

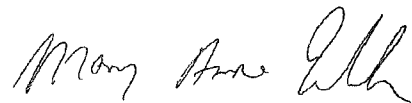
**'No more head stockman, he's a chairman now':
The Making and Breaking of the Pastoral System
in the Kimberley Ranges, 1903-1972**

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Bachelor of Arts (Hons)**

**This thesis is presented for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy of Murdoch University**

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I declare this thesis is my own account of my research and contains as its main content work which has not previously been submitted for a degree at any tertiary educational institution.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mary Anne Jebb', written in a cursive style.

Mary Anne Jebb

Warning.

The following contains the names and images of deceased Aboriginal people from the north and central Kimberley region of Western Australia. It is not to be published without the permission of the author. Some informants contributed to this research on the understanding that it would be seen only by examiners and supervisors and that publication to a wider audience would occur after further consultation with the informants or their representatives.

Abstract

**‘No more head stockman, he’s a chairman now’:
The Making and Breaking of the Pastoral System
in the Kimberley Ranges, 1903-1972.**

This thesis examines Aboriginal pastoral workers’ life stories in the context of the two mass movements in Kimberley history: the move toward pastoral stations in the ‘early days’ of this century and away from them in the 1960s and 1970s. In the northern ranges region of the Kimberley pastoral settlement began in 1903, with a second phase of intense settlement from 1920. The recency of settlement in this region meant that in the late 1980s people were alive who had experienced both ‘first contact’ and the arrival of ‘Welfare’. This study places Aboriginal life story narratives in a wider historical context, drawn from written archives and a range of oral testimonies about the origins and development of the pastoral system in the north and central Kimberley. The broader economic and political context which affected the process of incorporating northern ranges people into the Australian nation is examined through individual contacts and biographies to develop the patterns of alliances with ‘Bosses’ and the impact of Welfare on those relationships.

In 1971, small reserves on the outskirts of Kimberley towns which catered for 20 to 40 people in the 1950s, held up to 300 residents who were previously living on pastoral stations. The overcrowded and unserviced fringe camps were thought to contain people displaced from station employment by the decision to enforce equal wages for Aborigines in the pastoral industry. It is one of the contentions of this thesis that the social and economic foundations of the old rationing system on most of the stations in the northern Kimberley were crumbling before the award wages decision and its application to the Kimberley in 1969. The ‘eviction after award wages’ theme underestimates Aboriginal agency in the migration process, fails to take account of their changing social and economic requirements and the pull of Welfare support, glorifies the period of ‘settlement’ on stations and reinforces the ‘myth of the lazy native’ which underpinned public debate and Arbitration Commission discussions in the 1960s about the inclusion of Aboriginal workers within the Pastoral Industry Award.

Abbreviations

AD	Aborigines Departments files (including Native Affairs and Welfare)
AADL	Aboriginal Affairs Department Library
ARAD	Annual Report Aborigines Department
ATSIC	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
AWU	Australian Workers Union
BL	Battye Library
CAR	Commonwealth Arbitration Commission Report
CNA	Commissioner of Native Administration
CNW	Commissioner of Native Welfare
CoP	Commissioner of Police
CPA	Chief Protector of Aborigines
CS0	Colonial Secretary's Office
Col Sec	Colonial Secretary
DOLA	Department of Land Administration
DSS	Department of Social Security (Commonwealth)
GG	Government Gazette
NB	Researchers Note Books
NDG	Northern Division General (Native Administration files)
PC	Police Constable
PD	Police Department file, Battye Library
PGA	Pastoralists and Graziers Association
RM	Resident Magistrate
SSP	Social Security Age Pension
UAM	United Aborigines Mission
US	Under Secretary
WA	The West Australian
WAPD	Western Australian Parliamentary Debates
WAVP	Western Australian Votes and Proceedings

Some of the people

Allenbrae, Campbell. Born about 1925 on Kurunjie station. Father and mother worked with Afghan sandalwooders. Head stockman at Kurunjie late 1940s and early 1950s. Wife Dargie, stockwoman on Kurunjie.

Dale, Jack. Born about 1920 near Mt House station. White father, Jack Dale of Queensland. Mother Dolly Dale. Travelled in the bush during the 1920s with his grandfather and was trained for stockwork at Mt House. Contract head stockman in the 1950s and 1960s. Chairman of Imintji Aboriginal Community 1984-1991.

Gudaworla, Maggie. Born about 1912 Mt Barnett region. Moved with mother to Mt House about 1924. Returned to Barnett with missionaries about 1936. Stockwoman.

Howendon, Harry. Born about 1914 in the bush. Fred Merry named him about 1922 at Mt Barnett station camp.

Jowan, Jack. Born about 1910. Left with Jack Connaughton and Aboriginal uncle as a boy. Worked in Mount Barnett region during 1920s and moved to become a stockman at Tablelands station. Chairman of Tirralintji Aboriginal Corporation, 1989-1994.

Jowalji, Mick. Born just before Scotty Saddler and Jowalji's father occupied Tablelands lease in 1920. Travelled with Jowan on shooting incidents in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Chairman of Yulumbu Aboriginal corporation 1995.

Karraworla, Mary. Born about 1905. Taken from the bush by Jack Carey after her father was shot in about 1919. Accompanied Carey throughout the violent 1920s in the Mt Barnett and Gibb River region.

King, Billy. Born about 1920. White father William King. Head stockman for Mt House from 1947 to 1972. Manager of Mount Barnett station and chairman of Kupingarri Aboriginal Corporation 1989-1996.

Maggie Ghi. Born in the bush around 1920. Father and mother removed her from the Kurunjie homestead and hid her in the bush. Around 1930, captured by Rosie Mumungulya and Jack Campbell from Kurunjie station. Camp cook and

stockwoman, worked contract musters to Wyndham for Scotty Salmond in the 1940s and 1950s.

Martin, Scotty. Came in to Mt Elizabeth 1947 aged about eight. Became head stockman in the 1960s. Chairman of Dodnun Aboriginal Community.

Midmee, Barbara. Born on Tableland station late 1920s. Stock woman and cook. Sister of Mick Jowalji.

Mobby, Larry Murphy. Born about 1900. Father speared and killed. Jack Carey's assistant. Stockman at Gibb River station until his death in the late 1960s.

Morndingali, Morndi Munro. Known also as Billy Munro. Born at a muster camp on Napier Downs station around 1912. Father captured by police in the 1880s and mother captured at the Barnett police station about 1908. Munro became head stockman of Napier Downs, Kimberley Downs and Meda between 1955 and 1972.

Mamangulya, Rosie. Born in the bush. Mother captured for work at Kurunjie where Rosie grew up in the 1920s. Worked as a stockwoman and homestead camp boss at Kurunjie station. Acted as a tracker for Jack Campbell in the 1920s when he explored the Drysdale river region looking for people to work at Kurunjie.

Ngulit, Fat Paddy. Born 1890s near Mount Barnett. Confronted and escaped from Jack Carey about 1919. Stockman at Mt Barnett and Napier Downs.

Umungul, Susie. Born in the bush about 1910. Rescued from a massacre of her family group by Mary Karraworla. Built the first bark hut on Gibb River station. Noted horserider and saddler.

Weeda Munro (Nyanulla). Wife of Morndingali. Born in the bush near Mt Joseph in the King Leopold Ranges about 1915. Grew up and trained for stock work on Mt Hart station. Renowned stockwoman. Father Wundigul.

Wundigul, Police Paddy. Captured near Mt Hart by police about 1905 to become tracker at Mt Barnett. Stockman and assistant for Mick O'Connor, Fred Potts, William Chalmers and Felix Edgar. Convicted for murder and gaoled 1927-1932.

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The people who shared their life stories with me -

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Special thanks to Betty Walker, Beverley Treacey and Barbara Midmee for introducing me to their old uncle and father, Morndi Munro.

I am particularly appreciative of the understanding and encouragement from Malcolm Allbrook which, coupled with his editorial skills, knowledge of the Kimberley and historical interest provided the foundations for this project.

To my children, Charlie and Sarah Jebb and Nick Allbrook, who lived for periods without me while I wandered the northern ranges or sought peace and quiet for writing, thank you.

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