pingelly, she risked the resentment of the Nyungar people. Local Protectors had been appointed in Western Australia since 1905, and were often government officers, resident magistrates or police, with the result that the conflicting roles of protection of Aborigines and upholding the oppressive 1905 Aborigines Act, led to distrust and resentment by the Aboriginal population. When the 1936 Native Administration Act was introduced to amend the 1905 Act, the Aborigines Department became the Department of Native Affairs and the Chief Protector became the Commissioner of the Department. In his publication on legislation relating to Aboriginal people in Western

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146 Extract from Patrol Report by C. R. Wright Webster, District Officer, 18 July 1949. Ibid, 42.
147 Milnes, From Myths to Policy: Aboriginal Legislation in Western Australia, 32.
Australia, Peter Milnes described the 1936 Act as “the most draconian piece of legislation in the state’s history” because of the increased invasion into the lives of Aboriginal people. The system of Local Protectors remained unchanged, but a greater number of Aboriginal people came under the restrictions of the 1936 Act. Since Jones had no paid government position she was not identified as a government officer with power to enforce the 1936 Act, but she was able to use her role as Local Protector to lobby for improved conditions, and so earned the respect of the Nyungar people.

Within a year of moving to Brookton, Jones was assisted in her work by Kathleen Partridge, a graduate of the Perth Bible Institute. Both women were present at the inaugural meeting of the Pingelly/Brookton Native Welfare Committee formed in March 1950. Since the meeting was held at the Brookton Mission Church, it seemed likely that Jones had initiated this committee, which had a continuing role of support. The records of that committee showed that apart from taking services at Brookton and Pingelly, from 1950, Jones conducted a kindergarten at Brookton each morning and Partridge did the same at Pingelly. Jones also helped children with their homework, when parents who had been deprived of a western education were unable to support their children in that way. Additional activities provided by Jones included sewing classes, indoor games nights and an occasional picture show. Nyungar Elder Kathy Yarran remembered both good and hard times on the reserve in Brookton where she was living when she met Mary Jones. She was appreciative that Mary Jones taught adult women, including Yarran, to read.

148 Ibid, 39-42.
149 Haebich, For Their Own Good, 345.
152 Ibid, f6.
153 Ibid.
154 Kathy Yarran, Interview by A. Longworth (Kellerberrin, Western Australia: 2003), 7.
155 Ibid, 8-9.
Mary Jones maintained her independence as a faith missionary and established Nyungar congregations. She recalled that the day after she moved into the Brookton property on 1 January 1949 she conducted a service in Pingelly and the following Sunday services began at Brookton. Jones explained that at Pingelly, she stored seats and a portable organ in a house, and services were held in the open that first summer, until the cold and rain prompted one of the Nyungar men to offer to build a church on his land. A building made of bush timber with hessian walls cemented over, windowlite for windows and rubberoid for the roof became a place of worship. When Yarran and her late husband Conway became Christians, they regarded Jones as their friend and their support was practical, for Yarran told how Conway drove Jones to Pingelly, Beverley and Quairading for church services and he also transported the children into town to attend Sunday School. Jones succeeded in bringing people together and breaking down cultural barriers. Taylor spoke of family holidays to Bremer Bay when everyone camped together. Yarran also recalled occasions when Jones would pitch her tent with the Nyungars, and the children used to ask about her “Was she a Nyungar or was she a wadjallah?” To Kathy Yarran “she was one of us.”

It was difficult to find a critical word spoken or written about Mary Jones and her work at Brookton. Journalist Mary Furber from the Daily News newspaper found this to be the case in 1959, when she researched an article on Jones and wrote

I went in search of a woman who had bought herself a church and mission. I found her and I also found a one-woman effort in native assimilation which was perfect in every way.

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156 Living Water, September 1971, 4.
158 Yarran, Interview by A. Longworth, 9.
159 Taylor, Interview by A. Longworth, 4.
161 Yarran, Interview by A. Longworth, 16.
Mary Jones seemed perfect in every way, to advocates of assimilation of Aboriginal people into mainstream western culture. When asked about Jones’ attitude to Nyungar culture, Taylor pointed out that the culture and language was already being lost before Jones came to Brookton and she did not believe Jones contributed to that process. Jones spoke to Furber about her experience at Mount Margaret where children were taken from their families and placed into dormitories. She believed that she had developed a better way at Brookton by encouraging family life. Although this was still the era when Aboriginal children were being removed from their families, Taylor knew of only one case where this had happened in Brookton.

The Brookton Mission Church became the home of a successful convention movement. Jones recalled in her monthly circular of June 1965, that since 1951 she had organised annual Conventions for the Nyungar people at Brookton. Taylor believed that the Brookton Conventions brought together aspects of Evangelical western culture and Indigenous culture. She suggested Jones modelled the Brookton conventions on the Keswick Conventions because many people from that convention came to support the Easter conventions at Brookton. She also regarded the Brookton Convention as an example of continuing the Indigenous custom of gathering together for corroborees.

The Keswick Convention at Kalamunda adopted the platform of the Keswick Convention held annually in England and began with the support of the Perth Bible Institute. The inaugural Kalamunda Convention was held between Christmas and New Year in 1929-30 and it became an annual gathering. Situated in the hills of the Darling Scarp to the east of Perth, Kalamunda was in a scenic position, and holiday accommodation provided venues for house parties, while the convention meetings were

163 Taylor, Interview by A. Longworth, 5.
165 Taylor, Interview by A. Longworth, 6.
167 Taylor, Interview by A. Longworth, 13.
168 Spice, Carment Urquhart and His Vision: The Perth Bible Institute, 30.
held in a large marquee. Jones certainly attended the Kalamunda Convention in her Brookton years. Marie Taylor remembered occasions when she travelled to the Keswick Conventions with Jones and the whole Brookton congregation where they camped together and attended the meetings.

May O’Brien recalled that many Wongutha people attended the Brookton Convention because they knew Jones had been at Mount Margaret, and this encouraged closeness between the Nyungar and Wongutha people. Kathy Yarran was also involved in the Brookton Conventions and remembered that up to five hundred people attended from as far away as the Kimberley region in the north of Western Australia, and many people became Christians as a result. Yarran recalled Jones was a “good old preacher” however at the conventions Jones preferred to let men take the lead. Although she had the vision of women ministering to Indigenous congregations, and for many years was the preacher for the Brookton congregation, Jones encouraged the Nyungar men to assume leadership, but she did not encourage the Nyungar women to preach. In this way, she submitted to Evangelical patriarchy and modelled that to her Nyungar congregation.

As an independent faith missionary, Jones continued to trust God to provide her physical needs and although she had no mission organisation backing her, she was able to achieve a great deal through the support of many individuals. Jones and the Nyungar people received generous support from her father Albert and sisters, Emily and Janet. Shirley Dowling described the continued support she, and her husband Don, provided to Jones and the Brookton Church, even after they moved from Northam to Perth. It has

\[^{169}\text{Ibid.}\]
\[^{170}\text{Taylor, Interview by A. Longworth, 13.}\]
\[^{171}\text{O’Brien, Interview by A. Longworth, 10.}\]
\[^{172}\text{Yarran, Interview by A. Longworth, 10, 12.}\]
\[^{173}\text{Johnston. Personal correspondence to A. Longworth, 8 June 2001.}\]
\[^{174}\text{Dowling. Personal correspondence to A. Longworth, 27 October 2002.}\]
been seen that local Nyungar people such as Kathy and Conway Yarran, and Fred and Jean Collard also supported Jones in her work throughout the district.

Mary Jones and the Brookton Congregation (courtesy Janet Johnston)

This undated photograph of Mary Jones surrounded by her congregation was taken outside the church at Brookton. Jones wrote on the reverse side that many of the children were away on school holidays. This indicated that the congregation was usually larger than appeared in the photograph and that it was a church attended by young families.

Jones made an impression on the non-Indigenous community of Brookton too. Jack Higgins was farming in Brookton during this era and he employed Nyungar men Dick Reidy, Roy Blurton and Conway Yarran as shearers. During the winter football season they met on Saturdays, when many from the mission church played football, while Higgins was a goal umpire. He wrote of Jones: “She was a wonderful lady who left her mark indelibly imprinted on the whole Brookton community – a bit of a warrior,

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175 Photograph courtesy of Janet Johnston.
but a real servant of Christ”.177 His reference to Jones as “a warrior” was reminiscent of late nineteenth century British missionary writing where missionaries were seen as warriors in the battle against Satan, fighting to advance the reign of God. Judith Rowbotham drew attention to the way independent female missionaries were seen as “soldiers” in front line service, but as infantry rather than officers. She contrasted this masculine image for single women with the gentler image of missionary wives as workers or sisters.178 In her role as minister of the Brookton Church Jones had adopted an alternative role to the traditional female missionary who worked solely with women and children. As a result, she was labelled with the militant description of “warrior”.

The Billy Graham Crusade of 1959 saw a period of growth in the Brookton church when Jones and Nyungar people from Brookton and Pingelly attended the Perth meetings.179 After the fundamentalist controversy that split Evangelicalism, Stuart Piggin recognised that the Billy Graham Crusade introduced change within Australian Evangelicalism in that it achieved almost unanimous Protestant support.180 He described how Graham did not support sectarian fundamentalism in 1959, but called Christians to unite in prayer for revival and to expect conversions. After Sydney, Perth had the highest Australian response rate with 5,396 people, or 5.1 percent of those in attendance making a Christian commitment. This response led to a growth in church membership and enrolment in Bible Colleges throughout Australia after 1959.181 Denzil Humphries specifically remembered attending the Brookton Convention organised by Mary Jones in 1959, where he became friends with Ron Williams and the following year they were

177 Ibid.
in the first intake of students at the Gnowangerup Bible College, begun by the UAM for Indigenous students.\textsuperscript{182}

The growth in the Brookton Mission Church and the establishment of the Gnowangerup Bible College occurred during that period of revival. From 1960, Nyungar men and women were trained to be Christian leaders among their people and some became missionaries with the UAM and pastors of Indigenous churches. This change did not come easily. Shirley Humphries recalled a difficult time in 1963. She and Denzil were missionaries at Wongutha Mission near Esperance at the time and some western missionaries opposed her cross-cultural marriage to Denzil.\textsuperscript{183} It was apparent that the missionary belief in the superiority of western culture still created a barrier between western and Indigenous cultures. Even so, Mary Jones provided a model for the emerging Indigenous church through her conventions. Denzil and Shirley Humphries began the Peoples’ Church in Kalgoorlie and Shirley believed that the first truly Indigenous Convention was at Kalgoorlie in 1964, when they completely organised a convention there.\textsuperscript{184}

Since 1954, the Presbyterian Church in Australia had been negotiating a union with the Methodist and Congregational Churches that would lead to the formation of the Uniting Church in Australia in 1977. Australian Church historian Frank Engel acknowledged that many conservative Presbyterians were opposed to church union.\textsuperscript{185} It seemed likely that Jones was one of these and equated church union with liberal theology. Jack Hutchinson wrote that as Jones approached retirement in the 1960s and wondered about the future of the Brookton Church, she was concerned about liberalism within the Presbyterian Church in Western Australia and she took his advice to contact

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{182} Humphries, \textit{Interview by A. Longworth}, 8.
\footnote{183} Shirley Humphries, \textit{Interview by A. Longworth} (Perth: 2004), 3.
\footnote{184} Ibid, 10.
\end{footnotes}
the more conservative World Presbyterian Mission.186 During his visit to Perth in 1964, W. A. Mahlow of World Presbyterian Mission met with a group of Presbyterian ministers to promote the establishment of an Evangelical Presbyterian denomination in Australia. Mahlow visited Jones and the Brookton Mission. Recognising Jones for her frugal lifestyle and her reputation as a warrior of Evangelicalism, he wrote

Miss Jones loves these people. She lives in a little house near them which is reminiscent of a rundown summer cabin in the woods, and she is greatly loved and respectfully feared by them. One man in his 20s told me he still shakes in his boots when Miss Jones comes around, especially if he has done anything wrong.187

By January 1966, the Brookton Mission Church was named the Evangelical Presbyterian Mission, Brookton, and was associated with World Presbyterian Missions Incorporated.188 Jones had worked with interdenominational groups within Evangelicalism such as the Christian Endeavour movement, the United Aborigines’ Mission, the Keswick Movement and more recently the Billy Graham Crusade. Now in the closing years of her missionary work she turned back to a conservative Presbyterianism and decided against handing over the leadership of the Brookton Mission Church to Nyungar Christians.

The growth of Nyungar leadership during the 1960s reflected changes in Australian society. In Western Australia, the Native Welfare Act of 1963 lifted some of the restrictions of previous legislation, and the commissioner was no longer the guardian of all Aboriginal children, however the policy of assimilation of Aboriginal people into the community was retained within the Department of Native Welfare.189 Under that policy, Aboriginal people were expected to be absorbed into the Australian

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186 Hutchinson, "Mary Jones: Missionary to Indigenous People of W.A.,” Personal Communication, 2.
189 "Bringing Them Home," 634.
community. One result of the passing of the national referendum in 1967 was the abandonment of the policy of assimilation, but it was not until the policy of self-determination was introduced in Australia in 1972 that there was a decline in the removal of Indigenous children from their families.\footnote{Ibid, 32-35.}

Moves towards self-determination were evident among Indigenous Christians when the Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship (AEF) was formed in Western Australia in 1967, with Denzil Humphries one of the prominent leaders.\footnote{Jack Braeside, "The History of the AEF," in \textit{A Story of Fire: Aboriginal Christianity}, ed. Max Hart (Coromandel East, SA: New Creation Publications Inc., 1988), 4.} Jack Braeside, another AEF leader, expressed his hope that missions would pass their work on to Indigenous leaders.\footnote{Ibid, 7.} When Mary Jones gave oversight of her church to the World Presbyterian Missions, she displayed a paternalistic attitude that did not respect the Nyungar leadership. This was confirmed by Chris Ridings who was the Methodist minister in Brookton in 1967 and conducted funerals and weddings for the Evangelical Presbyterian Mission in Brookton. His perception was that Jones treated the Nyungar people as children.\footnote{Chris Ridings, Personal Correspondence to A. Longworth, 3 June, 2002}

During almost twenty-one years at Brookton, Jones had worked hard to keep Nyungar families together, but in 1969 it was obvious children were still being removed from their families, for Jones wrote about it in her November Circular to supporters. Children neglected through drink are being committed to the Child Welfare Department, who are not nearly as understanding as the Native Welfare (with all their faults) so we need much prayer about this. The only institutions with room seem to be R.C. and two at least are there and maybe four. We have been battling to find out where they are. I sent an S.O.S. to the Reformed Church of Perth and nine families responded as willing to foster a child. This would mean Christian homes and also education at a ‘Christian School.’ Please pray all obstacles to this might be removed.\footnote{Jones, "Circular: Evangelical Presbyterian Mission," November 1969.}
The image of a “warrior” missionary battling against government forces was a sign of the distress this policy caused to Nyungar families and to Jones herself. While Jones tried to find Christian foster homes, the Nyungar people had a different agenda. They were concerned about the children being taken out of their cultural setting, and Jones reported their solution:

Our Aboriginal Christians have suggested running their own Children’s home for such needy children and three families here have already taken a needy child into their homes. Please pray for the salvation of the parents of needy children which is of course the better way. 195

In the face of the social issues of poverty, oppressive legislation and racism that led to alcohol abuse and the separation of children from their families Jones called her supporters to prayer.

Prayer, specific, persistent and believing prayer is the very great need of our day… Little children are suffering because of our laxity in prayer and effort and the need is great. Will you pray? 196

Negotiations with the World Presbyterian Mission were slow and it was November 1969 before Jones announced to her supporters that Reverend David Cross, with his wife Barbara, was expected to begin work in Brookton in January 1970. 197 After the protracted negotiations, when David and Barbara Cross arrived Jones did not immediately move into retirement, but stayed in Brookton and continued to take services. 198 The shared living arrangements were not satisfactory for the young family and when David Cross wrote that one of his first goals was to get the church properly organised there was an implied criticism of Jones’ work and it was apparent there was a

195 Ibid.
196 Ibid.
197 Ibid.
198 Athol Thomas, Kalkarni: The Brookton Story (Brookton: Shire of Brookton, 1999), 255.
clash of expectations. The relationship between Jones and her successor deteriorated, until David and Barbara moved to Perth and began a congregation in Perth, out of which grew the Westminster Presbyterian Church. When sharing her memories of Brookton, Barbara Cross joked about Jones’ lack of driving skills. It was a sign of the difficult relationship between them, but failed to take into account the significant achievements of Mary Jones during her many years of service. Mary Jones finally retired in 1971. The work at Brookton and surrounding districts declined through this difficult transition. Minutes of a meeting of the Evangelical Presbyterian Missions (USA) Inc., held at the Perth suburb of Lockridge on 10 March 1972, stated that the Pingelly and Quairading congregations were suspended and the Brookton congregation was in decline, but would not be abandoned. It was a disappointing conclusion to a significant ministry.

The following photograph of Mary Jones was taken in the kitchen of her retirement unit in Armadale in June 1977.
Although she looked well, Mary Jones was again suffering from the cancer which would claim her life on 30 December 1977. Her funeral was not taken by a Presbyterian, but by Nyungar Pastor Denzil Humphries.\textsuperscript{205} It was an appropriate choice, given her long association with Humphries and the Nyungar people.

This case study has identified that for Mary Jones, issues of gender changed with maturity. At Mount Margaret, she was initially recognised for her status as a daughter of the manse. Twelve years later, she was linked with the controversy regarding mission superintendent Rod Schenk and his alleged sexual indiscretion. Jones took advantage of that difficult situation to reinvent herself as an independent missionary. Nyungar Elder Kathy Yarran paid tribute to her friend Mary Jones when she said, “She was a warrior for God and she was only a little small woman.”\textsuperscript{206} She was referring to the way Jones would stand up for what she believed to be right, whether that was opposition to

\textsuperscript{205} Western Australian Register of Births Deaths and Marriages: Death Records.
\textsuperscript{206} Yarran, \textit{Interview by A. Longworth}, 6.
drinking, gambling and Sunday sport, striving to improve the conditions for the Nyungar people, or in defence of conservative Evangelicalism and her own authority. In her work as an independent missionary Jones pursued her dream to become a woman in ministry with the Nyungar churches she planted in Brookton and districts.

Evangelicalism remained important to Jones. The Presbyterian heritage proved stronger than her earlier commitment to interdenominational organisations with the result that she handed over the work to the World Presbyterian Missions rather than the Nyungar people themselves. The Westminster Presbyterian Church in Australia claimed Mary Jones’ move to Brookton in 1949 as the beginning of their history.\textsuperscript{207} In \textit{Kalkarni: The Brookton Story}, published in 1999, Athol Thomas described Jones as “possibly Brookton’s most remarkable post-war character”, and he recognised that she was still revered in Brookton where a continuing Nyungar congregation was evidence of her influence.\textsuperscript{208} Mary Jones continued to struggle with the complexities of gender, race and Evangelicalism. Jones did not identify with the Nyungar people to the extent of learning their language, but dissatisfied with the dormitory system at Mount Margaret, she strived to keep Nyungar families together. The value of the ministry of Mary Jones within the Nyungar Christian community of Brookton was affirmed in the words of Nyungar Elder Kathy Yarran, “she was one of us”.\textsuperscript{209}

\textsuperscript{208} Thomas, \textit{Kalkarni: The Brookton Story}, 253-258.
\textsuperscript{209} Yarran, \textit{Interview by A. Longworth}, 16.
Melvina Langley made her first visit to a city in 1939 when she travelled by train from her home in Portland, Victoria, to study at the Melbourne Bible Institute. Langley joined the United Aborigines’ Mission (UAM) in 1940 and served as a faith missionary in Western Australia until she married Nelson Rowley, also from Victoria, in September 1956. She then served another fifteen years as a married woman in the north-west of Western Australia until she and Nelson resigned in 1971, the same year that Mary Jones retired as an independent missionary. This chapter will focus on Langley’s formation, particularly at the Melbourne Bible Institute (MBI) and the role that institution played in her Evangelical formation and preparation for missionary service. This will be followed by an investigation of Langley’s missionary service as a single woman working among the Nyungar people of Western Australia, addressing the themes of gender, culture and Evangelicalism.

Melvina Alice Langley was born on 11 November 1916 in Portland, Victoria, where her father Arthur, who had no trade qualification, worked either on the railway or at the port. Langley had one younger sister and she recalled a happy childhood.¹ Her parents converted to Christianity during Langley’s childhood and within ten months, through the influence of her mother Alice, Langley also made a profession of faith. She recalled

There was nothing spectacular or outstanding, but one thing I do remember, that one Sunday morning I was in my bedroom reading my Bible and I read the story of Mark chapter five of the raising of Jairus’s daughter where it says she was twelve years old and I remember saying out loud, “She was twelve and I’m only eleven, but he has given me new life too.” So I really knew there was a change in my life.²

² Ibid, 2.
This recollection established that Langley made a profession of faith in childhood and from a young age she was reading the Bible and applying it to her personal experience. Although Langley reported nothing spectacular about her conversion, nevertheless it was significant that she had a conversion story to tell. The genre of the Evangelical conversion narrative emerged even before the Evangelical revival of the eighteenth century and was found by historian D. Bruce Hindmarsh to comprise a pattern that began with childhood religious experiences, followed by a period of “worldliness” leading to despair, then on to repentance, forgiveness and a life of service.³ The emphasis on personal conversion flourished within Evangelicalism alongside the growth of individualism and self-consciousness in modern western history.⁴ When Langley described her childhood conversion in 1927, she did not speak of despair or use the word repentance, but her words “So I really knew there was a change in my life” denoted repentance.⁵ Her words suggested a joyful assurance in her newfound faith and she went on to a life of Christian service. Langley’s narrative reflected the Evangelical emphasis on personal conversion that had its roots in the western culture into which she was born.

Grief entered Langley’s life experience when her mother died after a long illness when Langley was fourteen years of age, just as Australia was entering the economic Depression of the 1930s. Langley showed early signs of personal resilience when she became the housekeeper for her father and sister and completed her Intermediate Certificate at the Portland High School that year. Her mother had encouraged Langley to obtain a good education and her ambition was to become a teacher, but alongside the loss of her mother, Langley experienced deep disappointment when the expense of her mother’s illness and funeral meant that her father could not afford to send Langley away

³ Hindmarsh, "Patterns of Conversion in Early Evangelical History and Overseas Mission Experience," 72-73.
⁴ Ibid, 81.
⁵ Rowley, *Interview by A. Longworth*, 1. See expanded quotation on previous page.
to finish her schooling. She was not alone in this setback. During the Depression, many young people did not complete their schooling because of the need to supplement the family income. Historian Marilyn Lake verified this in her collaborative chapter covering the 1930s Depression, when she recognised that a sense of deprivation often remained with the young people. 6 Langley resigned herself to her situation and when her father remarried three years later, she worked as a live-in domestic servant some miles away. 7

Membership of the Christian Endeavour (CE) society at the Portland Baptist Church was part of Langley’s youth in the 1930s and it was an enduring influence. In 2003, she could still recite the CE pledge by which members consecrated their lives to God and promised to pray and read the Bible every day. Daily prayer and Bible reading became a practice she maintained throughout her life. 8 Active membership of CE was the means by which Langley learned to speak in public through praying and leading at meetings. It was either at CE or church that Langley recalled meeting UAM missionary Tom Street when he was on deputation in rural Victoria and that meeting changed her life. 9

Because Street was so influential for Langley, further information about him will bring understanding to the role he played in her formation. Tom Street served as a probationary missionary at Gnowangerup in 1927, under the supervision of Hope and Hedley Wright. 10 In 1928 Street was in Nannine in Western Australia and his report from there to The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, showed he considered Aboriginal culture as menacing and incompatible with Christianity for he wrote:

7 Rowley, Interview by A. Longworth, 1, 4.
8 Ibid, 6.
9 Ibid.
10 The Australian Aborigines’ Advocate, February 1927, 2.
As one sits out in the cool of the evening and listens to their corroboree songs, the grunts, the chants, the shouts, the wails, how one longs that these people who sit in utter darkness, may come to know the light and liberty of life in Jesus Christ and nothing but the power of God can ever make this possible for them.11

That year Street was among the dissidents who left the Australian Aborigines’ Mission over their concern that it was influenced by modernism and he and his fiancé Beryl Kingston both aligned themselves with the Gospel Mission to the Australian Aborigines.12 Later, as missionaries with the United Aborigines’ Mission, Tom and Beryl Street were on furlough in Tasmania in December 1934 and were present at the annual meetings held in Melbourne in April in 1935.13 It was during that 1934-1935 furlough that Street would have visited Portland. From Tasmania, Street wrote to The United Aborigines’ Messenger and described his work in the Kimberley region of Western Australia as “an advance into the Devil’s territory”.14 Nevertheless, his negative attitude to Aboriginal culture did not prevent Street from expressing his distress at the decline in the population and he provided medical assistance as he was able. His deepest concern however was the spiritual conversion of people he believed were going to eternal punishment because they did not know Jesus Christ. He accused the Christian Church of not responding to the situation that had prompted Ernest Telfer to come to Western Australia in 1908.15 If his message at Portland reflected the passion of that written report, it was not surprising that his spoken word influenced the young Langley. From her position in the choir at Portland Baptist Church Langley remembered hearing Tom Street preach from Ezekiel 3:17-18.16 That text is a call from Yahweh to the prophet Ezekiel to warn Israel of God’s judgment of death upon the exiles. If the

11 Ibid, March 1928, 2.
12 *The Aborigines’ Interceder*, May 1928, 12.
14 Ibid, December 1934, 11.
15 Ibid.
prophet did not obey God’s call, the text suggested, he would also die. Langley believed that through that proclamation, God called her to follow Street’s example and go to warn the Aboriginal people of God’s judgment. If she did not, then like the prophet Ezekiel, she would be accountable to God. From that day when she was still a teenager, Langley committed herself to proclaim the Christian message to the Aboriginal people of Western Australia.17 The fact that she could remember the meeting with such clarity sixty-eight years later, showed the influence that Street had upon the young woman.

Until she met Tom Street, Langley had little awareness of Indigenous people, apart from Mulga Fred, a whip cracker, who performed at the annual Portland Show, and David Unaipon.18 Unaipon was from the Point McLeay Mission in South Australia, and during the 1920s and 1930s was well known as an inventor, a travelling preacher and a political activist for the rights of his people.19 Historian John Harris described him as a sophisticated man who appeared to be the successful product of assimilation and yet he challenged people’s conception in that he never forsook his identification with his culture.20 Langley however recalled nothing about Indigenous culture from that meeting, only the name. It was her meeting with Tom Street, and his emotive sermon, that prompted Langley’s sense of call to join the UAM in Western Australia.21

Tom Street advised Langley that a mission would probably require Bible training and he recommended the Melbourne Bible Institute (MBI), although he explained Langley would need to be twenty-one before she could be accepted.22 Street and his wife, the former Beryl Kingston, had both been students of MBI in 1925.23 His recommendation drew attention to a new attitude within the faith mission that now

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17 Ibid, 6-7.
18 Ibid, 2.
20 Ibid.
21 Rowley, Interview by A. Longworth, 14.
22 Ibid, 7.
required Bible training for missionaries. In his research into the Bible College movement in Australia, David Parker named the Melbourne Bible Institute and the Missionary and Bible College in Sydney as the two Australian colleges founded after the First World War as missionary training colleges. He suggested they also played a significant role in the fundamentalist controversy against modernism and that many of their graduates served with faith missions.

Langley’s sense of call did not diminish through those three years of waiting and as soon as she reached the required age, Melvina applied to the MBI. The young woman was already facing the prospect of living by the faith principles of the UAM, for in the letter that accompanied her application Langley wrote “I have not very much of this world’s goods but I am trusting Him and I am confident that He will supply all my needs.” Langley was well recommended, for her minister, Reverend W. Cross, described her as “one of the most sincere Christians it has been my privilege to know.” and her medical report showed that she had enjoyed good health throughout her life. Langley was a typical candidate in terms of Dana Roberts’ analysis of female faith missionaries in that she was from a rural, working class background and had limited education. With her family background, good health, strong personality, Evangelical theology and understanding of the faith principle of trusting God to provide her needs, Langley had all the ingredients required of a faith missionary.

In 1930, the UAM claimed that most of their missionaries had undergone their theological formation at the MBI. Langley joined that number in 1938. Principal Clifford Nash was the inaugural principal of MBI and he remained in the position until

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25 M. Langley to MBI Secretary Tregaskis, 27 November 1937 "File 848 Melvina Langley," in Melbourne Bible Institute Archives, Bible College of Victoria (Melbourne).
26 W. Cross to MBI Secretary Tregaskis, 27 November 1937 & Medical report, 20 November 1937 Ibid.
27 Robert, American Women in Mission: A Social History of their Thought and Practice, 216.
28 The United Aborigines’ Messenger, September 1930, 4.
1942. As the only lecturer, he had a wide influence. Langley showed the respect she felt when she stated:

We had one teacher, the Principal. We had two lectures each morning, one on New Testament and one on Old Testament, Monday to Friday… Mr Nash just sat there with his Bible and we sat with our Bibles and our notebooks. He didn’t give us notes, he didn’t dictate notes, he just lectured and we wrote down what we could from what he said… To me he knew everything, as a young student… He just opened up the Bible and told us what it said.29

Langley’s comment showed the importance that was given to the Bible. With her Evangelical background, Langley respected Nash and his teaching. Nash had declared his theological position in an address given in the Melbourne Town Hall as early as 1907. On that occasion he spoke about his belief in the harmony between God’s work in science and God’s word in the Bible and stated “Since the Book not only contains God’s Work, but is itself that Word, its statements, being inspired by Him, are free from all error… The Scripture record is absolutely free from error.”30 In 1937, the year Langley made her application, Nash included in his annual report a defence of the accusation that MBI had a closed mind regarding modern scholarship.

With increasing clearness we learn that “the sum of Thy Word is Truth,” and that while the Scriptures contain many apparent superficial contradictions they present no fundamental divergence of principles. All that is gleaned from their pages can be woven by the careful student into a shining harmony of progressive revelation, every part of which is affirmative of “the many-hued wisdom of God.”31

By 1937, Nash’s acknowledgement of apparent superficial contradictions in the scriptures had softened his earlier position on inerrancy, but in his report he maintained these problems with the text had no affect on the authority or truth of the scriptures.

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Although his biographer Paproth did not use the label of fundamentalist, Nash showed in his annual report that he continued to uphold the fundamentalist view of the Bible.\textsuperscript{32}

Her formation at MBI taught Langley to trust God for her physical needs and she gave the following example. The trainee missionary was in the custom of writing a letter to her father every week, but one week she had no money for a stamp. Her father perceived her need because no letter arrived from his daughter and the following week his regular letter arrived with a stamp plus a ten shilling note and from that time, he always sent a stamp and sometimes money. Langley had prayed about her need and believed her father’s response was in answer to prayer.\textsuperscript{33} Her recollection illustrated the simple lifestyle bordering on poverty that would be the cost of her decision to become a faith missionary. A teenager during the 1930s Depression, Langley was used to economising and she accepted her lack of physical resources as an adventure in faith.

Learning to live by faith was not only about money, but also meant trusting God with all aspects of her life. It was at MBI that Langley faced the question of her willingness to remain single.

There was one experience I had at MBI … regarding marriage and would I be willing to remain single all my life for the sake of the Lord and that was a bit of a battle because other missionaries had gone out. I had heard they had gone to the field, they’d got married and … it took me a while to come to a decision but finally I said, yes Lord, you are my Lord… I told the Lord I was willing to remain single all my life if he wanted me to.\textsuperscript{34}

This issue needed to be faced because women missionaries were in the majority in the UAM. In May 1938, when Langley was at MBI, the UAM missionary staff consisted of twenty-three single women, eight single men and twenty-three couples.\textsuperscript{35} Although the UAM did not require its missionaries to be single, singleness was often part of the cost

\textsuperscript{32} Paproth, \textit{Failure is Not Final}, 184.
\textsuperscript{33} Rowley, \textit{Interview by A. Longworth}, 18.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid, 14.
\textsuperscript{35} \textit{The United Aborigines’ Messenger}, May 1938, 2.
of missionary service for women because of the gender imbalance. During her formation, Langley anticipated that singleness would be her lifestyle and she had resigned herself to that likelihood.

Langley was preparing to work with people from another culture, but she received no specific training in cultural awareness or knowledge of Aboriginal culture. The widespread belief in the superiority of western civilisation, traced by Brian Stanley to pre-Enlightenment times, was present during the missionary expansion from the nineteenth century. Inevitably, it resulted in a lack of appreciation of non-western cultures and the attitude prevailed into the twentieth century. When Hudson Taylor founded the China Inland Mission in 1865, he recognised the importance of missionaries identifying with the local language and culture. Although the MBI was training missionaries who would work across cultures, it was not until 1940 that the institution planned to increase its teaching staff and widen its curriculum by introducing subjects such as anthropology, church history and the history of modern missions. By that year, Langley was on her way to Western Australia so these changes were not in time for her to benefit from a study of mission and culture.

Like the previous two case studies, the journey across the barren continent by steam train had a profound effect on Langley, confirming again the recognition by Lavinia Byrne that the physical journey to the mission field was symbolic of a rite of passage. Langley was born in Australia, and she did not travel to an exotic overseas country for her missionary service and so the train journey across the continent was the significant transition in her life. The young woman was emotionally close to her father, and he travelled with his daughter as far as Port Pirie in South Australia. The train was

37 Taylor, China's Spiritual Need and Claims, 44, 76.
39 Byrne, ed., The Hidden Journey: Missionary Heroines in Many Lands, 2, 37.
already moving when Arthur disembarked, and then Langley was on her own.\textsuperscript{40} This parting during the journey itself was a symbol of letting-go her emotional dependence on her father and travelling into the unknown. She interpreted her journey through the biblical text of Hebrews 11:8 where Abraham went out not knowing where he was going and she identified herself, like Abraham, going into new territory and trusting God. Concerning that journey Langley recalled:

\begin{quote}
The Aboriginal people used to come to the train selling their artefacts … and the train pulled in one night and in the shadows I could just see these dark faces and their white teeth and I was really terrified. I just stood there and prayed: Lord if I’ve got to work among these people you’ll have to give me a love for them. I didn’t say please or thank you, I said, you’ll have to, and he did … he gave me a real love for the people which has continued to this day.\textsuperscript{41}
\end{quote}

Langley admitted that in December 1940 she was terrified by her first encounter with Aboriginal people. Her formation at MBI had given her knowledge of the Bible from a fundamentalist perspective, but no cultural awareness. Forty-seven years after the first missionary outreach at La Perouse, the UAM still provided no introduction to Aboriginal culture to its probationary missionary. In spite of the antecedents of the faith mission having adopted the faith mission principles of the China Inland Mission in 1902, the identification with Indigenous culture had not become a characteristic of the UAM.\textsuperscript{42} Langley’s terror at that first encounter with Aborigines indicated that cultural difference would be a huge barrier for Langley to overcome.

Langley arrived at Djurin, six miles east of Kellerberrin, on 18 December 1940, where she was under the supervision of Christina Finlayson.\textsuperscript{43} Djurin is the site of a traditional campsite where the Nyungar people had built a bough shed and pitched a tent.

\textsuperscript{40} Rowley, \textit{Interview by A. Longworth}, 19.  
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{42} NSW Aborigines' Advocate, November 1902, 2.  
\textsuperscript{43} The United Aborigines’ Messenger, February 1941, 10.
for Mary Jones in 1939.\textsuperscript{44} Finlayson was at Djurin by December 1939 and they worked together until Jones returned to Mount Margaret early in 1940.\textsuperscript{45} In her research covering the situation of Nyungar people during the difficult years of the 1920s and 1930s Anna Haebich recognised that while reserves such as Djurin enabled the retention of some Nyungar tradition, the people realised that the exclusion of their children from the state schools limited their employment options.\textsuperscript{46} Her analysis showed that the Nyungar people had survived the loss of their land, were adapting to the changes forced on them by European settlement and wanted the benefits of a western education for their children.

Christina Finlayson was Langley’s initial contact in the field with a serving missionary who was an intentional mentor. Their relationship was central to Langley’s development as a faith missionary. Finlayson was born in Scotland in 1874 and migrated as a child to Devonport, Tasmania, where she cared for her parents until they died.\textsuperscript{47} It was only then that Finlayson was free of family responsibilities and joined the Australian Aborigines’ Mission in 1917, at the age of forty-three, and was appointed to the Bomaderry Children’s Home near Nowra in New South Wales. Ernest Telfer paid tribute to Finlayson when he wrote: “She was suited for the work amongst the children, and for many years the influence of her sterling character has been felt by all who have come in contact with her ministry of love.”\textsuperscript{48} The role of Bomaderry Children’s Home in the separation of Indigenous children from their families was evident in a report by Matron Lily Fowler dated October 1930. In that report Fowler described the case of a sick baby taken from Ulgundahi Island on the Clarence River and given into the care of

\textsuperscript{44} Morgan and Tjalaminu, \textit{Ngulak Ngarnk Nidja Booyja, Our Mother, This Land}, 66-68. & Humphries, \textit{Interview by A. Longworth}, 2.
\textsuperscript{45} \textit{West Australian Golden Link}, December 1939, 12.
\textit{The United Aborigines’ Messenger}, May 1940, 11.
\textsuperscript{46} Haebich, \textit{For Their Own Good}, 222-242.
\textsuperscript{47} Western Australian Register of Births Deaths and Marriages: Death Certificate.
\textsuperscript{48} Telfer, \textit{Amongst Australian Aborigines}, 136.
staff at Bomaderry following the death of the mother, because the father, who did not want to part with the child, was unable to care for him.49

The Aborigines Protection Amending Act of 1915 gave authority to the Aborigine Protection Board of New South Wales to remove Indigenous children from their parents without needing to prove they were neglected.50 The policy certainly had its opponents during the 1920s and 1930s for the Bringing Them Home report described Aboriginal activists who protested against the destruction of Indigenous family life.51

As early as 1874, the Public Charities Commission Inquiry had recognised that institutional life was prejudicial to the health of children, but the practice continued.52 Telfer’s partisan history of the UAM told of the dedicated women who cared for the children and he regarded the Bomaderry Home as an opportunity not only to “rescue” children, but also to lead them into the Christian faith.53 Finlayson served at Bomaderry Children’s Home for seventeen years.54 Her many years of service suggested she did not question the role of the children’s institutions in implementing oppressive government policy.

The reason Finlayson was sent to Oodnadatta, in South Australia, in 1936 was due to a tragedy within the UAM. In December 1935, UAM missionary Jim Page died at Nepabunna, in the northern Flinders Ranges of South Australia.55 The UAM did not mention the cause of death, but in her research into the incident Tracy Spencer referred to the coroner’s report into his suicide that indicated a factor may have been depression arising from allegations, with little supporting evidence, of a relationship with an

49 Ibid, 142.
51 Ibid, 45.
52 Ibid, 44.
53 Telfer, Amongst Australian Aborigines, 144.
54 Rowley, Interview by A. Longworth, 21.
55 The United Aborigines’ Messenger, January 1936, 10.
Indigenous woman.\textsuperscript{56} Fred Eaton and his unnamed wife were immediately sent from Oodnadatta to Nepabunna, leaving a vacancy at Oodnadatta which was filled by Finlayson.\textsuperscript{57}

In its isolation, Oodnadatta was a very different experience to the institutional work at Bomaderry. A 1937 report of riding a camel on a day trip to Hookie’s Hole illustrated that she was in the outback, where camels were still used for transport.\textsuperscript{58} Finlayson would have been at Oodnadatta as Telfer was writing his history, which was published in 1939, but he did not name her and details of her contribution there are minimal. Telfer did reveal the mission support for the removal of children from there in the 1920s when he wrote “It was found that the best work could not be done for the Aboriginal children at Oodnadatta, mainly owing to the proximity to the Home of the native camp.”\textsuperscript{59} The children were removed to Quorn and this was deeply resented by the Arunta people at Oodnadatta. Dora Wakerley, who together with her husband replaced Finlayson, wrote of the suspicion towards missionaries because of the removal of the children. She omitted the role of the mission in taking the children from Oodnadatta to Quorn and claimed only that it was government policy to take the children away.\textsuperscript{60} No evidence has been located to indicate Finlayson’s personal response to grief-stricken parents at Oodnadatta.

By December 1939, Finlayson was at Djurin, east of Kellerberrin. She was sixty-five years of age when she came to the new mission at Djurin and acknowledged “It is somewhat difficult”.\textsuperscript{61} After living among the more traditional Arunta people, she observed that the Nyungar people spoke English and were “more civilised” than in

\textsuperscript{57} \textit{The United Aborigines’ Messenger}, January 1936, 10.
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid, January 1937, 8.
\textsuperscript{59} Telfer, \textit{Amongst Australian Aborigines}, 172.
\textsuperscript{60} Dora Wakerley, \textit{The Storm Lantern's Travels} (Box Hill: Mission Publications of Australia, 1990), 47-48.
\textsuperscript{61} \textit{The United Aborigines’ Messenger}, December 1939, 11.
many other places, but had not been taught the Christian faith. From Djurin in 1940 Finlayson replied to a mission survey about living according to faith principles. She responded positively that she had lacked nothing. However, it was clear the work load was taxing the energy of the older woman and she ended her short letter “Please excuse brevity. I am very weary.”

The following photograph of Langley and Finlayson was taken on the front verandah of the mission home in the 1940s. It accentuated the age difference, depicting the elderly Finlayson supported by the much younger probationary missionary, Melvina Langley.

UAM Mission Secretary Amy Sandland had warned Langley of the age difference before she left Melbourne and instructed the young probationary missionary to love the older woman “for the Lord’s sake”. Her remarks anticipated a potentially difficult situation for Langley, but this was not the case. Langley stated “I wasn’t there for very long before I loved her for her own sake and we really worked like mother and

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63 Photograph courtesy of Melvina Rowley.
daughter.” Langley had been terrified about working with people who were culturally different and this familial relationship with the older missionary provided the support she needed to overcome her fears. The house seen in the background of the photograph was built on land owned by the Leake family, across the road from the Nyungar camp and leased by the UAM on a peppercorn lease. Finlayson’s brother-in-law Robert Powell, a former missionary with the China Inland Mission, had built the house. The walls were of wire netting and hessian cemented together and Langley described it as comfortable, but basic. In comparison with her simple living conditions, Langley recalled the lack of facilities for the Nyungar residents, for example, only one tap was provided on the reserve. By current standards, this seems incredibly inadequate. It was not an isolated situation. At the Badjaling Mission in the years 1930 to 1954, the missionaries and Nyungar people coped with unreliable well water throughout the entire existence of that mission. Kellerberrin was on the route of the pipeline for the Coolgardie Goldfields Water Supply Scheme, designed by C. Y. O’Connor and opened in 1903. The pipeline serviced not only the goldfields, but also the agricultural districts en route and its proximity to the reserve explained why Djurin had access to scheme water. At the Djurin campsite, water from that one tap had to be carried by bucket to the makeshift camps and Langley was convinced that the poor conditions resulted in deaths through pneumonia, particularly of children and babies.

Unlike Mount Margaret where Rod Schenk was the dominant male missionary, at Djurin the women shared the work equally, for Langley explained she and Finlayson alternated between leading the Sunday services while the other accompanied the

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64 Rowley, Interview by A. Longworth, 21.
69 Rowley, Interview by A. Longworth, 33.
singing, but both women conducted the Sunday School. Leading worship and preaching was a role taken up by Langley from the beginning of her missionary service. Langley had wanted to be a teacher and since a government schoolteacher was appointed at Djurin to teach the children, she fulfilled her ambition when each week she taught literacy to the young men who had never had the opportunity of schooling. Hunger was often a reality for the Nyungar people when employment was scarce. The two women made vegetable soup and for payment of one penny, provided a nutritious lunch of soup and a piece of fruit to the schoolchildren. This had the added bonus of encouraging the children to attend school regularly. At Djurin the missionary women engaged in typical female roles of feeding and caring for children, but were in addition, spiritual leaders.

The life of a faith missionary continued to be arduous. At Djurin the only transport was a horse and cart and the horse was so old it could make the six miles into Kellerberrin, but could not manage the journey to the nearest colleague, Mary Belshaw, at the Badjaling Mission thirty-nine miles to the south-west of Kellerberrin. There was no telephone and the women rarely met other missionaries except at the annual meetings in Perth. Langley reported that missionaries were always on call and had no annual leave, but did have a furlough once every three years. A circular written by Langley to her supporters in 1942 revealed the hardship of isolation when there was a crisis. Langley told how she had been in Perth for speaking engagements and on the day of her return Finlayson went to the Nyungar camp to seek help to harness the horse in order to meet the train. One of the camp dogs attacked the elderly Finlayson. Her

70 Ibid, 24.
71 Ibid.
72 Ibid, 29.
73 United Aborigines Ministries, "Old Brown Case - W.A. Reports etc, File: Circulars," in United Aborigines Mission Archives (Melbourne), f3.
injuries included facial lacerations and her wrist and hip were broken; she required hospital care and was absent for eleven months.

Langley continued with voluntary assistants until Ellice Goodfellow, who had been appointed to the Badjaling Mission, came to Kellerberrin to assist.\(^{74}\) Langley had shared a room with Goodfellow during her first term as a student at MBI, when Goodfellow was entering into her third term as a student and became a senior student the following year. Goodfellow was born in New South Wales on 2 December 1909, making her seven years senior to Langley.\(^{75}\) Langley referred to the role reversal with herself as the missionary in charge at Djurin and Goodfellow a probationary missionary. She displayed her loyalty to a former colleague and a reticence to speak of her personal skill of teamwork, when she admitted it had not been an easy time and expressed admiration for the way Goodfellow had accepted the situation.\(^{76}\)

The missionary women at Djurin were accountable to the state UAM committee and through them to the federal committee, although Langley stated they received little support and no regular visits.\(^{77}\) There was a regular remittance received from the UAM and Langley recalled that this averaged about ten shillings per month at the time she was at Kellerberrin.\(^{78}\) When compared to her wage of seven shillings and sixpence per week as a domestic worker before she began her studies at MBI, it was apparent that living by faith meant living so simply that it could be described as verging on poverty.\(^{79}\) Langley however, did not complain.

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\(^{74}\) Rowley, *Interview by A. Longworth*, 32.

\(^{75}\) “File 824 Ellice Goodfellow,” in Melbourne Bible Institute Archives, Bible College of Victoria (Melbourne), application form.

\(^{76}\) Rowley, *Interview by A. Longworth*, 32.

\(^{77}\) Ibid, 28.

\(^{78}\) Ibid, 26.

\(^{79}\) Ibid, 8.
In spite of their management of individual mission stations, women missionaries had almost no leadership role in the administration of the UAM. Missionaries attended the public annual meeting in Perth but Langley stated:

Missionaries weren’t welcome at the business meeting. I don’t know why, but that was just the thing that we accepted, I suppose… There was one woman on the federal council and there was one woman on the Perth council and they were both the secretaries of the council, but as I said, missionaries were never at the council meeting.80

In these words, Langley revealed a diminished role for women within the fundamentalist UAM compared to the era of the New South Wales Aborigines’ Mission and the Australian Aborigines’ Mission, when missionaries participated as members of the mission council in New South Wales. Adherence to a fundamentalist theology which subordinated the role of women was a paradox for women like Langley. The UAM accepted women as missionaries then gave no opportunity for leadership in the administration of the mission, and offered no theological affirmation of their role. When Langley submitted to the theology, it was evidence of the continuing gender barrier faced by women missionaries, as observed by Dana L. Robert.81 The UAM was also out of step with changes in Australian society, for the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 saw many more women enter the workforce.82 In her collaborative research into the changing roles of women during the Second World War, Marilyn Lake emphasised that the government expectation was that the employment of women was a temporary change for the duration of the war. After the war however, both single and married women remained in the workforce and the struggle for equal wages that had begun during the war years continued in the post-war period.83 Lake did not specifically address the experience of Indigenous women in Australia during this period, and neither

80 Ibid, 28.
83 Ibid, 265.
did Langley in her 1944 report, for the racial injustice was stronger than gender concerns. In spite of the growth in opportunities for western women in Australian society, Langley did not question the status of women in the UAM. She had formed a close bond with Finlayson that was to endure beyond Kellerberrin; however, as a role model for the Nyungar women, Langley could be seen to be submitting to the patriarchy of the UAM.

During Langley’s era at Djurin, racial prejudice in the wider community meant the Nyungar people were not welcome at town functions and so the missionaries used occasions such as Christmas, Easter and New Year to have their own celebrations at the mission, when they gathered the families together for sports and gift giving. Langley recalled that when she arrived at Kellerberrin one week before Christmas in 1941 she was put to work mending second-hand clothes so that everyone received an item of clothing for Christmas. The missionaries lived very frugally and relied on donations from mission supporters for the Christmas gifts and no doubt the wartime scarcity meant that these were often second-hand items. The following photograph shows Langley as Santa’s helper, distributing the presents while Finlayson and local supporter Mr O’Brien, Methodist minister Norm Hicks and Finlayson’s sister Mrs Powell stood alongside. These people provided significant support to the women missionaries.

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84 *The United Aborigines’ Messenger*, July 1944, 5.
86 Photograph courtesy of Melvina Rowley. From left to right – Christina Finlayson, Mr Wilkins, Melvina Langley, Father Christmas (Mr O’Brien), Rev Norm Hicks (Methodist Minister), Mrs Powell (sister of Finlayson).
The photograph is also a picture of a racial divide depicting active gift-giving Europeans and passive Nyungar recipients. There is no Nyungar parent sharing in the gift-giving ritual. This introduction of the Santa myth from the western celebration of Christmas seemed incongruous with the literal interpretation of Scripture adopted by the UAM. It was confirmation that western culture was introduced alongside Christianity. There was an additional motive however, for Langley recalled that special events organised by the missionaries helped to reduce alcohol consumption and family feuds, and facilitated opportunities to share the Christian message. Violence associated with drunkenness was a common occurrence on the reserve and the women missionaries often broke up fights, provided first aid or organised transport to hospital.87

The missionaries had little contact with the European population in Kellerberrin and Langley believed this was a consequence of their identification with the Nyungar people.88 In contrast to her marginalisation within the European community, Langley

87 Rowley, *Interview by A. Longworth*, 27.
88 Ibid, 23.
received friendship from the Nyungar people, as illustrated in the following comments by Denzil Humphries, whose family lived at Djurin.

Lots of times our people and even our men folk were really hostile to white men. They seemed to be so aggressive and that and they seemed so hard, but the approach of the women missionaries was very useful in those days... The old missionary, well we call them old now but they were young in those days, Miss Langley, Miss Goodfellow, Miss Finlayson and Miss Jones they all came out and worked in the Kellerberrin area and also in the Quairading area where Badjaling Mission was set up and so that was our early contact with Christian people and especially white people who cared and who loved us and we loved them in exchange and almost sort of accommodated them in doing things what they wanted to do.89

The authority of male police officers no doubt contributed to the dislike of white men, for Humphries described his experience of being forced out of town at six o’clock in the evening by local police.90 The women missionaries on the other hand, he experienced as caring and loving. Gender played a part in the initial acceptance of single women missionaries. Humphries included Langley in that list of women missionaries whose friendship has left a positive remembrance with Nyungar people, particularly those who, like himself, adopted the Christian faith.

Langley had taught the Christian faith to Humphries when he was a child and in the 1950s, when Syd Williams was the missionary at Djurin, he made the decision to become a Christian. As he told the narrative of his conversion, Humphries spoke of the frustration of young Nyungar men like himself, who finished school at fourteen years of age to work on farms in the district, but found themselves on the edge of the European community. With few social outlets, they turned to alcohol, which led to fights. After witnessing a drunken fight in which an uncle was badly burned, Humphries made a Christian commitment and gave up drinking. His life was changed. It would appear that conversion among young men was rare, for Humphries recalled the hardship of still

89 Humphries, Interview by A. Longworth, 2-3.
90 Ibid, 4.
living and working among his people on the reserve, but no longer participating in the gambling, drinking and fighting.\textsuperscript{91} With the biblical teaching of his childhood as a foundation, and the mentoring of Williams, Humphries began to exercise Christian leadership among his people.

Like Langley, Humphries could narrate his conversion narrative and it followed the pattern as described by Hindmarsh even more closely than that of Langley.\textsuperscript{92} From his childhood teaching to a period in his youth when he succumbed to the “worldly” camp life of gambling, alcohol and violence, followed by despair and repentance, his life was changed when he made a Christian commitment. Humphries could testify to the challenge of living the Christian life and a further call to a life of pastoral ministry to his own people. Hindmarsh argued that an introspective conscience and self-consciousness were necessary for the development of conversion narratives.\textsuperscript{93} He compared conversion narratives from the rise of Evangelicalism in the eighteenth century and contrasted them with the adoption, variation or absence of such narratives in Evangelical mission history of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. He suggested that the rise of an introspective conscience was due to long contact with western missionaries, and only in societies where self-determination was possible could people make real choices.\textsuperscript{94} In her comparative work into colonial mission encounters in British Columbia and South and Western Australia, Peggy Brock concluded that Indigenous people responded to missionary endeavour after assessing the benefits and the cost and most converts maintained links with their cultural roots and their new faith.\textsuperscript{95} This was borne out in Humphries’ case, for in spite of his experience of racial prejudice within the European community of Kellerberrin Humphries chose to adopt the

\textsuperscript{91} Ibid, 5-7.
\textsuperscript{92} See page 304-305
\textsuperscript{93} Hindmarsh, “Patterns of Conversion in Early Evangelical History and Overseas Mission Experience,” 92-93.
\textsuperscript{94} Ibid, 92-98.
\textsuperscript{95} Brock, ”Mission Encounters in the Colonial World: British Columbia and South West Australia,” 179.
narrowly focused Evangelical Christianity taught by the UAM. He could articulate his conversion narrative in the style of a western Evangelical culture and although this verified a western influence, Humphries continued to identify with his Nyungar culture. This included Nyungar values about caring for the extended family and living in the Australian bush, and Humphries stated his belief that these aspects of Nyungar culture also came from God.96

Finlayson and Langley both left the Djurin Mission in 1946 and the two women rented rooms together in Perth, and while Finlayson was now retired, Langley became the deputation officer for the UAM from March 1946 until May 1947.97 In that role Langley attended women’s meetings, Christian Endeavour meetings, church services and mission prayer meetings in order to publicise the work of the mission. Her report to the UAM in September 1946 emphasised the importance of prayer for missionaries who “face the heathen darkness on the mission stations” and showed her continuing perception of Aboriginal people as heathen.98 In keeping with the faith mission principles, Langley did not mention finance however this would have been an unspoken reason for informing other Evangelical Christians of the work. Her deputation work also meant that Langley visited the UAM stations in the south of the state, including Badjaling, where she spent Christmas 1946. Langley took the following photograph at the Badjaling Siding where her colleague Ellice Goodfellow and Badjaling residents waited to meet the train.99

96 Humphries, Interview by A. Longworth, 2.
97 Rowley, Interview by A. Longworth, 39-40.
98 The United Aborigines’ Messenger, September 1946, 7.
99 Photograph courtesy of Melvina Rowley of the Badjaling Siding, 1946. Ellice Goodfellow on the left, waiting with Nyungar residents of Badjaling to meet the train.
Nyungar residents and Ellice Goodfellow at Badjaling Siding (courtesy Melvina Rowley)

It seemed likely they were waiting to welcome new missionary Ruth Allen who described the scene of her introduction to the mission station just before Christmas in 1946 when “a row of dark, shining-faced little girls, with the boys in the background” waited to welcome her.100

The arrival of Father Christmas was an annual highlight at most UAM centres, including Badjaling. The following photograph was taken that Christmas at the Badjaling Mission bough shed, and since some of the children were wearing or holding masks, it appeared that war-surplus gas masks were among the gifts at Badjaling that year.101 In spite of the poor conditions, the children were obviously dressed for a special occasion and eagerly gathered around Father Christmas.

100 The United Aborigines’ Messenger, February 1947, 11.
Using the railway system, Langley travelled for seven weeks around the Great Southern and South-West districts of the state during March and April 1947, and her itinerary included a visit to the Gnowangerup Mission where Hope and Hedley Wright managed that mission, supported by Tom and Beryl Street. In her report of the tour, Langley wrote of her concern for the seventy children at the Gnowangerup Mission.\textsuperscript{102}

In 1947 it was still the case that the Education Department did not provide a teacher and untrained missionaries struggled to teach the children. Langley believed this was her next field of service and she asked the UAM if Finlayson could accompany her, because the seventy-three year old woman had no home in Perth. Permission was granted and when Langley began teaching the junior classes at the mission school in 1947, Finlayson kept house for her. Langley testified to the success of this arrangement which provided a home for the older missionary and gave support to Langley who not only worked full-time in the school, but also managed the mission store after school and on

\textsuperscript{102} The United Aborigines’ Messenger, May 1947, 9.
Saturdays.\textsuperscript{103} Although she taught Sunday School, preaching and leading worship were not described as part of Langley’s work at Gnowangerup where senior male missionaries, Hedley Wright and Tom Street, were likely to take that role. Langley’s earlier role as a pastor and preacher at Djurin was relinquished at Gnowangerup and she was fully occupied in the more traditional female role of teaching children.

The analysis will now address Langley’s missionary experience with a cultural focus. Langley admitted she initially felt afraid at the thought of working with people who were culturally different. This soon passed because of the friendliness of the Nyungar people at Kellerberrin. In spite of this, Langley did not recall that she ever heard the Nyungar language spoken, only English, and she remained ignorant of Nyungar language and culture.\textsuperscript{104} Denzil Humphries attended school at the Djurin Mission and first learned about Christianity from the missionary women, including Langley, but he also learned from his father a traditional Nyungar prayer to the Creator “Maamon nidja yirrah nyininj” meaning “there’s a Father sitting up above and he’s looking down.”\textsuperscript{105} So Nyungar language and spirituality survived, although apparently hidden from Langley.

This was confirmed by Hazel Winmar, a Nyungar Elder from Kellerberrin who also lived at Djurin Mission as a child, for her memories about cultural issues at the mission were different to those of Langley.

We weren’t allowed to talk our language on the mission. We had to talk wadjalla way. But we talked Nyungar amongst ourselves. Mum would talk Nyungar language when she wanted to cook something, like damper and kangaroo… I learned to speak Nyungar from my mother and I kept it in my head all the time.\textsuperscript{106}

\textsuperscript{103} Rowley, \textit{Interview by A. Longworth}, 40-41.
\textsuperscript{104} Ibid, 21-22.
\textsuperscript{105} Humphries, \textit{Interview by A. Longworth}, 3.
\textsuperscript{106} Morgan and Tjalaminu, \textit{Ngulak Ngarnk Nidja Boodja, Our Mother, This Land}, 73.
These divergent recollections from different cultural perspectives established that a definite cultural barrier existed between the missionary and the Nyungar people. This would have existed before Langley arrived. As a young probationary missionary with no experience or training in cross-cultural relationships, Langley initially accepted the status quo that did not differentiate between western culture and Christianity.

Langley’s awareness of cultural and language difference did grow with experience for when the untrained teacher taught at the mission school in Gnowangerup in 1947 it was to children whose primary language was Nyungar.

The schoolwork shows slow but good progress, the great difficulty being with the different language, especially for the first grade. Because of this difficulty, and that there are three grades and only one teacher, the children are taught in three sessions, Grades 1 and 2 in the morning, and Grade 3 in the afternoon.107

The Nyungar people at Gnowangerup had retained more of their traditional culture and language than the people at Djurin who were bilingual by the time Langley arrived. Identification with the culture and language was part of the methodology of the China Inland Mission as practiced by Hudson Taylor.108 Although the UAM had modelled itself on the China Inland Mission, language work was not given priority by the UAM or its predecessor, the AAM, prior to the 1950s, although there were some exceptions. Hope Malcolm attempted to learn the language at Carrolup in the early 1920s.109 Linguist and former UAM missionary Wilf Douglas acknowledged the encouragement he received from Belshaw and McRidge to learn the Nyungar language when he was at Badjaling in 1939.110 There was no evidence to suggest that Langley learned the Nyungar language at Gnowangerup.111 In its centennial publication the

107 *The United Aborigines’ Messenger*, December 1947, 12.
108 Taylor, *China's Spiritual Need and Claims*, 44 & 76.
111 Ibid.
UAM recognised that it was only following the end of the Second World War in 1945 that Indigenous Christian leaders became more prominent within the UAM and contributed to the growing awareness of the need of Bible translation.112

The faith mission history and its context within Australian society contributed to this lack of cultural awareness in the first half of the twentieth century. When the New South Wales Aborigines’ Mission (NSWAM) made the decision to adopt the faith principal of Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission in 1902 it did not single out Taylor’s identification with Chinese culture and language. A report in The New South Wales Aborigines’ Advocate in June 1902 portrayed the belief at that time that the Aboriginal people were a dying race.113 This widespread belief would have contributed to the omission of identification with the culture and an emphasis on the urgency of proclaiming the Christian faith. In the 1940s, the UAM in Western Australia was influenced by the government policy of assimilation. As Chief Protector of Aborigines, A. O. Neville promoted this policy in Western Australia from 1915 to 1940, with the intention that Aboriginal people would become absorbed into the European population.114 Neville and politicians such as Paul Hasluck were still upholding the policy into the 1950s. Pat Jacobs argued however, that by that time, the concept of European racial superiority was diminishing and racial equality was being recognised as a requirement if the policy were to be successfully implemented.115

From the 1950s, Langley worked in the Kimberley region where she was occupied in translation work in the Walmatjiri language and in 1956 she married Nelson Rowley.116 When she wrote in 1961 “Now we praise the Lord that the Word is going forth from one of their own and in their own tongue,” it was evident that the missionary

112 Challenging the Almighty, 40-41.
113 NSW Aborigines' Advocate, June 1902, 2.
114 Haebich, For Their Own Good, 317-319.
115 Jacobs, Mister Neville: A Biography, 292.
116 Challenging the Almighty, 60, 66-67. Rowley, Interview by A. Longworth, 43-44.
had grown to appreciate the value of presenting the Christian faith in culturally appropriate ways. In its centennial publication the UAM recognised Melvina Rowley (formerly Langley) as one of the pioneers in this field in the Kimberley and Western Desert region, however, with its focus on the encounter with the Nyungar people this research will not enlarge on that later aspect of Langley’s work.

While Nyungar culture and language was hidden from Langley at Kellerberrin, the injustice faced by the Nyungar people was not. This was apparent when, after three years service, Langley returned to Victoria on furlough and gave a strong message on the plight of the Nyungar people of Western Australia at the annual meeting of the UAM held in Melbourne during 1944. The report was published in the monthly publication.

“A People Robbed and Spoiled.”
A Message given by Miss Langley at the Annual Meeting held recently in Melbourne.

Text: Isaiah 42:22,23
These verses very aptly describe our native people. “They are for a prey and none delivereth; for a spoil and none saith restore.” Of what have they been robbed? They have been robbed of their land.

We Have Taken Their Land
and given them nothing in return. We have taken their hunting-grounds, their food and their livelihood. We have taken their laws and given them no share in ours. “They are a people robbed and spoiled.”

What Have We Given Them In Return
for all this? Practically nothing! Our people at Kellerberrin, and they are the same as hundreds of others, live in little camps made of bushes, tins, bags or anything they can find. When it rains they have to patch it up. If a strong wind blows parts of them are blown down… The people of whom I am thinking now are half-castes and quarter-castes. They are people who have been forced to live on white man’s food and wear white man’s clothes and are many of them more than half-white, and yet because of white man’s injustice, they must live under these conditions.

118 Challenging the Almighty, 44.
119 The United Aborigines’ Messenger, July 1944, 5.
Langley’s presentation obviously made a strong impact, for she recalled the UAM not only included it in full in *The United Aborigines’ Messenger*, but also published it in tract form for circulating more widely. Her message was unusual within the history of the UAM in its concern for justice. It reflected similar concerns expressed in 1938 by Dr E. Stanley Jones who had been the speaker at the Tenth World’s Christian Endeavour Convention held six years earlier in Melbourne.

I came to this country thinking that the aboriginals were just dying out, but I know now that they are being killed off. Their means of subsistence disappears when the land is taken from them, as you have taken it. You have destroyed their animals, and then have dealt severely with them when they have taken some of your animals for food. You have decimated the native population by diseases, chiefly syphilis. Those aboriginals whom you have detribalised have been robbed of what has been best in their native life, and you have given them nothing in return. In short, your treatment of these people is unworthy of this great country.

Langley was studying at the MBI that year and it seemed likely that from there she would have read reports of that convention in *The Edifier*, a weekly Evangelical newspaper, for the editor, Eric Daly, had previously been a student at MBI in 1932. Piggin described Daly as part of the “male club” centred on MBI Principal Nash, which included the federal committee members of the UAM, and therefore his newspaper had the support of the fundamentalist network in Melbourne. In spite of the extensive reporting of the CE Convention over several issues of *The Edifier*, the content of Stanley Jones’ challenging words were ignored, even though Jones attracted over twelve thousand people, the largest gathering of the entire convention. The editorial on 12 August expressed regret that speakers such as Jones emphasised reform of a troubled

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120 Rowley, *Interview by A. Longworth*, 34.
124 *The Edifier*, 5 August, 1938, 3.
world and did not present a more evangelistic message. In his thesis, Godman identified that the 1938 CE World Convention showed a commitment to social responsibility, but he questioned the support Jones would have received within the CE in Australia because the movement was already in decline by that time. Although Langley was a member of the fundamentalist UAM, she was an exception in that her Evangelical activism included a concern for justice for the dispossessed Nyungar people who had become her friends.

In the year 1944, when Langley presented her call for justice to the UAM, the UAM celebrated its Jubilee. Her message could be contrasted to that of pioneer missionary and president of the New South Wales Council, Ernest Telfer, who wrote the Forward of the Jubilee Edition of *The United Aborigines Messenger* in November 1944. He wondered “How long the Lord will delay His coming”, revealing his premillennialist theology, and he urged supporters to meet their responsibility of faithfully proclaiming the Christian message to Aboriginal people. Although Langley was troubled by living conditions for the Nyungar people at Kellerberrin, the proclamation of the Christian message to the Aboriginal people in isolation from other concerns remained the vision of the UAM. Langley’s reference in 1944 to the Nyungar people being “more than half-white” showed the irony that Aboriginality was measured according to colour rather than cultural identification at that time, and yet the wider community still did not provide equality for the Nyungar people of mixed descent. With limited resources and minimal support from the UAM organization, Langley did what she could in her local context.

From her western perspective, Langley saw the poverty and deprivation. For many Nyungar people, Djurin was home and held special memories. Hazel Winmar

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125 Ibid, 12 August 1938, 5.
126 Godman, "Mission Accomplished?" 52.
127 *The United Aborigines’ Messenger*, November 1944, 4.
128 Ibid, July 1944, 5.
recalled “We used to have some good times at the mission. We played hockey and the
boys used to play football. School kids, you know, all mucking around together.”

Nyungar Elder Kathy Yarran was born at Kellerberrin, and although she lived at
Brookton for many years, she lived at the Kellerberrin Reserve when her family
travelled around the region in search of work. In an interview with the writer, Yarran
spoke of the “good times” when her home was a mia-mia in the bush. People from the
various town camps used to get together for a game of hockey followed by singing and
dancing around the campfire, to music from an accordion or mouth organ. Clearly,
the Nyungar recollection of the past included positive and negative memories.

The final theme of this case study is an investigation into the Evangelical faith as
practiced by Langley within the UAM. The fact that Langley was accepted by the UAM
meant that she adhered to the fundamentalist theology of the mission, as laid down in
1929. Her earlier membership of the Christian Endeavour movement within her
Baptist denomination and her graduation from MBI were further confirmation of her
fundamentalist credentials. The first report sent by Langley and published in *The United
Aborigines’ Messenger* in March 1941 showed a continued commitment to the CE
movement. Langley described a picnic for the “Juniors” but this was not only a social
group, for she was teaching the children to take part in the meetings, just as she had
learned to do as a child in Portland. By 1948, the missionary column in the CE
publication *West Australian Golden Link* described the work of UAM missionaries
throughout Western Australia, including Melvina Langley, Christina Finlayson, Hope
and Hedley Wright who were all serving at Gnowangerup at that time, but it provided
no information about CE groups on any mission station. In 2003, Langley did not

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129 Morgan and Tjalaminu, *Ngulak Ngarnk Nidja Boodja, Our Mother, This Land*, 73.
130 Yarran, *Interview by A. Longworth*, 1, 3.
131 *The United Aborigines’ Messenger*, May 1929, 2.
133 *West Australian Golden Link*, April 1948, 12.
recall CE was significant in her missionary career, although she recognised that what she had learned through that Evangelical movement she applied to other groups that she organised for young people. The absence of CE in Langley’s missionary praxis reflected the decline in CE in Western Australia after the end of the Second World War, as documented by Arthur Meyer.135

Langley and Finlayson were caring for twins while the mother was in the Kellerberrin hospital in August 1941, when Langley wrote “Dear Praying Friends … We praise the Lord for the supply of all needed grace and strength.” Langley found that living according to the faith principle meant both emotional and physical needs were met. She expressed gratitude to supporters, including Albany Bell at the Roelands Mission Farm who had sent supplies of fresh vegetables. In December 1942, Langley’s optimism and trust in God was evident when her report to the UAM, published the following month, described a visit from five colleagues passing through on their way to the Warburton Ranges.

Our little church building was nearly full, and we had a very good meeting. Occasions such as this make a great impression on our people, and our prayer is that through it they may come to know the reality of our Lord Jesus Christ… At the close of this another year, we would raise our Ebenezer, and as we look into the coming year with all that it may hold it is with confidence that “He faileth not.” Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forever.137

Although Langley never referred to the personal cost of living as a faith missionary, the lack of funds prevented the UAM achieving all its goals and in 1948, a special call to prayer was issued to mission supporters. Alongside the assurance that God had sustained them, came the admission that the required finance was not always available. Two former Mount Margaret Mission students, Dora Quinn and Gladys

134 Rowley, Interview by A. Longworth, 17.
136 The United Aborigines’ Messenger, August 1941, 11.
137 Ibid, January 1943, 11.
138 Ibid, September 1948, 3.
Vincent, had received training for missionary service in Western Australia from Rod and Mysie Schenk and Robert and Mrs Powell, but the UAM recognised the desirability of a training institute for Indigenous Christians. Faith principles prevented direct appeals for money, but supporters were informed of the vision and urged to pray. It would be 1960 before the UAM commenced the Gnowangerup Bible Institute as a training college for Indigenous Christians, with Denzil Humphries among the first intake of students.  

A sign of Langley’s premillennial belief in the imminent second coming of Christ was found in her report dated July 1942 when she saw the days of unrest due to the Second World War as signs of Christ’s return and she wrote of her own “glorious hope” while serving those who “are not ready for the coming of the Lord”. Again on 9 November 1942 she wrote, “Before our next report is printed, if the Lord tarries, Christmas will have come and gone again.” The troubled times contributed to her anticipation of Christ’s return. Shirley Humphries, wife of Denzil, was interviewed by the writer in 2004, and she remembered that the UAM personnel were united in their belief in the imminent Second Coming of Christ, particularly during the Second World War and the post-war period and the doctrine was often preached. In his research into faith missions, Klaus Fiedler concluded that while doctrinal beliefs did not change within faith missions, by the time he was writing in 1994 premillennialism was not the powerful force it had been earlier. Fiedler attributed this decline to the way speculative eschatology defined the end-times as imminent and discredited itself when the end did not come. David Parker’s analysis of the Australian context was that the fundamentalist inclination towards premillennialism was typical of faith missions in

139 Ibid, April 1960, 5.
140 Ibid, July 1942, 10.
141 Ibid, December 1942, 12.
142 Humphries, Interview by A. Longworth, 8.
143 Fiedler, The Story of Faith Missions, 278-279.
Australia in the period from 1920 to 1980. In Langley’s reports from 1945 onwards, there was no evidence of the premillennial doctrine, suggesting that the end of the Second World War reduced the impact of the pessimistic world view of premillennialism and led to a reduction in the public expression of the doctrine within the UAM publications.

Langley wrote the Gnowangerup report for *The United Aborigines’ Messenger* in September 1948 and showed that her primary object remained the narrowly focused conversion of the Nyungar people.

We long to see a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit in conviction of sin, and a gathering in of those who are still unsaved. Please pray, that we, as His stewards, might be kept faithful to our Lord in all things, and that things that are secondary may not be allowed to creep in and take first place. We have been sent to preach the Gospel, and all other things must be but means to an end, and that the proclamation of His Word and the gathering in of souls.

This report gave the subtle suggestion that “secondary” things, such as disagreement between the missionaries at Gnowangerup, had actually disrupted mission life. *The United Aborigines’ Messenger* did not broadcast the conflict, but the Wright’s daughter, Lois Quadesmith, recalled a difference of opinion over mission policy about the supply of tobacco led to their resignation. Hope and Hedley Wright relinquished their relationship with the UAM in September 1948. Langley’s request for prayer support so that missionaries would remain faithful exposed her concern, and her carefully worded report was evidence of her loyalty to the UAM and her colleagues in spite of differences.

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146 Quadesmith, *Interview with Lois Quadesmith, Interviewed by Yvonne Choules*, 29.
147 *The United Aborigines’ Messenger*, September 1948, 8.
While on a tour of Western Australian mission centres, the federal secretary of
the UAM, J. Wiltshire, visited Gnowangerup in May 1949.\textsuperscript{148} He acknowledged that
Western Australia at that time had the largest stations, the greatest distances between
them and they were the most expensive to run, so it was timely that the federal council
gain first-hand experience of the work. Wiltshire wrote

> When the children come together, under the care of the missionaries,
> receiving a Christian training and encouraged in a clean Christian
> atmosphere, they make the best progress, and the work of the
> missionaries does not suffer such an adverse pull as from the native
> quarters… It is becoming evident, too, that the parents think it an
> honour for their children to come into such beneficial touch with the
> missionaries, and they are quick to see the changes that are made in
> conduct and cleanliness.\textsuperscript{149}

Wiltshire’s report of the construction of a dormitory was evidence that while Hope and
Hedley Wright had endeavoured to keep Nyungar families together, a new policy was
being developed at Gnowangerup under the leadership of Tom Street. The report
expressed the belief that Nyungar parents actually supported this policy. No evidence
was found to verify this, and it was certainly not the case in Kellerberrin, where a
dormitory was built in 1948 after Langley and Finlayson had left.\textsuperscript{150} The Kellerberrin
dormitory was operating in June 1952, for the maintenance returns that month showed
subsidies were received by the UAM for nine children, but the children were then
withdrawn by their parents because they were not prepared to give their consent for the
children to remain indefinitely.\textsuperscript{151} The fact that parental consent was required was
evidence that these children were not considered “destitute” or “neglected” and placed
in care under the authority of the 1947 Child Welfare Act, but were placed by their
parents.\textsuperscript{152} It showed that Nyungar parents might place their children in the mission

\textsuperscript{148} Ibid, May 1949, 7.
\textsuperscript{149} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{150} Ibid, February 1948, 11.
\textsuperscript{151} “AN 1/7 Acc 993, File 819/51, Kellerberrin Mission - Subsidy,” in Department of Native Affairs,
SROWA, f3, 9.
\textsuperscript{152} “Bringing Them Home,” 633.
dormitory to continue their schooling when the parents needed to go away for work, but they were opposed to a permanent separation.

Dora Wakerley described the first children taken into care at Gnowangerup as orphans from the same family and brought to the mission by an Auntie. This would have been in December 1948 for that month The United Aborigines’ Messenger asked supporters to pray that the Gnowangerup missionaries would be able to establish a home for the children. Dora and Harry Wakeley arrived in February 1949 to build extra facilities for the children and care for them. Wakerley wrote that the couple arrived with the understanding that there was furnished accommodation available for them, but this was actually a small empty room in the cottage occupied by Langley and Finlayson. Also at Gnowangerup was Ellice Goodfellow who lived in the small maternity hospital and was the midwife, while Langley was the schoolteacher. These details of housing arrangements clarified that Langley was part of the missionary team at Gnowangerup when the dormitory was opened, and although she was not involved in its operation she taught the children.

Langley taught at Gnowangerup for three years before she was transferred in March 1950 to Sunday Island in the Kimberley region of Western Australia. She explained that the climate was not suitable there for Finlayson and so accommodation was found for her in Perth. Langley remained in touch with Finlayson and it was evident that they were more than colleagues. They had developed a close mother/daughter type of relationship. Finlayson’s situation also revealed the personal cost to single women who worked for many years as faith missionaries and then found themselves without a home in their old age. Finlayson was fortunate that the bond that

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153 Wakerley, The Storm Lantern's Travels, 156.
154 The United Aborigines’ Messenger, December 1948, 5.
155 Ibid, February 1949, 12.
156 Wakerley, The Storm Lantern's Travels, 155.
157 Rowley, Interview by A. Longworth, 43.
158 Ibid, 21.
had grown between the two women meant that Langley became a supportive companion for the retired missionary. While it is possible Finlayson accepted Langley’s support as God’s provision, nevertheless it was apparent that the UAM was deficient in its care of missionaries, particularly of single women who had no children and therefore had minimal family support and few resources in their old age.

Langley’s additional twenty-one years of service in the north of Western Australia will not be fully covered in this chapter, which is focused on her work among the Nyungar people. Although she had assumed she would remain single, Langley married UAM missionary Nelson Rowley in 1956. By 1971 when their eldest daughter was ready for high school, the couple chose to keep the family together and resigned from the UAM. They returned to secular employment in Kellerberrin, the wheat-belt town where Melvina had spent the first five years of her missionary service, and the family renewed their association with the Nyungar people.159

In 1952 the Nyungar people of Djurin had also exercised their choice and withdrawn their children from the UAM dormitory rather than relinquish their parental responsibility.160 Such a choice was not always available to the Nyungar people. The Bringing Them Home Report showed that when the Department of Native Welfare was abolished in 1972, the number of Aboriginal people held in institutions in Western Australia numbered 3,099 and most of these were children.161 Recommendation Six of the Report called on governments, churches and agencies who were involved with implementing the forcible removal of children from their families to acknowledge their role and make an apology.162 Sir Ronald Wilson, who presented the Report to the Attorney-General Daryl Williams in 1997, explained in his May McLeod Lecture given

159 Ibid, 44.
160 See page 339-340.
162 Ibid, 652.
in the year 2000, that an apology was not about accepting blame or responsibility, but showed a sense of solidarity with the sufferer and implies a desire to ease the pain.\textsuperscript{163}

In 2003, Rowley was defensive about the role of missionaries in this process and she suggested that since children were removed due to government and not UAM policy, she felt there was no need for missionaries to apologise. Nor did Rowley see a need for governments to apologise for what had been done by a previous generation.\textsuperscript{164} Nevertheless, historian John Harris was critical of the UAM for its involvement in the removal of children from their families and its negative view of Indigenous culture. He recognised that the compassion of individual missionaries did not erase the painful aspects of the history.\textsuperscript{165} While Rowley failed to acknowledge the role of the UAM in providing care for children separated from their families, she recognised in 2003 that the UAM should have done more work with Indigenous languages, demonstrating that she had grown in her respect of culture and language.\textsuperscript{166} Rowley believed the people would have gained a better understanding of the Christian message if there had been more identification with the culture, confirming that conversion of the people to her Evangelical Christian belief was still the overriding vision.

When Rowley retired in 1971, it was the beginning of a period of change for the UAM. The centennial history described the years from 1970 to 1994 as a period of decline in the number of missionaries, with Aboriginal male pastors assuming responsibility for the care of congregations in their homelands.\textsuperscript{167} Hostels for children were closed and missionaries focused on translation work and training church leaders. The UAM Directory in November 1971 listed sixteen single female and two single male missionaries plus twenty-five couples, including Melvina and Nelson Rowley, involved

\textsuperscript{164} Rowley, \textit{Interview by A. Longworth}, 46.
\textsuperscript{165} Harris, \textit{One Blood}, 568.
\textsuperscript{166} Rowley, \textit{Interview by A. Longworth}, 47.
\textsuperscript{167} \textit{Challenging the Almighty}, 64.
in language work at Leonora, and Denzil and Shirley Humphries at Gnowangerup. The majority of missionaries continued to be women and the mission administration continued to be dominated by males, however Indigenous missionaries were an integral part of the UAM. This transition had not come easily, as illustrated by Shirley Humphries when she spoke of the opposition from western missionaries to her cross-cultural marriage to Denzil in 1963.

In 1967 Denzil Humphries was among the Indigenous Christians who formed the Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship, an event which Max Hart described as the Pentecost event for Aboriginal Christians. Jack Braeside called on missions such as the UAM to pass on their work to Aboriginal Christians and to encourage unity between the Indigenous churches formed by different missions and denominations. The empowerment of Aboriginal Christians through the AEF was part of a world-wide trend, at a time when traditional western missions were in decline. In his investigation into the missionary movement and the transmission of faith, Andrew Walls wrote that the role of faith missions had been revolutionary in encouraging lay workers and particularly women to be involved in mission work. Walls recognised a new era had emerged in the second half of the twentieth century. He analysed a decline in western missionary societies not as failure but success, in that by the closing decade of the twentieth century the majority of Christians were to be found in former mission fields. So, it can be seen that Rowley retired from the UAM as the Indigenous church in Australia was emerging.

168 The United Aborigines' Messenger, November 1971.
169 Shirley Humphries, Interview by A. Longworth, 3.
This case study has investigated the formation and missionary service of Melvina Langley with a focus on the years from 1941 to 1950, the period when she worked as a single woman among the Nyungar people of Western Australia. Langley was found to be from a working class background with limited education. Her conversion experience as a child was typical of a western Evangelical form of Christianity and like the other case studies in this research, her membership of the Christian Endeavour movement nurtured her early development. The chapter established that with the rise of fundamentalism within the UAM, leadership opportunities for women missionaries diminished compared to the earlier history of the mission and the support provided by the UAM to its female missionaries was often particularly inadequate. Langley did not challenge the position of women within the patriarchal faith mission. In this faith mission based on the mission principles begun by Hudson Taylor, Rowley continued to “raise her Ebenezer” by trusting God for her physical needs. However, in her work among the Nyungar people at Djurin and Gnowangerup, Rowley did not apply Taylor’s expectation that faith missionaries identify with the local culture; her work on the Walmatjiri language was a later development. Rowley did establish friendships with Nyungar people and yet her reluctance to acknowledge UAM complicity in the forcible removal of Indigenous children from their parents demonstrated a failure to acknowledge the importance of family in Aboriginal culture and the suffering of Indigenous Australians under oppressive government policies.

As Rowley reflected on her thirty-one years of missionary service in 2003, she stated: “Yes, it certainly was worthwhile” and what convinced her was the continuing relationships she has with Nyungar people she knew as children, who are now leaders in
Nyungar Evangelical churches. Nyungar Pastor Denzil Humphries expressed his ambivalence when he referred to the oppression of his people and stated “Looking back, I guess we had a lot of difficulties… since the coming of European settlers to Australia,” and yet he included Rowley in his list of UAM women missionaries who cared about his people and taught them the Christian faith. Clearly female faith missionaries have been part of the difficult shared history of Nyungar and European relations, but Rowley has received respect from Nyungar converts and witnessed the growth of an Indigenous Evangelical church.

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Conclusion

This research has used five case studies to analyse the experience of female faith missionaries in their encounters with the Nyungar people of Western Australia over a period of six decades from 1912 to 1971. The thesis began with the question: Was it worthwhile? When asked by some of the missionaries the question referred not only to the personal cost of the exercise, but also questioned the outcome of their work. When asked by a historian the question calls for analysis of the mission culture, including its effect on women missionaries and the Nyungar recipients of their evangelism. The investigation has analysed changes and continuities in mission praxis within the United Aborigines’ Mission (UAM) and its antecedents, and will now outline the conclusions in relation to Evangelicalism, gender and cross-cultural relationships.

The concept of mission as understood by the missionary organisation was central to the investigation. The thesis has established that the New South Wales Aborigines’ Mission (NSWAM) traced its beginnings to an outreach at La Perouse in 1893, under the banner of the interdenominational and Evangelical Christian Endeavour movement. The NSWAM understood its mission to be the narrowly focused conversion of the Aboriginal people within New South Wales to Evangelical Christianity, understood as a personal commitment to Christianity as framed by that form of theology. When the name of the mission changed in 1908 to the Australian Aborigines’ Mission, the vision changed only in a geographical sense to include Aboriginal people throughout Australia although in reality, the expansion at that time was limited to Western Australia. When the UAM formed in 1929, the vision remained unchanged.

From 1902, the NSWAM adopted the faith principles of the China Inland Mission, established in England by Hudson and Maria Taylor in 1865. This meant that missionaries were required to trust God to provide their physical needs, without soliciting funds or going into debt although the investigation uncovered various lapses
of this principle including that by the AAM council in Western Australia when it financed the Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage with an overdraft. The mission council gave no guarantee of financial support and missionaries accepted their role at considerable personal cost. The China Inland Mission and the Christian Endeavour movement were both shown to originate within western Evangelicalism in the second half of the nineteenth century during a period of industrial growth alongside colonial and missionary expansion. Like the China Inland Mission, the NSWAM adhered to a narrowly based theology within the reviverist stream of Evangelicalism that emerged in Britain and America with the 1858-1859 Revival. The strong emphasis on mission was linked to the premillennial theology associated with that revival which anticipated the imminent Second Coming of Christ and eternal punishment for non-believers. The resultant urgency about the task emphasised personal conversion more than the development of Indigenous churches.

The investigation identified that change came to Australian Evangelicalism during the 1920s, with widespread theological disagreement between advocates of modernism and fundamentalism and this led to a period of division within the AAM in 1928. A subsequent reunion in 1929 as the United Aborigines’ Mission resulted in a more aggressive fundamentalist theology, with the federal leadership of the new mission no longer based in Sydney but in Melbourne, and dominated by theologically conservative men. The research indicated a narrower interdenominational base for the faith mission from that time. During the troubled period from the First World War (1914-1918), through the economic depression of the 1930s and the Second World War (1939-1945), fear and uncertainty contributed to the emphasis on premillennialism. In the post-war era from 1945, while the theology of the UAM may have remained unchanged, the premillennial doctrine was less evident in mission reports. By the late 1940s, UAM missionaries in Western Australia recognised the need to move beyond
conversion to training Indigenous leaders, but it was not until 1960 that the Gnowangerup Bible Institute was established. When Aboriginal Christians formed the Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship in Western Australia in 1967 and the organisation spread to other states, participants called on missionary organisations such as the UAM to hand over leadership to Aboriginal Christians. This action reflected changes in Australian society which included the end of the assimilation era and the move by Aboriginal Australians to self-determination. It also replicated a worldwide trend, which saw the decline of western missions in the second half of the twentieth century and a growth of the Christian church in places such as Africa, Asia and the Pacific where former mission stations gave way to the development of non-western churches. This more recent phenomena is outside the range of this research, but calls for further investigation in the Australian context where the Indigenous community does not comprise the majority of the population, but forms a very small percentage of an increasingly multicultural and multi-faith society.

Gender was a major focus of the research. From the appointment of Jeanie Watson as the first missionary at La Perouse in 1894, women served as missionaries in greater numbers than men, without expectations about educational background or professional qualifications. Investigation of the Christian Endeavour (CE) movement identified that active membership of CE provided spiritual formation and leadership opportunities for women, albeit restricted ones. The AAM continued to accept missionaries with limited professional or missionary training and it was not until the rise of fundamentalism and the formation of the UAM in 1929 that missionaries were encouraged to undergo training at a Bible College. Bertha Telfer was an exception in that she received her formation from Angas College in South Australia in 1908, while Mary Jones was accepted by the UAM in 1930 with no formal Bible training. By the time Melvina Langley trained at the Melbourne Bible Institute from 1938 to 1939 it was
the expected practice. Even so, the fundamentalist theology of the UAM, including a literal interpretation of the Bible, reduced the leadership of women in the councils of the mission.

Archival material from the AAM in Western Australia was not preserved within the UAM Archives and the partisan monthly mission publication, while an invaluable source, called for deconstructive analysis to discern gender and cultural themes. Bertha Telfer's work at Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage (1912-1914) was hidden in reports written by the male secretary of the Western Australian mission council. Ethel Fryer also became invisible in mission reports from Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage (1914-1915) due to the dominance of her husband and his growing disillusionment with the hardship of life under faith mission principles. The invisibility of these women missionaries in official reports to the Aborigines Department not only neglected the contribution of women missionaries, but also reflected the pattern of a western patriarchal society in which men assumed the more public roles. Hope Wright continued to write mission reports following her marriage in 1926, but she was given no speaking role in the regional CE rally at Gnowangerup in 1937 even though she was the local CE leader. Wright was hidden within Nyungar sources too, when oral histories from Nyungar Elders at Gnowangerup overlooked her attempt to learn the Nyungar language and her keen participation in cultural activities. Instead, the Elders concentrated on the failure of her husband Hedley to appreciate Nyungar language or culture. As single women, Mary Jones (1930-1971) and Melvina Langley (1940-1956) regularly wrote reports. From 1945 Jones chose to work independently at Northam and then Brookton after being linked with the controversy regarding Rod Schenk and his alleged sexual indiscretion, followed by a health crisis requiring surgery. Prayer letters written by Jones in her early years as an independent missionary have not survived, suggesting that at the time of writing, neither supporters nor family recognised their historical significance. Jones was
critical of the place of women and girls at Mount Margaret and yet as an independent faith missionary her fundamentalist theology overruled gender and cultural equality when she encouraged Nyungar men to become preachers but not women, and when she passed on her work to the Presbyterian World Mission rather than to Nyungar leaders. However, the Convention movement Jones established at Brookton attracted Indigenous people from around the state and was significant in its encouragement of Indigenous leadership. As a single woman Langley accepted the restriction of female leadership within the UAM and the minimal support given to female missionaries and she remained with the mission until her retirement in 1971. The ethnocentric attitude of women missionaries meant they accepted their own mission culture regarding the lack of gender equality. In this acceptance of their own culture they were similar to Indigenous women who experienced racism in Australian society as a greater oppression and chose to stand in solidarity with their men in the struggle for self-determination, rather than seek gender equality.

It became apparent that living according to the faith principle exempted the mission council from any responsibility to provide for the missionaries or to effectively resource their work. The pressure to give positive written reports for publication in the mission periodicals in order to encourage financial support from readers meant that conflict, loneliness, and poverty went unreported. The research revealed that when the AAM expanded to Western Australia distance and cost prevented missionaries from attending the federal meetings and annual conference. When the UAM committee in Western Australia excluded both male and female missionaries from business meetings, they became isolated from their colleagues and lost the opportunity for continuing growth and reflection about contemporary missionary praxis. Although the UAM and its antecedents empowered some single female missionaries to be independent workers, and both single and married women to accept the role of evangelist, the thesis has
demonstrated that within the narrow theology of the mission female missionaries were role models of women submitting to a patriarchal mission structure.

The thesis identified that each of the female missionaries were from a rural or working class background and all experienced loss within their family of origin. Telfer, Jones and Langley suffered the early death of their mothers, Hamer’s parents separated in her youth and Malcolm/Wright was raised by extended family, but this experience of loss did not necessarily create empathy for Indigenous children separated from their families. Bertha Telfer was distressed by the grief she witnessed because of this government policy, but this did not prevent her returning to Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage when recalled due to a staff vacancy there. Ethel Fryer resorted to violence when she could not cope with the oppressive system at the Carrolup Native Settlement. Melvina Langley called for justice for people robbed of their land, but only Hope Malcolm/Wright and Mary Jones were remembered for their efforts to keep families together. The disintegration of Nyungar families continued throughout the six decades of missionary service covered in this research.

Although the faith mission had a goal of individual conversions of Indigenous Australians, there were aspects of the mission culture that worked against the achievement of that goal. From the beginning of the NSWAM a cultural bias was discerned in which the organisation perceived Aboriginal people as culturally inferior to Europeans. Hudson Taylor’s principle of identification with the local culture and language was not adopted because the work was among people who were already dispossessed. Assimilation into western society was seen as a solution to their predicament. As a consequence of the dispossession of their land and loss of itinerant lifestyle, Nyungar people learned the English language to assist their employment opportunities and they wanted western education for their children, but in the privacy of their camps they maintained aspects of Nyungar culture and language. The case studies
established that although the vision of the UAM and its antecedents was the conversion of Indigenous Australians, the women missionaries did not understand that the process of personal conversion was connected to their western Evangelical theology, and there was minimal appreciation of the cross-cultural nature of their task. This failure to identify with Indigenous culture and language had its roots in a belief in the superiority of western culture that permeated Australian society. In the second half of the twentieth century a gradual recognition by western missionaries of the importance of culture and language combined with the adaptation of Nyungar culture to western influence and resulted in some conversions.

Melvina Langley was working among the Nyungar people in 1944 when she asked “Is this work worthwhile?”¹ She believed her efforts were worthwhile when people responded positively to the Christian message through a conversion experience. The call to conversion has received a varied response. Isobel Bropho spent years of her childhood at the AAM Dulhi Gunyah Orphanage and confessed her belief in God, but her oral history described a difficult life as a fringe dweller around Perth and the Swan Valley and the struggle for survival, rather than Christian conversion, formed the theme of her life story.² Similarly, when Nyungar Elders from the Wheat-belt and Great Southern regions of Western Australia shared their histories in Ngulak Ngarnk Nidja Boodja, the dominant purpose was the sharing of life experiences and cultural knowledge, and while many recalled the mission days, cultural survival was celebrated rather than Christianity.³

In his interview with the writer in 2004, Nyungar Pastor Denzil Humphries shared his analysis.

¹ The United Aborigines’ Messenger, July 1944, 5.
² Bropho, Interview with R. Jamieson.
³ Morgan and Tjalarinu, Ngulak Ngarnk Nidja Boodja, Our Mother, This Land.
Looking back, I guess we had a lot of difficulties … since the coming of European settlers to Australia. Of course, the old story is the white people discovered Australia, but Aboriginals were here before that …

We were restricted in lots of ways. Once the bush was open … but gradually we saw fences come up. We saw “No Entry” signs…

Lots of times our people and even our men folk were really hostile to white men. They seemed to be so aggressive and that, and they seemed so hard, but the approach of women missionaries was very useful in those days… They were our early contact with Christian people and especially white people who cared and who loved us and we loved them in exchange.⁴

Each of these Nyungar perspectives included the memory of oppression experienced as a result of European settlement. Female faith missionaries were part of that shared history. From his perspective as a Nyungar Elder and an Evangelical Christian, Humphries confirmed that the poverty and marginalisation experienced by those missionary women, when combined with their compassion and Christian commitment, created solidarity with some Nyungar communities that reduced the barriers of culture and gender. Compared to the widespread failure of nineteenth century Aboriginal missions, the goal of the five women investigated in this thesis was partially successful when Nyungar people received these faith missionaries into their communities and some chose to convert to the Christian faith. It was a costly exercise and mistakes were made. The role of some of those converts in the development of an Indigenous Evangelical church is a continuing witness to some fruitfulness in the encounters of these five women missionaries with the Nyungar people.

⁴ Humphries, Interview by A. Longworth, 1-3.
## Appendix One  Synopsis of the UAM and its antecedents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1893</td>
<td>Aborigines’ Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>La Perouse Aborigines’ Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>New South Wales Aborigines’ Mission (NSWAM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>Adoption of the faith mission principles of the China Inland Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>Retta Dixon resigned to form the Aborigines’ Inland Mission (AIM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>Australian Aborigines’ Mission (AAM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927-28</td>
<td>Australian Aborigines’ Mission and Gospel Mission to the Australian Aborigines (GMAA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>AAM and GMAA reunite as United Aborigines’ Mission (UAM)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix Two  UAM Stations, January 1945

1 The United Aborigines’ Messenger, January 1945, 12. Mission Stations underlined with the exception of Coroki, Northern NSW, not shown.
Appendix Three  Nyungar Land and Linguistic Groups.¹

¹ Map based on Tindale and Rhys Jones (1974) and drawn by Robin Longworth.
Appendix Four  South-west of Western Australia (main places named in the text)\(^1\)

\(^1\) Map drawn by Robin Longworth.
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