

## Nyungar Tradition :

### glimpses of Aborigines of south-western Australia 1829-1914 by Lois Tilbrook

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*Nyungar Tradition* by Lois Tilbrook is based on the South West Aboriginal Studies project (SWAS) - in which photographs have been assembled, not only from mission and government sources but also, importantly in Part II, from the families. Though some of these are studio shots, many are amateur snapshots. The main purpose of the project was to link the photographs to the genealogical trees of several families in the area, including but not limited to Hansen, Adams, Garlett, Bennell and McGuire, enhancing their value as visual documents.

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# **NYUNGAR TRADITION**

## **Glimpses of Aborigines of South-Western Australia 1829-1914**

**LOIS TILBROOK**



UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA PRESS

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All the photographs are from the SWAS Photograph Collection, unless otherwise stated. The SWAS Photograph Collection is made up of copies of photographs which have been given to the project, or which have been researched from published sources or public or private collections such as that of the Benedictine community of New Norcia. Mostly, the original source is acknowledged, e.g. Battye Library collection, or private collection of Neville Green.

The people in these photographs have been identified by those who knew them. This identification is as accurate as memory and time permit.

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## PREFACE

This book has come about as a result of my involvement in the South West Aboriginal Studies project (SWAS) of the Western Australian College of Advanced Education, Mount Lawley Campus. This was a special research project which set out to record the tradition and history of Aborigines of the south-western region of Western Australia. The project started in 1977 when limited funding was obtained through the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. This enabled the employment of an academic research assistant, and an active programme was undertaken involving archival and library research. As well, a total of sixteen Aboriginal people from the south-west were employed to record oral family history including genealogies, or family trees. This resulted in the compilation of several genealogies based mainly on the research assistants' own families.

As the work of the research assistants was pieced together, the number of family trees was built up in an *ad hoc* fashion. In August and September 1978 these trees, together with a range of historical documents and photographs relating to Aborigines in the south-west region, were put on public display at Mount Lawley College. The principal aim of this display was to further interest Aboriginal people in recording their own past, as well as to show to Aborigines and the general public the type of work SWAS was engaged in.

The SWAS display generated a great deal of interest among Aboriginal people in the Perth metropolitan area. This in turn resulted in an explosion of the amount of material collected up to that time as altera-

tions and corrections, additions and at times totally new trees, were added to the collection. Many people visited the display several times, bringing relatives and friends to see it, and contributing photographs and recounting anecdotes about various ancestors.

In response to requests from Aborigines to take the display to the south-west for the benefit of those people who had not seen it in Perth, a tour of three regional centres—Albany, Narrogin and Bunbury—was made in November 1978. Once again, the display generated a great deal of interest among Aborigines.

In response to requests from Aboriginal people and others for this material to be published in some form, and in keeping with the aims of the SWAS project, the family trees have now been re-drawn to incorporate additional information, and this book has been prepared.

Academic findings are often couched in more technical terms than will be found here, for example the more correct term 'genealogy' has been replaced with the expression 'family tree'. The reason for this is to make the text readily understandable and familiar to readers who may not be accustomed to academic works. It is hoped that, through this publication, more Aboriginal people will become involved in recording their own past and in particular their own family trees, and in this way supplement this work which is only a glimpse of a tradition.

LOIS TILBROOK

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	Joanna Wright

## *THE DOCUMENTARY SOURCES*

The information in the first part of the work has been drawn from the records of the Colonial Secretary's Office, Correspondence Received (CSR); the files of the Aborigines Department (ADF); accounts of early explorers and others; and Aboriginal oral history collected by the SWAS project. Early written records consistently list Aboriginal names in a variety of spellings, with the nett result that while some people are referred to by several names (or spellings of a name), the same spelling may be used in reference to a number of different people. Hence, it is often very hard to establish continuity of personalities over time.

The letters reproduced have been selected because they express qualities of the writer or attitudes of the day which throw light on the situation of the Aborigines within the period. There has been a conscious effort to document the positive contribution and quality of the Aboriginal personalities mentioned, and to illustrate the effect of legislation and circumstance upon their daily lives. As far as possible, the transcripts of letters retain the original style of the writer, although spellings and punctuation have occasionally been corrected or added in order to obtain the sense of the letter. However, these documents represent only a small fraction of the people and many personalities, outstanding for their personal courage and individual contribution, remain unrecorded and unsung.

## *ABBREVIATIONS*

- CSR Colonial Secretary's Office, Letters Received. This abbreviation is followed by the year in which the correspondence is written, the volume in which it is bound, and the page number where applicable, e.g. CSR 1834, Vol. 31/10.
- ADF Aborigines Department Files. This abbreviation is followed by the year in which the correspondence is filed, and the file number, e.g. ADF 1906, 558.
- SRP Swan River Papers, Public Record Office London, compiled by Alice J. Mayes. This abbreviation is followed by the volume in which the document is bound, the names of the correspondents, and the date of correspondence, e.g. SRP Vol. 14, Morgan to Hay 8/3/1832.

The above three sources are all housed in the Battye Library of West Australian History.

*PART I*

*NYUNGARS OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA 1829-1914*  
*AN OVERVIEW*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Prior to British colonization and settlement at Albany in 1826 and the Swan River Colony in 1829, the south-western portion of Western Australia was occupied by several Aboriginal tribal groups. The term Nyungar (Nyungah, Noongah) translates as 'man' or 'person' and it refers to the languages spoken throughout the area which have come to be known collectively by this name. The area over which the Nyungar language was spoken extends from the coast south of Geraldton in an arc south-eastwards, ending at the Great Australian Bight east of Esperance.<sup>1</sup> The Nyungars of today count many of these Aborigines among their ancestors.

It is estimated that there were around six thousand Aborigines in the region in 1829,<sup>2</sup> with a denser population along the coastal plain and fewer people living in the less favourable areas. James Stirling, the first governor of the Swan River Colony, calculated that there was roughly one person per square mile for the colony in 1832,<sup>3</sup> however, for the lush Perth area for the same period, recent estimates of one person per four square miles have been made.<sup>4</sup> Early records indicate that there were several semi-nomadic tribal units, made up of a number of smaller, locally based groups with strong ties to the tract of country in which they lived. Here, they fished, captured game, and gathered seasonal fruit and root vegetables. As well, they tended to all the other aspects of daily life ranging from the dramas of birth, death, illness and marriage, to everyday tasks such as spinning possum fur into string and preparing kangaroo skins to be sewn together to make warm, waterproof cloaks. The men hunted large animals such as kangaroo, while the women caught small animals and gathered fruit and vegetables. Both men and women joined in fishing, and many of their food quests were shared ventures.

According to the season, the whole camp moved from one area to another, where particular foods or water were available. Meetings with the members of other tribes were sometimes organized to coincide with these shifts. Many of the tasks associated with moving camp fell to the

women, like gathering up the household goods and building huts at the new site. The men were kept busy, too, with hunting, tool making, and attending to spiritual matters, although the women also played an active and influential role here.

When the members of various groups came into contact, both men and women joined in the excitement of meeting others and exchanging gossip, and participating in the festivities. Goods such as hard stones to be used as axe heads were traded from one area to another, and information was passed between groups; sometimes elopements occurred and old grievances were settled. At times violent fighting broke out between members of different groups which lasted until both sides felt that some balance of justice had been achieved and peace was restored.

At other times of the year larger groupings fragmented into small family units and ranged within the area to which they held particular rights of access. This was generally in the winter months of July and August when game was scarce and large gatherings of people could not be supported.

On occupation of Western Australia the British government declared the native inhabitants to be British subjects, with the full rights and responsibilities that this implied. The Aborigines were to adopt the customs and beliefs of their colonizers, and it was hoped that they would provide a handy source of labour for the spreading settlement. Few settlers gave much thought to the dispossession that Aborigines were facing as their lands were occupied and their accustomed food sources disrupted, although some explorers, for example Sir George Grey and E. J. Eyre, wrote of their plight.<sup>5</sup>

In practice, the place in the colony allotted to Aborigines was a limited one. The nature of the work available was mostly seasonal, in response to the demands of the agricultural economy. At those times when work was not available, Aborigines were expected to maintain themselves by their traditional skills of hunting and gathering, and so retain much of their practical knowledge if not their tribal law and

customs. In reality, this was impossible because British colonization struck at the core of Aboriginal economy, destroying or depleting traditional resources and creating a dependency on introduced goods as the only alternative to starvation.

In the first seventy or so years of the colony large numbers of Aborigines died as a result of introduced illnesses including measles, influenza and a wasting disease that affected young and old alike. Deaths occurred, too, in skirmishes between Aborigines and settlers and in punitive action taken by British posses against small bands of Aborigines. Roads opened up and travel between distant places was made easier, at times resulting in increased fighting between members of different tribal groups, for example the Perth and York tribes.

British settlement brought with it many far-reaching changes to traditional Aboriginal life, and unions between Aborigines and settlers resulted in a number of children of mixed descent. These children grew up to carry on some of the traditions handed down by their Aboriginal ancestors, while their way of life was moulded to the demands of the new political and social order. A body of custom and lore came into being, combining elements from Aboriginal life together with those of the introduced culture of the settlers.

As these people of mixed descent increased in numbers, the question of whether they should be considered Aboriginal or European assumed a new importance in the colony. Laws relating to Aborigines had existed from the very early days of the Swan River Colony, and as time went on it became more critical to determine who were to be classified as Aborigines for the purposes of administering these laws. Initially, control of Aboriginal matters was in the hands of the British Colonial Office in London, which appointed protectors of Aborigines to administer policy at the state level. However, local state laws also frequently contained clauses relating to Aborigines, such as the prohibition on the sale of alcohol to Aborigines introduced in the Wines, Beer and Spirit Sale Act in 1880. When the state achieved self-government in

1890, Aboriginal affairs remained the responsibility of the British Colonial Office for another seven years, until 1898 when the Aborigines Department was set up as part of the state public service.

Aborigines and settlers both distinguished two groups of people of Aboriginal descent. The first group comprised people who identified and associated with a traditional Aboriginal lifestyle, insofar as this was possible in the changed circumstances. This included Aborigines and people of mixed descent. The second group was made up of people who had adopted the lifestyle of the settler society and who gained their sense of personal identity from that source. Little is known of the individuals in this latter group because they merged into settler society, only to appear in the records as Aborigines if they, or others, had cause to assert the Aboriginal side of their heritage at some later stage of their lives. Laws relating to Aborigines were generally not applied to them because they were not considered to be under any traditional Aboriginal influences.

The people who, through whatever circumstances, identified with their Aboriginal heritage also participated in and contributed actively to the life of the state in many ways. At times they employed their traditional skills, as when employed as trackers for the police. At other times they worked as domestics, labourers, farmhands and seasonal workers. In many respects their lives were more closely interwoven with those of the early settlers than has been acknowledged generally until recent times. These are the people who appear in the records of the Aborigines Department.

A period of change in the relations between people of Aboriginal descent and others was marked in 1905 by a discriminatory Act of parliament, the Aborigines Act. This Act specified that Aboriginality was a biological matter rather than a matter of identification and lifestyle. Hence, people presumed or thought to be of more than one-quarter Aboriginal descent were brought under the provisions of this Act regardless of anything else. Exemptions from certain sections of



the Act could be gained on application, but no exemption could be had from the Act itself.

The 1905 Aborigines Act made the chief protector of Aborigines legal guardian of all Aboriginal children, and Aborigines could be ordered out of towns, moved off their camping sites and directed to live on reserves especially set aside for the purpose. The Act also made it illegal for anyone classified as non-Aboriginal to associate with an Aboriginal, and employers were required to obtain permits to engage Aboriginal labour.

The Aborigines Act 1905 had a singularly negative and embittering effect upon relations between Aborigines and others in the south-western part of Western Australia because people classified as Aboriginal were subject to severe legal and consequent social disabilities and disadvantages. People whose lifestyle was indistinguishable from that of the general society were now brought under this Act and severely limited in their freedom of choice, movement and opportunity. From being regarded as 'ordinary citizens', they were suddenly made to feel different and apart and had to face the fact that they were seen in law as belonging to a rejected section of Australian society. Moreover, for people not under the Act it was now both legal and social foolishness to admit to an Aboriginal side of the family by either blood or marriage.

People were forced to deny their Aboriginality and their Aboriginal ties in order to avoid the Act, and to go to great lengths in attempts to prove they were justifiably outside its provisions should their appearance suggest otherwise.

Amendments to the Aborigines Act 1905 were made in 1911 and 1936, further increasing its restrictiveness. Subsequent amendments made in 1940 (when the name of the Act was changed to the Native Administration Act), 1941, 1947 and 1954 began to reverse this trend and in 1954 the Native Welfare Act was introduced. Nevertheless, this Act and its amendment of 1960 were still based on the earlier legislation. The Native Welfare Act 1963 was a break from the past and restored many basic rights to Aborigines. This Act was finally repealed in 1972 when the Commonwealth of Australia assumed responsibility for Aboriginal affairs from the states (except Queensland), following a constitutional referendum in 1967 which voted to give the Commonwealth these powers.

It is only today, with the repeal of the last remnants of the Aborigines Act 1905 that it is once again possible for people to look freely at both sides of their heritage, and to regard with pride the efforts and achievements of their Aboriginal forebears in the early years of the state.

## 2. *ABORIGINES AND SETTLERS*

In the early days of the Swan River Colony, Aborigines and European settlers came into direct contact in many different situations, and had the common problem of knowing and understanding very little about each other. This ignorance gave rise to uncertainty and fear, and both sides grew ever more suspicious of the other, and unsettled by their respective presence.<sup>1</sup> In particular, settlers were worried by the fighting that occurred within, and between, different groups of Aborigines. They feared that these attacks by small bands of Aborigines against each other would escalate, and not realizing that this behaviour was strictly controlled within Aboriginal society, they imagined a situation of wholesale tribal warfare developing. In addition, Aborigines continued with their practice of physically punishing individuals who broke certain tribal rules, or who were held to be wholly or partly responsible for misfortunes that happened. This punishment usually took the form of lesser spearings, often for reasons the settlers found extremely difficult to understand.

An encounter between an Aboriginal woman and Captain T. Ellis, commander of the mounted Native Police stationed at Mount Eliza Bay, serves to illustrate the contrasting ideas of punishment held by the two groups. In 1834 Ellis banished the wife of an Aboriginal known as Benillo from his property because she set her dog on his poultry. After staying away for a while, and referring to her own culture, the woman offered to let Ellis punish her by spearing her in the leg and thereby settling the matter, provided he permit her to return. Traditionally, a punishment such as banishment would only have been inflicted in extreme circumstances. In the case of a misdemeanour such as this, banishment would have been considered far too harsh, while a superficial spearing in the thigh was considered just. However, Ellis saw the situation through the eyes of his own culture, and feeling sympathy for the woman's distress, he contented himself with scolding her, believing that this was punishment enough. She, in turn, must have wondered how Ellis could change from his extreme position to take such a mild

stand, in what must have seemed to her to be a very inconsistent and unpredictable manner.<sup>2</sup>

The British settlers regarded fighting between Aborigines as breaches of the peace, and made several complaints to the governor to enforce British law and quell the disturbances. As a result, proclamations were issued prohibiting Aborigines from fighting in the streets, and from bringing their spears into towns. A number of Aborigines were subsequently arrested for failing to comply with these edicts, as they were unprepared to go about unarmed in potentially dangerous situations where they might come into conflict with other Aborigines or with settlers. Moreover, they had before them the example of armed soldiers and settlers as well as instances where breaches of the peace were caused by colonists themselves.<sup>3</sup>

Because of the cultural differences between the two groups, Aborigines were suspected first for misdeeds that happened in the colony. For example, in 1831 Agett's house on the banks of the Swan River was set on fire. Initially, Aborigines were blamed, but on further investigation it was found that a woman servant and two soldiers had been seen associating with the Aborigines who were accused of lighting the fire. In the same year the house belonging to Jenkins, the town carpenter, was burnt down and this was said to be the work of Aborigines. However subsequent questioning of Green, labourer of Perth, showed him to be responsible. Again, Aborigines were at first blamed for a fire at Wale's house at Preston Point, but it later came to light that three colonial youths had been seen leaving the scene of the fire.<sup>4</sup>

The number of fires in Aboriginal camps, clearly visible to the colony at night, was a constant reminder of the potential hazard fire posed to colonial property. This was one of the reasons why Aborigines were so readily suspected of setting light to goods and dwellings. Throughout the south-west Aborigines followed the custom of burning off tracts of land in the warmer months of the year, as a technique for hunting small game and kangaroo, which they would spear as the

animals ran away from the flames.<sup>5</sup> At times this burning-off was very intense, and in 1832 it was reported that the fires on the mainland were affecting the atmosphere on Garden Island, eight kilometres out to sea.<sup>6</sup>

While the settlers appreciated that the firing technique was used in game chases and food collection, they did not view it tolerantly because of the danger it posed to their crops and livestock. The possible damage to European property by firing was not readily appreciated by the Aborigines who regarded it as a time-honoured technique, although they understood the effects it could have. Moreover, they themselves had a tradition of temporary structures that were not threatened in the way that permanently placed buildings or sheep and other introduced livestock were. Thus, when Aborigines lit fires in the Kelmscott area in 1831, some buildings owned by Wright were destroyed. This event had unfortunate consequences when Ellis gave chase to the Aborigines and in the foray he was speared and an Aboriginal, Dencil, was shot.<sup>7</sup> At other times Aborigines may have deliberately set fire to buildings in an attempt to drive the settlers away.

The concern with Aborigines firing the land became general as European settlement spread throughout the south-west, and in 1841 the residents of York wrote to Perth complaining that Aborigines were firing the district and that this depleted the feed available for their livestock, as well as constituting a threat to life and property.<sup>8</sup> As a local attempted solution to the problem, the York settlers formed an all-Aboriginal fire brigade whose job it was to ensure that no fires were lit in the district. The brigade was paid by food rations, but as an incentive to ensure that the members did their job, food rations were withheld if any fires were lit.<sup>9</sup>

One important reason for the outright hostility that at times broke out between Aborigines and settlers was the effect that European settlement had on the availability of traditional sources of food for Aborigines. As early as 1832 a settler, W. Shenton, wrote to the Agricultural

Society pointing out that the natural game on which Aborigines depended had been severely depleted by the settlers who had taken over their hunting grounds. Kangaroo were being shot, often wantonly, by sportsmen while the number of native fowl had visibly declined over the three years of settlement and several fish traps had been destroyed. Moreover, Aborigines could not now approach a river bank to fish without fear of an attack by settlers.<sup>10</sup>

Europeans failed to appreciate the utility of Aboriginal fish traps or to worry about it, and frequently destroyed them because they were constructed as weirs across the mouths of waterways<sup>11</sup> and hence were a menace to small craft, as well as being a source of attracting Aborigines onto land which had now been taken up by settlers. In 1832 another observer, R. M. Lyon, also commented on how Aborigines were being driven off from their traditional fishing grounds by settlers.<sup>12</sup>

Tension between Aborigines and settlers found tragic expression in the Pinjarra massacre, called the 'Battle of Pinjarra', in 1834. Murray River tribesmen had for some time launched a series of attacks against settlers who were occupying their traditional territory, preventing their access to it, and being the cause of subsequent food shortages as well as social disturbances to Aboriginal life. These included an attack on Shenton's flour mill in South Perth in April 1834 when over thirty Murray Aborigines raided the mill and took flour, although they did not harm the millkeeper, Shenton. Three of the Aborigines who had taken part were captured and flogged, Gummal and Yeydong receiving twenty-four lashes and Galute, who was thought to be one of the principal leaders, being given sixty lashes with a knotted rope and then held in jail for two months.<sup>13</sup>

In July a party of twenty-one Aborigines including Galute made a joint attack on Edward Barron and Nisbett, in which Nisbett was killed. This took place on land which Thomas Peel had taken up in the Pinjarra district. In retaliation for this, a contingent of mounted police

under Ellis was sent to the area to put a stop to the Aboriginal resistance. The troops came across a domestic group of Aborigines, and assuming that the men responsible for the attack on Barron and Nisbett were amongst them, charged into the camp and fired randomly at the men, women and children there. In the affray, between fourteen and thirty or more Aborigines were killed or wounded, and Ellis received a wound while falling from his horse and subsequently died. Among the wounded and dead were Galute's youngest wife, Yamup, and his youngest son, Ninia.<sup>14</sup>

In addition to deaths caused by skirmishes and military hostility, from around 1833 reports of illness and resulting deaths among the Aborigines became much more common. Colds and coughs seem to have been the main complaints, together with tuberculosis unwittingly introduced in cows' milk.<sup>15</sup> The blankets that were issued to Aborigines with good intent also had unforeseen and tragic consequences, for whereas the traditional skin cloaks provided excellent insulation and were waterproof, the blankets retained the damp, which in turn led to chills and infections. One observer, government surgeon Alexander Collie of the Swan River Colony and then King George Sound, cautioned about the dangers of European clothing for Aborigines living in the bush as early as 1832. Collie recommended that Aborigines be encouraged to wear their skin cloaks on all occasions except when they were working and living in settlers' houses.<sup>16</sup> Unhappily his advice was ignored by settlers and government administrators, who took the wearing of European clothing to be a symbol of 'civilization'.

The deaths of Aborigines was a cause of continuing concern to both the Aborigines and the European settlers. In terms of traditional Aboriginal culture the death of any individual, except the very young and the very old, was understood to be the result of actions by someone else who may have used sorcery to bring about the end result. Deaths were avenged by deaths, and this gave rise to much inter-group friction. The settlers feared that these same beliefs would be extended to

them and that people would be speared who had not directly caused Aboriginal deaths. They based this on the knowledge that in Aboriginal society a person close to the one who was believed to be directly responsible, was often the one against whom retaliation was carried out. Some spearings of Europeans, together with many threats of spearing, were made in direct reprisal for Aboriginal deaths, although Aborigines generally continued to blame misfortunes on other Aboriginal groups. One example of a European being held responsible was the death of a soldier, Dennis Larkin, at Mount Eliza in 1834 in retaliation for that of an Aboriginal, Edumera, who had been shot as he attempted to escape from gaol.<sup>17</sup>

Three Aborigines, Weeip, Bilumera and Godalshwood, were among those involved in the spearing of Larkin, but Weeip, a man of influence and standing among Aborigines, was held responsible by the soldiers. A reward of £20 was offered for his capture or proof of his death. However, a number of settlers petitioned the governor to have this proclamation annulled because they feared that if Weeip was killed, other Aborigines would avenge his death and there would be an all-round escalation of hostilities. They also used the example of Weeip to support their argument that Aborigines should not be regarded as British subjects, and processed as such by the British courts because they acted according to a different set of values, and did not have a knowledge of British law.<sup>18</sup>

Weeip left the Perth area, but returned twenty-two days later with reports of money lying on the beach to the north. At that time, Perth Aborigines also told of hearing of 'white men' and dogs at Bannister River, and the settlers concluded that there must have been a shipwreck to the north. As a result, the *Olmaney* set sail for the Champion Bay area. While no shipwreck was found, the search party did make contact with Aborigines in the Champion Bay district.<sup>19</sup> Weeip was requested by G. F. Moore to carry a letter to the survivors of the supposed shipwreck, informing them that help was on its way. In return for carrying

out this task, Weep was to gain his own pardon and the release of his son, Bilumera, who had also been implicated in Larkin's death and jailed.<sup>20</sup> While Weep was unable to locate any shipwrecked people, the two men were pardoned and released.

When they were responsible for the death of a settler, Aborigines frequently attempted to deal with the deceased the same way they would with a member of their own culture. When Errin Entwistle was speared by Aborigines in 1831, the assailants used axes and saws to break the limbs of the corpse, after their traditional practice,<sup>21</sup> and Reuben Beacham was killed with twelve spear thrusts by a party of Aborigines, all taking corporate responsibility for their actions.<sup>22</sup> At times the head of the corpse was cut open, and there are records of Aborigines observing this practice in the case both of other Aborigines and of settlers.<sup>23</sup> Several other accounts also depict attempts by Aborigines to deal with the dead in cultural terms that were meaningful to them.

Women played a major role in the preparation of the corpse, and both men and women participated in burials. Early records show the ready adoption and use of tools such as shovels and steel axes in these rites. While it was general throughout the south-west for the dead to be buried in a bent or foetal position, other details in the rites differed from locality to locality.<sup>24</sup> These practices were in very marked contrast to the settlers' customs concerning the treatment of the deceased, and were widely regarded by them as terrible violations to the corpse. In Aboriginal terms these practices were a means of ensuring that the spirit of the deceased was appropriately dealt with, in the interests of both the living and the dead.

Faced with a continuing European presence, a number of Aborigines approached the European settlers directly in an effort to establish communication with them. Yagan was one of these and in this he referred to his own culture to try and make sense out of events that were taking place at the time, just as the means with which the settlers attempted to deal with him were constrained by their own culture. Yagan was a man

of personal dignity and bearing, and—together with his father, Midgegooroo, and Midgegooroo's wife—was a person of standing among Perth Aborigines. When the settlers first arrived Yagan may have believed them to be spirits of the dead, returned to the shores of the living, because the Aboriginal belief was that on death the spirits of the deceased travelled westwards towards the setting sun. There, their old skin fell away and they took on a whitish appearance. The word used by Aborigines to describe the early European settlers was *djanga*, the same word used for the spirits of the deceased.

With little ground for mutual understanding, Yagan's actions led to his being branded as an outlaw in the Swan River Colony. He was one of the parties, together with Midgegooroo and Midgegooroo's wife, involved in the death of Errin Entwistle in 1831,<sup>25</sup> and in 1832 he was captured along with Dommera and Ningina. However, R. M. Lyon persuaded the government to confine the prisoners on Carnac Island, ten kilometres offshore, where he would accompany them as unpaid missionary, along with two soldiers and two sailors. But the three Aborigines escaped in the boat and rowed back to the mainland, even though they had never been in a boat before being taken to Carnac.<sup>26</sup> Early in 1833 Yagan forced the door of Thomas Watson of Perth. Watson interpreted his actions to mean that he wanted a gun, and attempted to indicate that he did not have one in the house, meanwhile offering Yagan supplies of food. However, Yagan seized some linen handkerchiefs, and the terrified Watson gave him an additional amount of flour and bread in order to retrieve these items.<sup>27</sup> Both parties were left guessing about the intentions of the other, and while Watson concluded that Yagan wanted to do some harm, and tried to divert and pacify him, Yagan's intentions remain unknown although seemingly motivated by peaceful concerns.

Shortly after he had been to Watson's house, Yagan was named, along with Midgegooroo and Monday, as part of a group of fifty to sixty Aborigines who were present when John and Thomas Velvick

were speared at Bull Creek, thirteen kilometres from Perth.<sup>28</sup> The three Aborigines were declared outlaws and a bounty was placed on Yagan's head. Midgegooroo was captured and hanged, Monday was finally pardoned, and Yagan was killed by a youth, William Keats, for the bounty.<sup>29</sup>

As European settlement spread rapidly throughout the south-west, the effects were experienced at an increasingly profound level by the Aborigines. Traditional cultural practices gave way to a different pattern of life intimately interwoven with the farming communities of the newcomers. Customs and practices of the settlers were forced upon

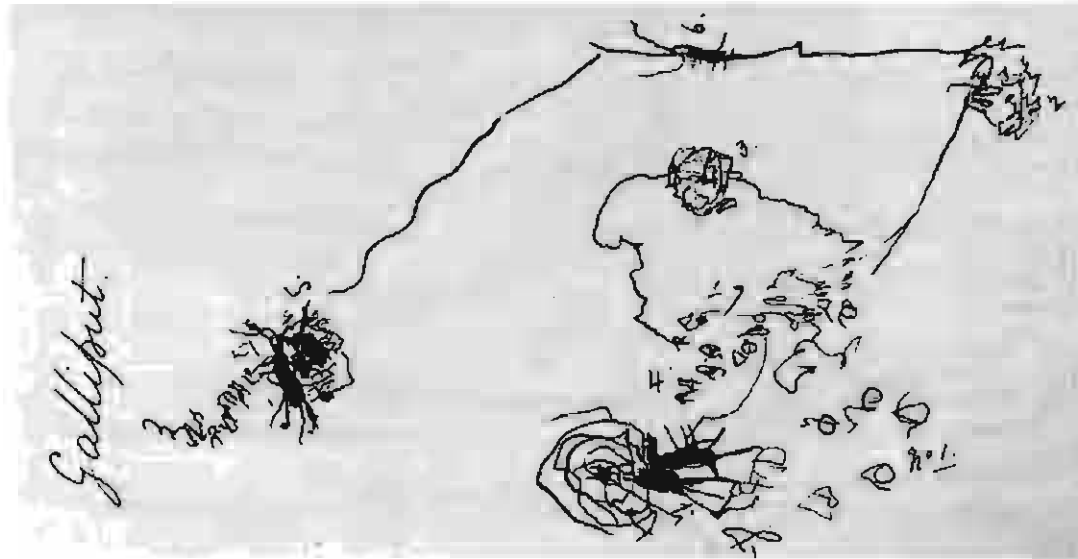
or adopted voluntarily by the Aborigines. These changes were reflected in dress, accommodation, utensils and tools used as well as in the means of gaining a livelihood. Children of mixed descent were born, inheriting cultural traditions from their European fathers as well as their Aboriginal mothers. Missions, schools and orphanages were founded for the education of Aboriginal children, many of whom were orphaned due to the effects of illness, accidents or acts of aggression.

The following photographs depict the rapid change experienced by Aborigines of the south-western region from the early days of the Swan River Colony to the beginning of the twentieth century.



'Early Sketch of Aborigines Building a Fire, Possibly King George's Sound'

This is a sketch by a French artist, de Sainson, the illustrator aboard *Astrolabe*, commanded by Dumont d'Urville, which anchored in King George Sound in 1826. Early artists had some difficulty depicting the Australian landscape because it was so different from that to which they had been accustomed. This is noticeable in this sketch, in the treatment of the blackboy (grass tree) on the left and also the cloaks and poses of the Aborigines which are more reminiscent of classical Greek figures.



'Particulars, (as expressed by Gallput) of the Native encampment, scrawl'd out by him.—That place (No. 1) womanar, children, pickninny.—That place (No. 7)—married men—that place (No. 2) single Men—Some morning sun get up vera early—married go down—call up single men,—single men get up when sun get up very early—all go down (to No. 6 a lake) catch fish, then go up (to No. 5) catch Kangaroo—bring him down dare—(No. 3) fire—roast him—all Men set round so—(suiting the action to the word) upon ham.'

Map of Native Encampment, drawn in quill and ink by Galliput (Gallput, Gyallipert) of King George Sound, February 1833

This represents the only known drawing by an Aboriginal from the south-western region for this period. Several accounts exist of Aborigines drawing in sand to illustrate stories or explain directions, but these were not meant to last and quickly blew away. Known cave paintings in the south-west date from much earlier periods.

The drawing clearly illustrates the general layout of an Aboriginal campsite and surrounding local country, resembling the general Australian pattern, with the single men camped some distance apart from the married men, women and children. On some mornings, very early, the married men would call the single men and all would go down to a nearby lake to catch fish. Afterwards, they would move to another site where kangaroo were known to graze.

Here, Galliput has drawn a kangaroo, a wispy figure bearing the distinctive characteristics of Aboriginal drawings also found in other parts of Australia. After a successful catch, the party would return to the main campsite where the animal would be roasted and all, men first, would sit down to enjoy their feast.

The artist Galliput was brought to Perth from King George Sound with another Aboriginal, Manyet, in the *Thistle* in 1833 to promote good relations between the Aborigines of the two places. He had never used a quill and ink before, but sat experimenting as J. Morgan, with whom he was staying, was writing a letter home to England. Morgan was astonished by Galliput's drawing, and praised him and Manyet for their conduct during their visit. The two Aborigines attended church service while in Perth, and also breakfasted and dined with Morgan on a number of occasions before returning to King George Sound in the *Ellen*.

Several descriptions of Aborigines at the time of the first European settlement of Western Australia are to be found in the writings of early observers including Moore, Grey, Colle, Bunbury, Salvado, Hassell, Nind and Curr.<sup>30</sup> The following description, by the Rev. J. Smithies, is both comprehensive and brief:

The appearance of the natives of Western Australia at first sight is certainly forbidding, besmeared as they are with grease and wilga or red ochre, which are plentifully distributed over the head and face and neck, and some parts of the body, and then a bandage tied around the forehead in which is stuck a bunch of Emu or Cockatoo feathers, these applications form the decoration of the head, their dress consists simply of a Kangaroo Skin, made into a Booka or cloak, which is worn at all seasons, and seems well adapted to keep out the wet in the rainy season, in addition to which the women have one small bag made of the same material, with a sling to throw over the shoulders, in which they carry their little child, and finally they have a sort of household bag, made in the same way and material as above and carried on their back, in which they deposit wilga, drinking can, rice etc. and all of which is taken from place to place, so that wherever they are they are at home; the women generally carry a long stick about 6 feet long called a 'won-na' or digging stick with which they dig up roots out of the Earth for food. The men usually carry a throwing board, and a few spears and a hammer of peculiar construction made of stones and gum, this is stuck in a belt made out of the fur of a possum and is worn about the waist, this hammer is a useful instrument to climb trees with, and also a terrible instrument of attack on an enemy, if put to its use.<sup>31</sup>



'Mungie, of the Pinjarra Tribe 1829'

Although this photograph is dated 1829, it could not possibly have been taken that early, although this date could refer to Mungie's birthdate or possibly mean that she was present when European settlers arrived. Mungie is wearing the traditional *buka* (*booka*) and bags, described by Smithies. Her cloak is fastened with a kangaroo bone pin, and she is wearing what appears to be a woven, or crocheted, headband. This is a studio portrait, and it is difficult to know whether or not the headband is a 'touch' added by the photographer. Early descriptions of Aborigines mention string headbands, spun from possum fur, which were worn by the men. It is likely that Mungie adapted her traditional skills to weaving and crocheting with wool and cotton, and wove her headband in the context of the changes brought about in her life by European settlement of the south-west.





#### 'Mainland Aborigines'

This is a studio photograph, and the people are obviously posed. The woman on the left and the man sitting are wearing the *bukka*, and the woman is carrying the long digging stick described by Smithies. The two men standing are carrying spears, a throwing stick and a shield, and are wearing head-dresses, body paint and eucalyptus leaves tied to their arms, in addition to nose bones which signify that they are both Inlited men. The shield is from the Western Desert region, and most likely would have been traded in return for some desired item from the south-west. Before European settlement, trading of this type would have taken place between a succession of trading partners linking the districts from which the items originated. However, by the time this photograph was taken, a man from the Western Desert might have visited the Swan River Colony; or else the shield could have been obtained by a south-western Aboriginal travelling with explorers or settlers; or he could have obtained it from someone who had been to the Western Desert and brought it back as a novelty.

While the authenticity of the ceremonial dress is difficult to establish, and the studio location of the photograph casts some doubt on this, the decorations worn by the two men standing correspond to descriptions by early explorers and observers. Living descendants of south-western Aborigines recall seeing, in their youth, Aborigines dressed for ceremonies and wearing bunches of eucalyptus leaves tied to their arms.

#### 'Winjan'

Winjan is first mentioned in the records in 1834, when his wife Bungup is listed among the wounded and killed at the Pinjarra massacre. It is not clear if Winjan was present also at this event. In the 1850s he is said to have been among those Aborigines appointed titular 'Kings' by the colonial governor, in the hope that they would exert their influence to keep the peace among other Aborigines in their area districts. Winjan had at least one son, George Winjan, so that the Aboriginal name became a family name. George Winjan lived in the Pinjarra district, and is buried there. It is not clear whether this is a photograph of Winjan, or of his son George Winjan.





'South West Aboriginal Woman Outside a Hut of Leaves Wearing a Buka, 1890, Near Fremantle'

This woman has the long digging stick, typical of the south-western region, which was used to dig for root vegetables and small animals. Her hut is constructed of eucalyptus branches, bent and threaded over a single frame of eucalyptus trunks placed in a semi-circle into the ground and bent over towards the centre. Blackboy grass (grass tree) was also used to construct huts, especially in wet weather and when the hut was to stand for any length of time. The grass fronds were stuck into a simple frame in successively higher concentric circles, to form a thatch which drained the rain onto the ground and kept the interior of the hut dry.

'Couple from the New Norcia District'

Here, both the man and the woman are wearing *bukas*, left characteristically untrimmed around the hemline. The fur side of the *buka* was worn on the inside, but when it rained the fur was turned out so that the water would run off. Possum fur was spun to make belts—in addition to headbands—in which the men hung their stone-headed axes and other small objects so that their hands could remain free. The loin-cloth worn by the man is an adaptation to the changes wrought by settlement, with the different values this brought.



'Native Camp at Crawley Point, 1860s'

The bark and rush huts shown here are frequently described by early observers. Several of the people are wearing *bukas*, while at least two men (to the right) are in colonial dress.



Aboriginal style hut

This hut was discovered in the Greenmount National Wildflower Park near Perth, in 1979. It is located in a sheltered position on the side of an escarpment, with a panoramic view of the surrounding countryside. A traditional Aboriginal mode of construction has been employed, with a series of poles placed firmly in the ground in a semi-circle. Lighter branches are then criss-crossed to form a lattice, into which is woven palms and small branches. Binder-twine has been used to secure some of the joints, and to attach the hut to the large blackboy which forms part of its support. Undergrowth has grown up through the original structure and some of the branches have dried and slipped out of place, giving the hut an open appearance.

It is not known who built this hut, nor for how long it was occupied.

'Aborigines from New Norcia Mission Showing Weapons'

These men show an interesting cultural combination of traditional Aboriginal and introduced features. They are wearing Spanish peasant work shirts introduced by the Benedictine monks who founded New Norcia Mission in 1848, except for the small boy on the lower right. Over these, two men on the left are wearing Aboriginal *bukas*, clasped with thonging possibly made from kangaroo sinew drawn from the base of the tail. The four adult men are wearing headbands with feathers, and holding a boomerang, throwing sticks and spears. However, the boy in the centre has a pair of opera glasses which he has slung around his neck. Several photographs were taken at New Norcia in the late 1860s, 1870s and 1880s depicting various aspects of the Spanish Benedictine Order's work there.



Jack Maher with his daughter and wife, late 1890s

John Jack Maher, English, born 1827, arrived in 1853 and was married in 1855 to Bordrian of Albany. Careful attention has been paid to dress for this family photograph and both Mrs Maher and her daughter are wearing jewellery and lace.

John Jack Maher was a friend of Elijah Quartermaine junior.

'Bobbie from Denmark, with his wife Jenny. Bobbie was said to have had his eyes put out for breaking a tribal law, and was led around by Jenny with the aid of her digging stick. Late 1890s'

Although Bobbie is wearing European-style clothing, he has draped his coat across his shoulders as he would a *buka*, and tucked up the superfluous sleeve. Jenny is wearing a cloth skirt after the style of the traditional *buka*, and showing the adaptation of an introduced garment to a traditional Aboriginal pattern. Living accounts tell of Aborigines in the area at the turn of the century adapting European clothing in this fashion, sometimes wearing as many as four skirts to try and imitate the warmth of the traditional *buka*. In particular, skirts were adapted by using the side placket as an armhole and placing the waistband over one shoulder and under the arm on the other side.

Aborigines were often given common English names, such as Bobbie and Jenny, by settlers. One unfortunate consequence of this has been the disuse of Aboriginal names. Also, it is difficult at times to distinguish between generations, where individuals are known only by common personal names, or even between individuals of the same period.

A story surrounding this photograph is that Bobby had his eyes put out as a form of tribal punishment, because his marriage to Jenny was against Aboriginal marriage laws, which were very strict. Jenny's punishment was that from then on she would have to look after Bobby and provide for all of the couple's needs. However, it is highly unlikely that this story has any foundation in fact, as there are no accounts of a similar tribal punishment. Traditional punishment for wrong marriages took the form of spearing of either the woman, or both parties, depending on the seriousness of the offence, and in the case of very wrong marriages, of death of one or both parties. Moreover, in a hunting and gathering based economy, deliberate crippling would have been too burdensome and have resulted in death.





Group from Gnowangerup, c. 1910

There are eighteen children, three women and one man in this photograph. It is thought that they are all members of the Williams family.



'Aboriginal Woman Gennie, in a Blanket with a Dog in front of her Humpy'

On the back of this photograph was the inscription 'Old Black Gennie, presented by Mrs James Wood to me, Mary Earnshaw'. Original inscription: 'To Dear Mary from her Mother, 1902, c/- Francis Bird, Old Farm, Albany.'

This photograph illustrates many of the changes wrought by European settlement over the preceding seventy-three years. In place of the traditional bark, rush or eucalyptus branch hut is a similarly shaped dwelling made of introduced metal sheeting. However, the method of construction is reminiscent of the traditional. The dog is much larger than the native dog or dingo, and is obviously an introduced European breed. In place of the kangaroo or possum-skin *buka*, Gennie is wearing a blanket under which she wears a dress. Several containers around the hut are all manufactured items from the culture of the Europeans.

### 3. ABORIGINES AND WORK

From the time the first boatload of British colonists landed at Fremantle, the economy of the Aborigines was irreversibly disrupted. Activities such as land clearing and the introduction of livestock upset the balance in the natural environment that had previously existed and brought profound changes for the Aborigines who could neither ignore the settlers' presence nor readily become absorbed into the life of the colony. Their diet, ways of obtaining food, and the traditional food supply itself, were all affected by the changes.

Aborigines early assumed a significance in the economic affairs of the colony, both for the goods and services they consumed and also the contribution they made. Because of the obvious effects that European settlement was having on their ability to procure accustomed foods, together with the settlers' desire to persuade them to settle down and provide a ready source of labour, Aborigines were offered limited food rations and medical care. Initially wheat was issued, but because their grinding stones were not suitable for this type of grain, the Aborigines exchanged it with the local miller for flour. The colonial officials became aware of this, and in 1833 began to issue flour already ground.<sup>1</sup> After this date, several proposals were made to provide Aborigines with hand mills so that they could grind their own wheat, and some mills were actually issued in the following year. Settlers at times paid Aborigines with wheat for work they did, and this had to be taken to the miller to be ground. However, suspicion that some of the wheat brought to the mill had been stolen was a source of friction between colonial officials and Aborigines, and the handles of some of the hand mills were removed when it was discovered that Aborigines had taken wheat from Government Stores. Also, the wheat issued to Aborigines was often of very poor quality, and so the problem of obtaining a staple food in place of native resources continued to force Aborigines into dependency on European goods.<sup>2</sup>

The introduction of European-breed dogs aided the Aborigines in the short term in their quest for food, although the use of these dogs

also brought them into conflict with the settlers. Prior to European settlement Aborigines of the south-western region had native dogs whose main utility was as hunting animals and pets. The settlers introduced larger European breeds which were used in hunting, and these mated with the native dogs to produce a larger animal which could attack and capture game as well as track it. While on the one hand this use of the new-breed dogs represented a clever departure from traditional practice, on the other it was an annoyance to settlers when the dogs were used by Aborigines to capture poultry and livestock. By 1834 the number of mixed-breed dogs owned by Aborigines had increased to the extent that the issue was raised at an Agricultural Society meeting.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, wild native dogs frequently worried sheep, but often Aborigines were blamed in the first instance for these losses even though the wild dogs were not theirs, and their own dogs were tied up. Consequently, dogs owned by Aborigines became targets for retaliation by soldiers and settlers.<sup>4</sup>

Fishing was another economic activity which caused friction between Aborigines and European settlers. Although the importance of fish in the traditional Aboriginal diet was noted by a number of early observers, many Aboriginal fish traps were destroyed by settlers in efforts to discourage Aborigines from coming onto land which they were occupying. Aborigines continued to build these weir-type traps across waterways in order to supplement their diet in the colony, and because group fishing in certain seasons of the year was an established tradition with important social implications.<sup>5</sup>

Fishing continued to be a source of aggravation to settlers, so that Aborigines continued to be barred from their traditional fishing spots and a traditional source of food was thus no longer available to them, except at personal physical risk. Finally, in 1899, under the fisheries regulations, the construction and use of weir-type fish traps was prohibited, and this in turn meant that fish traps were no longer built, and the art of constructing them was lost.

In other countries where the British had established colonies, they had found that the local people could be employed as labourers and domestics, and so in the Swan River Colony efforts were made to teach Aborigines the knowledge and skills necessary for them to become servants to the settlers. However, the place offered to Aborigines was mostly only a part-time one, corresponding to the seasonal demands of farming when additional labour was required for such tasks as harvesting, sowing and shearing. Less than ten years after the Swan River Colony was founded, Lieutenant George Grey in Albany wrote that the demand for Aboriginal labour was seasonal and irregular and this meant that when they were not being employed by settlers, Aborigines had to fall back on their traditional ways of maintaining themselves. Grey saw this as a contradiction when efforts were being made to encourage Aborigines to abandon their customs in favour of those of the settlers.<sup>6</sup>

Initially Aborigines were employed as shepherds, farmhands and general household helps. Because of their knowledge and understanding of the country they were also co-opted to accompany explorers, assist settlers move from one area to another, and escort prisoners and carry mail between districts. They were also called upon to act as interpreters with other Aboriginal groups. Among those who assisted settlers in many ways were Durangod, Joolonga, Wayrang and Jim, four Murray River Aborigines who carried letters within the Leschenault area in 1838;<sup>7</sup> Nindup and Makintosh, York Aborigines who escorted prisoners from York to Perth in 1840;<sup>8</sup> Yugan and Wawayran who carried mail from Leschenault to Pinjarra in 1839, but who would not travel any further north because they did not want to come face to face with the Perth Aborigines whom they regarded as hostile; mail carriers Dindu, Ninda and Jack of Pinjarra who bore mail to Perth; mail carriers Dick and Gatabonnayon of Leschenault; and William, Kenny, Biranga, Bushell, Hohindon and Paddy of the Vasse who carried mail between there and Leschenault.<sup>9</sup>

In 1841 the native interpreter, Francis Armstrong, set out a list of conditions to regulate the employment of Aboriginal children as household servants and apprentices. These rules were meant to govern the conduct of the children while at work, and when travelling between work and the homes of Armstrong and the Methodist missionary, Rev. Smithies, where they were accommodated. Several rules also applied to the employers of these children, requiring them to act with consideration and regard for the children's welfare.<sup>10</sup> At that time it was common in Britain and Europe for children as young as ten or twelve to be placed in employment, and this practice was continued in the Swan River Colony, although many of the Aboriginal children were younger.<sup>11</sup> The colonial government also provided an incentive to settlers who agreed to train Aborigines in farming or domestic skills, or teach them a trade or handicraft. This took the form of a land bounty of £19 rebate where farming or domestic skills were taught, and £36 rebate if they were taught a trade or handicraft. Ten bounties were granted to settlers for training Aborigines between 1840 and 1847.

One of the tasks for which settlers frequently relied on Aborigines was to search for livestock that had become lost in the bush. Because of their knowledge of the country Aborigines could often find missing animals where settlers could not, and for this reason they were also called upon to assist in searches for missing people, especially children who wandered off and became lost. One Aboriginal of the Perth-based group, Migo, played a crucial role in both these types of search. In 1833 a bull owned by Leroux was lost, representing a serious financial cost. Migo and another Perth Aboriginal, Dommera, were sent off to accompany the search party and they successfully located the animal.<sup>12</sup>

In the same year both Migo and Dommera became ill. This was the first serious outbreak of measles in the colony. Medical treatment was sent to Migo where he was camped at Lake Monger with his mother and her husband, Marungo. His illness worsened, and he was brought into the Perth settlement on horseback for further medical attention, at



that time including bleeding and cupping as standard medical practice. Not long afterwards a fight developed between various Aborigines and Migo and Dommera were among the wounded. The fight had erupted out of a visit to the Perth area by a Murray River tribesman, and Migo and Dommera were drawn into it, on opposite sides, because of family ties and obligations. A corroboree had been held to mark the visit of the Murray River Aborigines, as the Perth Aborigines had close ties with them, including Migo, whose brother had been killed at the Murray River, and Dommera, whose father was from that district.<sup>13</sup>

The purpose of the visits by Murray tribesmen to the Perth area on a regular basis was to arrange marriages, settle old scores, trade items, see relatives and friends, journey further northwards to make contact with groups there, and conduct whatever other business needed attending to. However, the European settlers at best only partly understood this, and tended to regard the visitors as nuisances, especially when they were drawn into Aboriginal matters without intending to be. For example, Ellis describes how he was woken up in the middle of the night by Duredup, a young widow, who asked him to help her and her Murray River friend elope by rowing the couple across the river in his boat. Ellis helped them when Duredup told him that other members of the Perth Aboriginal group would spear her if they knew what she was about.<sup>14</sup> Traditionally, elopements between Perth and Murray River Aborigines were not uncommon, but the presence of the Europeans meant that it was easier to do some things that were not strictly according to the rules.

The following year, a child belonging to one of the settlers became lost in the bush. An extensive search failed to find any trace of the little boy. Migo was called on to help the search party, and he and another Perth Aboriginal, Molly Dobbin, eventually found the boy thirty-five kilometres away, by following his tracks and utilizing all of their bushcraft skills and knowledge of the terrain.<sup>15</sup>

Migo also acted as an interpreter for the mounted Native Police, and

in 1834 he was commended for being able to handle a baggage horse very well and being of great usefulness to the police.<sup>16</sup>

The police often employed Aborigines as trackers, usually to hunt down other Aboriginal suspects. Group divisions and hostilities found expression here, and Aboriginal trackers sometimes blamed their enemies for misdeeds such as spearing livestock and stealing potatoes so that they would be punished by the colonial authorities, even though they were innocent of the charges against them. By 1840 it became official policy to employ Aborigines as police aides, or constables, and one appointment was made at Albany with an application also to employ a second person.<sup>17</sup> In the same year appointments were made in the Upper Swan, and later at Perth, Guildford, Canning, the Murray district, Leschenault, the Vasse and Fremantle.<sup>18</sup> These Aborigines were to maintain peace among the other Aborigines in their respective districts, and to prevent them from committing offences against settlers and their property. They were paid in the form of food rations which were stopped if a breach of the peace occurred, but paid in arrears when they produced a culprit who would admit to the misdeed. The effect of this system of payment was to reinforce ill feeling between various groups of Aborigines.

The system of appointing Aboriginal constables gave way to one of 'King-ships' in the 1850s. Under this scheme, a number of Aborigines who appeared to the colonial authorities to stand out as leaders amongst other Aborigines, were given the title of 'King' and expected to keep the peace among their 'subjects'. The authority of their 'office' was intended to increase their standing and power among other Aborigines. This system gradually passed away, as it was found to be ineffective from the point of view of the police, especially as disruptions to the peace continued to break out from time to time.

As traditional food sources diminished or were prohibited to Aborigines, they had to rely on handouts from settlers and food rations from the government. The introduction of convict labour between 1850 and

1868 and the further influx of people into the state in the gold rushes of the eighties and nineties meant that there was heavy competition for labouring jobs. Under these conditions, Aborigines found it increasingly difficult to obtain permanent employment. While seasonal employment continued to be available to them, they were faced with having to maintain a living on scarce native resources during the times that work was not to be had.

By the end of the nineteenth century a number of Aborigines throughout the south-west were in dire straits because they were unable to find sufficient work with settlers, or to make use of their customary sources of native game and fish to maintain themselves. With the enormous changes that had taken place within Aboriginal society, aged and dependent Aborigines were at times finding themselves without support. These people had to appeal to the mercy of settlers, or seek welfare relief from government sources. A number of local farmers, aware of the depletion of native food sources, championed the Aboriginal cause at the turn of the century by appealing to the government to assist them. The following documents reflect the situation Aborigines were in, and the concern of some settlers, over this period.

In 1899 settlers C. Tuckey of Mandurah wrote the following letter to the chief protector of Aborigines:

There are about 20 Natives here, but rations are only supplied to a few old women who would otherwise be in a sorry plight for means of sustenance. When His Excellency was here in October 1897 the Natives explained to him the position they were in owing to the destruction of their 'Mimgah' (a kind of weir in the Serpentine for catching fish) which was their main source of subsistence, and His Excellency promised that something should be done for them. The 'Mimgah' had several times been destroyed by white fishermen and afterwards was ordered to be abolished under the new Fisheries Regulations. Representations were made to the late Aborigines Protection Board, and also to the Honourable the

Premier on behalf of the Natives, but nothing was done for them beyond the Magistrate giving an order for the supply of Rations to these old women; one of these has five children ranging in age from 12 months to almost 10 years, and she is allowed double Rations. The men get nothing though some of them are old and others in bad health. Native game is not so plentiful here as is generally supposed, and it is uncertain; their principal reliance was on the fish, and this they cannot depend on now that their 'Mimgah' is taken from them, so that altogether I think instead of reducing the Rations now issued some should be allowed to the old men who are not now receiving any—of course I quite agree that the young men and women should be left to shift for themselves except in case of sickness.<sup>19</sup>

Local game was becoming increasingly scarce in many districts besides Mandurah as more land was taken up for farming following the gold-rush period, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The effects of this movement onto the land on the ability of Aborigines to maintain themselves was noted by many farmers of long standing throughout the south-western region. However, not all farmers were sympathetic towards the Aborigines, and many blatantly disregarded the effects that their activities were having on their livelihood. Thomas Muir of Deeside, acutely aware of the plight of Aborigines through the office of protector which he held, wrote:

A Native named Bob or Christian came to me and asked if I would write to you as he was an old man if you would allow him rations supplied at Dingup. As I said before it is now rather hard times for the Natives now to get their living in the bush. Kangaroo and Oppossum are so scarce. Bob is an old man, must be about 60 years of age.

I am the only one that the Natives have to ask for anything for them.<sup>20</sup>

Local farmers in Bridgetown and Beverley were not as understanding as Muir, and complained of Aborigines hunting kangaroo and possum on their properties, with the aid of rifles. They were also worried that the dogs belonging to the Aborigines would kill their sheep. As a consequence of their complaints, the police of Beverley shot three dogs belonging to James Kickett. When Kickett objected, defending his dogs and stating that they were always kept chained, the police claimed that they did not know that the dogs belonged to him. They also pointed out to Kickett that any Aboriginal who had more than one dog, had to have a licence to keep them under the terms of the 1885 Amendment to the Dog Act.<sup>21</sup>

By seeking to justify their actions by a regulation, the police were acting in the spirit of the Aborigines Act of 1905. Attempts to enforce this particular regulation were deeply resented by Aborigines because of the cost of a licence, together with the fact that they depended on the dogs to hunt meat and that they had always kept a number of dogs for this purpose. Kickett was one of a number of Aborigines who objected to the enforcement of the restrictive provisions of the Aborigines Act of 1905 and other Acts. He was well able to express himself, and had the courage and conviction to write to the authorities in an attempt to gain some redress for both himself and his family and friends. (See Family Tree No. 18A.)

At Bridgetown, complaints were received by the police that Aborigines were shooting kangaroo and possum for their skins, rather than for meat. Once again, the police investigated the complaints, and this time confiscated a rifle belonging to Chucky, because he did not have a licence for it. Chucky was extremely upset by this action on the part of the police because, as he said, he depended upon the rifle to provide meat for himself and his wife. Moreover, he had had the rifle for three years by the time the police confiscated it, and no one had ever mentioned that he needed to have a licence for it. On the day following the police action, Chucky went to the police station to present his case for

the return of his rifle. However, the police advised him to apply to the Aborigines Department for a licence as required by a clause in the Aborigines Act, which it was their job to enforce. At the same time, Chucky was cautioned that if he acquired a licence and then used the gun to shoot kangaroo for their skins, he stood to lose the licence and hence the use of the gun.

A few days after his confrontation with the police, Chucky became seriously ill, and finally on 29 April 1907 his wife, Lucy Chucky, was forced to write to the chief protector of Aborigines, Prinsep, for assistance because the couple were destitute. Their meagre economic resources had proved insufficient to tide them over a period of unemployment topped by Chucky's illness.

Chucky saw the local doctor, who was sympathetic to his situation and supported his wife's request for help. Chucky also found a friend in the Bridgetown clerk of courts, R. C. Williams, who wrote to Prinsep on his behalf, describing him as: 'very reliable and good Native and I would recommend his case to you for your consideration'.<sup>22</sup>

Like a number of other Aborigines of this period, Lucy Chucky had received an elementary education, and was well able to make her meaning clear when necessity forced her to write to the Aborigines Department. Lucy Chucky's standard of literacy was comparable to the general standard throughout the south-west at the time.

As in Bridgetown and Beverley, fears that Aborigines' dogs would worry their sheep prompted the farmers of Darkan to attempt to prevent Aborigines hunting on their land. As a result of their complaints, the local police prohibited Aborigines from hunting on farming properties in the Darkan district. Faced with serious unemployment, this restriction had serious consequences for Aborigines who relied on bush food as they could not afford to buy meat. William Hart took a leadership role, and wrote to Prinsep on behalf of Aborigines in the Darkan district in an effort to have the prohibition lifted. Hart was a sophisticated man, and was prepared to make use of the customary

Transcript

Letter to H. C. Prinsep, Chief Protector of Aborigines, from Lucy Chucky, Donnelly Well, 29 April 1907 (ADF 1907, 186)

Dear Sir,  
Just a few lines to ask you if you will be kind enough to send me some clothes as Chucky has been very ill for a long time and he has not been able to work and I haven't got much cloth to my back and I want you to try and send me some.

And you will kindly oblige,  
Yours,  
Lucy Chucky

Donnelly Well  
Apr. 29. 1907  
Mr. H. C. Prinsep  
Dear Sir  
Just a few lines to ask  
you if you will be kind enough  
to send me some clothes as  
Chucky has been very ill  
for a long time and he  
is not been able to  
work and I haven't got  
much cloth to my back  
and I want you to try  
and send me some.

and you will  
kindly oblige  
yours as  
Lucy Chucky

channels of appeal in order to bring about change. He was willing to travel to Perth for discussions with officials of the Aborigines Department, and also to organize a petition to the governor if necessary. In part, Hart wrote:

[we] request of your honour to kindly state whether this prohibition is justified and if so, how are we to support ourselves and families."

Unfortunately, the questions Hart and others raised with the Aborigines Department were never come to terms with by the authorities, and Aborigines continued to be placed in very difficult economic circumstances through the implementation of the 1905 Aborigines Act, and associated amendments and Acts. (See Family Tree No. 11B.)

Failure on the part of farmers and townspeople to understand the situation that Aborigines were in, and at times plain indifference to them, increased the hardships that Aborigines were facing. This lack of understanding was reflected in the withholding of services to Aborigines, including medical attention. At times, this had tragic consequences for the individuals involved, as in the case of William 'Billy' 'Noongale' Kickett. (See Family Tree No. 18A.)

In 1870 Kickett, together with Tommy Windich, accompanied Sir John Forrest overland from Perth to Adelaide. This exploratory voyage led eventually to the establishment of an overland telegraph link between Western Australia and the other states. When these two Aborigines died, Forrest erected tombstones over their graves to commemorate the contribution they had made to the development of the state. Windich died a young man at the age of thirty-five, and was buried at Esperance. Kickett lived to fifty-two years, and died at Beverley in 1904. The circumstances surrounding his death led to an inquiry into the medical care given to Aborigines in the town, brought about in part by actions taken by Kickett himself, prior to his own death.



Tommy Windich's tombstone

Three days before he was to die, Kickett wrote to the Aborigines Department complaining that the local doctor had refused adequate medical attention to a sick woman, Sarah Andrew, who had subsequently died. Mrs Andrew's husband had died the preceding year, under similar circumstances. When Kickett suddenly fell ill and died, allegations of medical neglect were made by local residents, among them W. G. Iles who wrote to Prinsep:

I have to bring under your notice with extreme regret the medical treatment Aborigines receive in this town. On June the 28th one named Billy Kickett . . . a fine specimen of health and strength, was taken ill. His companions sent for the doctor to go and see him. The doctor gave them a bottle of mixture instead. The poor fellow grew worse and died yesterday, as it were, like a dog, no medical assistance. The natives are naturally very indignant at this treatment to one who has rendered such valuable services to Sir John [Forrest] and his country. Last week a black woman by name Sarah Andrew, died under the same circumstances, about 12 months ago the husband of the woman just dead died under similar circumstances but in that case they were unable to obtain even medicine without payment . . . The two recent deaths took place within 5 minutes walk of the hospital.<sup>24</sup>

Forrest was shocked on hearing of Kickett's death, and wrote to his family for the details surrounding it. Two brothers, James and Thomas Kickett, and a nephew John Kickett, replied that when they had sent for the doctor he had refused to come, but sent a bottle of medicine instead. After three doses of this medicine, Kickett died and when the doctor came to look at the body he remarked that the deceased had been poisoned. They concluded:

We are sending you these particulars in the hope that if there has been a wrong done you will see it righted.<sup>25</sup>

The matter was referred to the Aborigines Department by Forrest who wrote:

I saw Billy at Clackline in December 1903 and he looked strong and well . . . It seems quite clear that poor Kickett did not receive the attention he should and making all allowances I think the matter ought to be closely investigated in order that it may be known whether there was any culpable negligence. A report ought



William 'Billy' 'Noongale' Kickett's tombstone

to be obtained from the police and from anyone else who saw Kickett before death.<sup>26</sup>

Prinsep referred the matter to the under secretary for state for submission to the colonial secretary.

[my] expression of opinion that Mr Butler did not show that interest in either Kickett's or Sara Andrew's cases which I have a right to expect from him. He had been to the natives' camp only a night or two before the occasion on which he says he could not find Kickett's camp . . . . It is a most unfortunate and distressing affair, two such cases happening within a couple of days and as he allows, chiefly from his easily formed conclusion that the sick people were getting on all right.<sup>27</sup>

Aborigines could seldom gain redress for wrongs committed against them, even when they were prepared to argue for their rights. While Forrest was able to initiate an inquiry into Kickett's death, the matter appears to have stopped there and no action was brought against the doctor involved. This was also generally the case in instances of friction between Aborigines and the police. The case of Billy Cundean is an exception, in that the offending policeman was discharged from the force for shooting him in the back. In June 1901 Billy Cundean was found suffering from advanced tuberculosis, on the property of J. W. Moore of Keninup, Upper Blackwood. Moore supplied him with rations and requested a blanket for him, in addition to the pain killers he administered and which were the only patent medicine that seemed to do any good.

Moore wrote out a statement by Billy Cundean, in support of his claim that Cundean was entitled to government relief:

From 2½ to 3 years ago shot by a Policeman named Stokes. Case tried by Mr Adam, Katanning. Constable Stoke discharged from

the force over it. Mr Adam told this native he would receive rations for life on a/c of this shooting. He has been receiving rations from Mr C. Pearce, Katanning and Wagin.

This native showed me his back which is perforated with shot holes which he states are still in his body. He tells me he will go in and see the doctor at Bridgetown when he feels able to travel.<sup>28</sup>

Moore also wrote of another sick Aboriginal, Billy Mulget, who had died recently. Throughout the week before his death, most of the Aborigines on Moore's property had been away looking after him.

The practice of the whole group being involved in caring for a dying person had its origin in earlier Aboriginal practices, when family members would sit with the dying person, offering comfort. This task fell mainly to the women, although other members of the group would

also spend time with the failing person. On his death, the mourners would break out into lamentations over the corpse, expressing their grief by wailing and in the case of close relatives, beating themselves with their hands and with small branches.

The corpse was positioned bent over, and a shallow grave was dug, while the direction it faced varied from district to district within the south-western region. Branches were generally laid in the bottom of the grave, and the corpse placed on top of these, although whether on the right or left side, or in a sitting-up position, was a matter of local variation. When the corpse was buried the grave appeared as a mound, and the personal possessions of the deceased were either placed in the grave itself, or on top of the mound of earth covering it. The grave was generally swept with branches, and a fire lit and kept burning for a



Aboriginal funeral, Narrogin, c. 1915

The tradition of funerals involving the whole group has persisted among Nyungars of today, and it is quite common for as many as three to four hundred people to attend a funeral. While the funerals of old people tend to be larger because of the greater number of relatives and friends acquired during a lifetime, funerals of young people are often almost as large. In this photograph, the mourners include children and babies with their families. The presence of the police would have been to organize traffic so that the stream of mourners could pass freely to the graveyard.

period of up to several days. During this time, signs were looked for that would indicate the cause of the death. This was also believed to be the period during which the spirit of the deceased was making its way to the land of the dead.

Throughout the south-west there was a prohibition against using the name of any person who had died, and hence individuals with the same name were obliged to adopt a new one. This practice did not persist as European names, and particularly surnames, came into common usage among Aborigines.

The desire for burials to be carried out according to traditional Aboriginal practice persisted into the twentieth century. Johnny Cocky (Cockie) died at Picton in 1908 while on a visit to the area with his

family and several others from the Williams area. In the preparation of his corpse, the body was bent over and the knees drawn up.<sup>29</sup> (See Family Tree No. 11B.)

In 1905 Mawkerit died and other Aborigines requested permission from the Aborigines Department to give him an Aboriginal funeral in the bush. As a compromise with the authorities they stated that they would bury the body in a coffin if needs be, as long as the burial could take place in open country. However, this was not necessary as the Aborigines Department agreed to the burial without a coffin.<sup>30</sup> On 21 September 1908 an Aboriginal woman known as 'Jane of Collie' died. In accord with her own wish her European husband of many years, Jesse Crump, organized her burial 'in native style' in the fields.<sup>31</sup>



The death of Prince Dower 1895 (*Clarion* 13 Feb. 1897)

Tommy Dower (1845-1895) was a member of the first exploratory party led by Alexander Forrest which went into the Kimberleys district in 1879. The inscription on his tombstone, in the Perth Cemetery, reads:

He was possessed of more than ordinary intelligence and ability. He accompanied Alexander Forrest on his exploration from De Gray River to Port Darwin in 1879, when the Kimberley District was discovered. He also accompanied Sir John Forrest on several surveying expeditions in various parts of the colony. This stone was erected by the Aborigines Protection Board in Recognition of his services to the colony.

As Aboriginal personal names tended to be used as surnames once European settlement had taken place, it is likely that Tommy Dower was the son of Dower, a Perth Aboriginal with strong Murray River connections who was a youth at Mount Elliza when the Swan River Colony was first established in 1829. Dower's own father was Yalagonga, one of the outstanding men of the day whose land centred on the north side of the Swan River towards what is today known as Wanneroo.<sup>32</sup>



#### 4. ON THE LAND

When the Swan River Colony was founded in 1829, European settlers took up land occupied by Aborigines and set about transforming the appearance of the south-western region with their farming, crop cultivation and wood-cutting activities. A number of settlers at the time were acutely conscious that they, as newcomers, were the usurpers, and that in reacting to their presence Aborigines were attempting to protect their own rights. Dr Alexander Collie wrote in 1832 that the settlers were the primary intruders who had taken the ancient grounds of the Aborigines for their own purposes.<sup>1</sup> W. Shenton was very taken with the plan carried out in Van Diemen's Land of forcibly moving all the Tasmanian Aborigines onto islands off the mainland coast. He proposed a similar scheme to take all the Aborigines in the Perth district to Rottnest Island, where he suggested they could be taught farming skills over a protracted period of time. In his arguments in favour of his scheme, he made the point that the Aborigines had already been driven away from their accustomed haunts by the settlers.<sup>2</sup>

A number of plans were put forward to teach farming techniques to Aborigines, with the basic aim of changing their way of life from that of nomads or semi-nomadic wanderers, to becoming a settled peasantry. Nevertheless, at the same time it was generally assumed by settlers that Aborigines would continue to live off the land by utilizing their traditional hunting skills which necessitated moving from place to place in search of game. However, land continued to be regarded as available as a right to settlers, regardless of the needs of Aborigines, and new areas of the south-western region were opened up to farming and crop cultivation as the European population expanded with scant regard paid to the Aborigines there.

Under the Land Regulations of 1872 crown land could be set aside for use by Aborigines, as a gazetted reserve. Small reserves were created as sites for mission schools with 29 acres (12 hectares) for the New Norcia Mission in 1874, 2000 acres (810 hectares) on the Swan River for the Anglican Native Mission in 1887, and 100 acres (40 hec-

tares) in the Bridgetown district in 1884.<sup>3</sup> Under the 1898 Land Act, up to 200 acres of land could be granted or leased to an Aboriginal on application, for the purpose of residence or cultivation. If certain improvements were not made within a specified period the occupant stood to lose the land, which could then be re-classified as crown land.

A number of Aborigines obtained land under these provisions, either as free homestead farms or under a deferred payment scheme. Among these were Lukey Mourdey, Johnny Dangin, Benedict Cooper and George Long. However, lack of capital, together with the necessity to provide for their families, meant that many men had to find work and so were unable to make the improvements to their property that they had hoped.

Lukey Mourdey had land at Cataboota in the New Norcia district in 1905. Because the support of his wife and three children took all the money he could earn, he was unable to save sufficient to buy fencing and pay for other improvements. Mourdey approached the Aborigines Department for help, and eventually received some capital assistance after a protracted period of negotiations during which he was almost destitute.<sup>4</sup>

Another man, Johnny Dangin, applied for a homestead farm in the Avon district in 1904. He was successful in his application and by 1908 had 20 acres under cultivation and 120 chain of fencing. Dangin was able to make the improvements to his block through a loan from the Agricultural Bank, and was the only Aboriginal of that period recorded as obtaining a bank loan.<sup>5</sup> Benedict Cooper also acquired a block of land in the Victoria Plains district, near Wyening. (See Family Tree No. 14C.) He, too, made several improvements to his block, but was short of money for necessary fencing. In 1905 a local farmer approached the chief protector of Aborigines, Prinsep, on Cooper's behalf and as Cooper was well thought of in the district, wire was supplied to him through the Aborigines Department.

Prinsep wrote in 1905:

[It was] reported to me that this man was well worthy of encouragement as he was a well conducted, industrious man living on a block of land obtained from the Lands Department under their Regulations as Aboriginal—

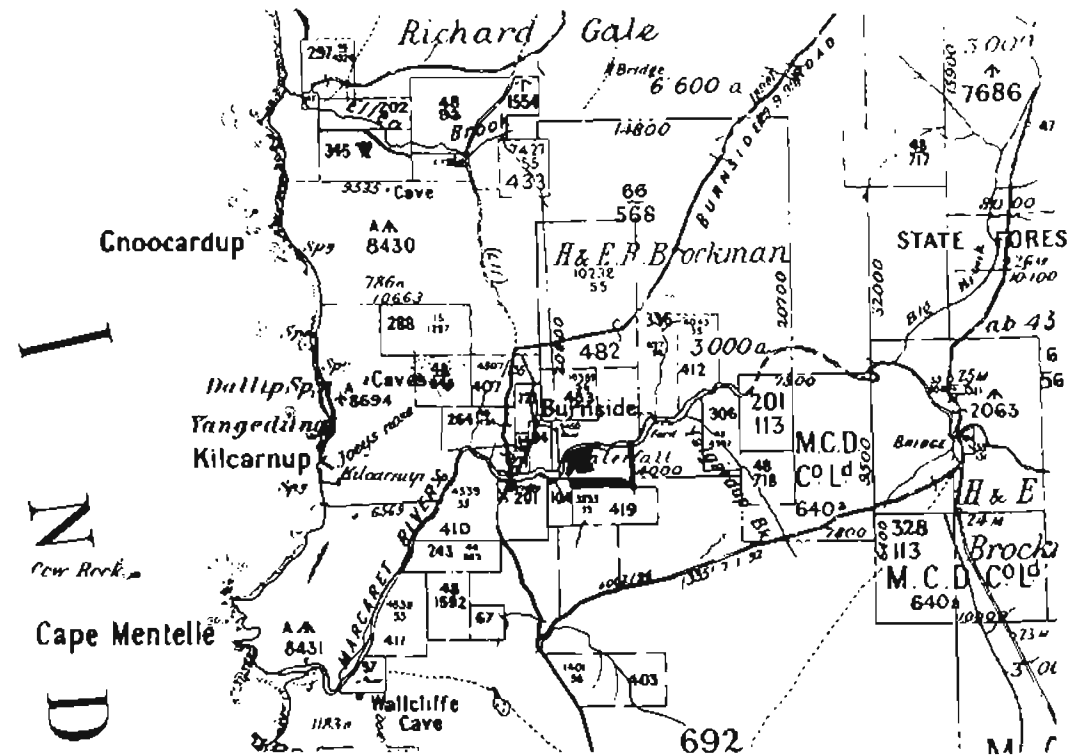
The man himself subsequently came to see me—and stated that out of the 160 acres he occupies—he had 15 acres under crop and 50 acres cleared ready for the plough. He had erected posts for wire fencing but was unable to purchase the wire from want of funds . . .

Mr Gardiner whose letter I attach also speaks highly of Benedict Cooper.<sup>6</sup>

In 1906 George Long successfully applied for land at Margaret River to make a home for himself and his would-be fiancée Rosey Guy. Long had grown up in the Margaret River area, and in his youth had courted a girl from Ellensbrook, a small orphanage farm for Aboriginal children, in the same district.' (See Family Tree No. 27.)

Aboriginal small landowners frequently found support among their neighbours during difficult times when things were not going right for them. George 'Jerong' Dinah was one such person. (See Family Tree No. 20B.) He had a homestead farm with a river frontage at Kunalling, Arthur River, on the Perth to Albany road. In 1906 it was reported to the Lands Department that he had failed to improve the block. Local residents felt strongly in Dinah's favour, and the Hon. O. A. Piessé helped him to keep his land by advising him on how to reply to the Lands Department. In 1907 Dinah was again reported for failing to make improvements, and this time local resident Nicholas Donnelly wrote in support of him, expressing the feelings of the majority of the farmers in the district:

Most of the farmers consider that the land should be given to Dinah and his family for all time. To my knowledge he has resided on the land on several occasions—has cut down several acres and cut and erected posts on one line of fence.<sup>9</sup>



Map of Margaret River, showing George Long's block, a homestead farm with a river frontage, marked in the centre (ADF 1907, 35).

However, often Aborigines lost their land when others alleged they had not made improvements to it. In May 1907 three reserves which had been set aside for use by Aborigines were cancelled and opened for public selection, because it was alleged that insufficient improvements could be shown on them. One of these blocks belonged to Charles Ponan of Catabody who had first obtained it in 1903. Ponan felt strongly that the improvements he had made to his land were substantial, and so he wrote to E. Pechelle, who was acting for Prinsep as chief protector of Aborigines, in order to put forward his case. He pointed out the various improvements he had made to the land, and argued too, that if he was to be moved off his land the government ought to pay him compensation for them.

... it is not fair thing do have me shifted out of my ground ...

Catabody 26 Monday 1907  
Mr E. Pechelle Chief Protector of Aborigines

Sir  
I am begging a favour from you Mr Fenden Savery he come to cut my block out he as in 1. Best of the land of 100<sup>ac</sup> for another man

Sir when Savery was running my ground out I was there working in it he told me it was no use for me to work it because another man applied for it

Sir I am begging a favour to you just tell you that I have done it in running in it and ringed 20<sup>ac</sup> and cleared 10<sup>ac</sup> and got a little 1/2<sup>ac</sup> garden sunk a tank three feet deep and two yard wide

Sir Savery come to cut my block out on the 23 of August I was there at present he told me it was no use for me to that 100<sup>ac</sup> because another man as took 76<sup>ac</sup> of your ground and gave me was ground to live in where no stock would live in it

Sir I hope you will do favour for me and have it altered so I will live in it again  
I think it is not a fair thing to have me shifted out of my best ground and what labour I done in it. I hope you will see into this for me.  
Sir, I am waiting for your reply by next mail.  
Sir, I am in my ground, I will not shift from what labour I have done in it until I hear from your reply.  
I am writing to the Minister for Lands about it.

Sir I am in my ground I will not shift from what labour I have done in it until I hear from your reply  
I am writing to the Minister for Lands about it

I am yours humble servant  
Charles Ponan  
Wrote my letter 40 weeks ago  
Wyening near Wyening  
Kiwitahi

Transcript

Letter to E. Pechelle, Chief Protector of Aborigines, from Charles Ponan, Catabody, Monday 26 1907 (ADF 1907, 357)

Sir,  
I am begging a favour from you. Mr Fenden Savery he came to cut my block out. He has taken [the] best of the land of 100 acres for another man.

Sir, when Savery was running my ground out I was there working in it. He told me it was no use for me to work it because another man applied for it.

Sir, I am begging a favour to you, just tell you that I have done it improving it, and ringed 20 acres and cleared 10 acres and got a little 1/2 acre garden, sunk a tank three feet deep and two yards wide.

Sir, Savery came to cut my block out on the 23 of August. I was there and present. He told me it was no use for me to [work] that 100 acres because another man has took half of your ground, and [the land that he] gave me was ground to live in where no stock would live in it.

Sir, I think [it] is not a fair thing to do that and shift me into other bad ground where no stock would not live in it.

Sir, I hope you will do favour for me and have it altered so I will live in it again.

I think it is not a fair thing to have me shifted out of my best ground and what labour I done in it. I hope you will see into this for me.

Sir, I am waiting for your reply by next mail.

Sir, I am in my ground, I will not shift from what labour I have done in it until I hear from your reply.

I am writing to the Minister for Lands about it.

I am yours humble servant,  
Charles Ponan

Write my letter c/- Mr Murphy, Wyening near Wyening

Ponan's arguments held force, and in November 1907 his block of land was again classified as a reserve for use by an Aboriginal, and he remained there. Ponan had the courage to challenge the various government departments involved in the decision about his land, and to fight for what he considered to be rightfully his. While he obtained the assistance of a friend to write his first letter, when he became desperate he wrote himself, pointing out the injustice of the situation. His is one of the few instances where a bureaucratic decision against an Aboriginal was revoked, but several other Aborigines in a similar position to Ponan simply lost their land.<sup>9</sup>

Prospecting was another area of employment that attracted Aborigines because of their familiarity with the country and their ability, through their bushcraft knowledge, to live off the land in remote areas, together with the independent style of life of being a prospector. Under the state Miners Act, Aborigines could not be employed to man mining leases. This was intended to prevent individuals from taking out leases for tracts of country and then employing Aborigines to remain on the leases but not work them. This would have been a means of 'freezing' areas of land suspected of containing rich minerals, by preventing other prospectors from mining them.

Fred Earbell, prospector, found gold at Blackboy Hill but incautiously talked about his find to others who developed it but gave him no reward. Earbell, like many prospectors before and after him, learnt from experience not to trust anyone on the goldfields, and when he next struck gold he asked his friend Paul Piramino to write on his behalf and enquire whether he could hold a Miner's Right.

Piramino, who had been brought up and educated at the New Norcia Mission, wrote to the chief protector of Aborigines who in turn referred the matter to the appropriate government department. In his reply the under secretary for mines pointed out that while Earbell could obtain a Miner's Right simply by paying a ten shilling fee, under Section 14 of the Miners Act:

New Norcia  
Mission  
To Mr. H. C. Pinsep  
Sir  
I now write to  
you this few lines let you no  
that a Native name (Fred Earbell)  
found some Gold and he asked  
me to write and ask you  
Mr Pinsep if he could hold a  
Miner's Right. he was the first  
Aboriginal found the Gold at  
Black Boy hill, and he tells me  
that they never give him money  
thing for finding the Gold  
and showing them  
and he found another reef  
now and nobody knows where  
it is. I have seen the stones  
that <sup>Mr</sup> Fred Earbell, found and  
there are plenty of Gold in it  
and this is only the thing that  
he wants to no from you  
Mr H. C. Pinsep if a Aboriginal  
Native could hold a miners  
right paper.

Your truly  
Paul Piramino

M<sup>r</sup> Pechelle

Sir

I am writing this letter to you  
 Dr Teague told me he heard from you on  
 the telephone yesterday saying that you can  
 not be responsible for the medicine out here  
 he wanted me to go into the hospital  
 but I dont care about going into the  
 Hospital as I am improving a little now  
 I am not able to do any thing for my  
 self yet I thank you very much for the rations  
 you supplied me with I am sending Maude  
 in I have some medicine to go on with  
 for another 3 or 4 days Dr Teague has  
 given me a letter to take to the hospital  
 when I have used this medicine I would  
 be very pleased if you could supply  
 me with a pair of boots as I have not  
 a pair to put on also if you would let  
 me have a nother week rations because  
 Maude's money has gone to the house rent  
 has Mr Tichboun sent the milk in there  
 are only five pints of milk you owe  
 them for I never got any yesterday to the house

I have written you in distinct understanding  
 that if he was sick he must go to the hospital -  
 unless he produced a medical certificate to  
 say he was unable to work he would get no relief next  
 week. 24.6.08.

they were serving me with milk  
 until the day before yesterday they mixed  
 condensed milk it so I sent it back I took  
 the milk to the next door neighbour and they  
 tasted it they said that the condensed  
 milk was mixed with it also and Mrs  
 Deibel putting it in so I never got any more

please give me another week  
 rations your obedient  
 servant Julbert Harris  
 Victoria Park

Transcript

Letter to E. Pechelle, Chief Protector of Aborigines, from Arthur Julbert Harris, Victoria Park, 24 June 1908 (ADF 1907, 747)

Sir,

I am writing this letter to you. Dr Teague told me he heard from you on the telephone yesterday saying that you cannot be responsible for the medicine out here. He wanted me to go into hospital but I don't care about going into the hospital as I am improving a little now. I am not able to do anything for myself yet. I thank you very much for the rations you supplied me with. I am sending Maude in. I have some medicine to go on with for another 3 or 4 days. Dr Teague has given me a letter to take to the hospital when I have used this medicine. I would be very pleased if you could supply me with a pair of boots as I have not a pair to put on. Also if you would let me have another week rations because Maude's money has gone to the house rent. Has Mr Tichboun sent the milk [bill] in? There are only five pints of milk you owe them for. I never got any yesterday and the day before. They were serving me with milk alright until the day before yesterday they mixed condensed milk [with] it so I sent it back. I took the milk to the next door neighbour and they tasted it. They said that the condensed milk was mixed with it also and Mrs denied putting it in so I never got any more.

Please give me another weeks rations

Your obedient Servant,  
Julbert Harris, Victoria Park

Notation on Harris's letter, by Pechelle, 24 June 1908

1 weeks rations given on distinct understanding that if he was sick he must go to the hospital and unless he produced a medical certificate to say he was unable to work he would get no relief next week.

it is enacted that labour of an Aboriginal is not accounted bona fide work for fulfilling labour conditions on claims, leases, & c.<sup>10</sup>

In this instance and others like it, clauses in Acts designed to protect Aborigines from unfair exploitation, in effect operated to restrict what they could do and to make it harder for people like Earbell to make a living. Hence the clause which was meant to prevent unscrupulous miners from forcing Aborigines to work in their mines for a pittance and under extremely trying conditions also prevented Earbell from employing any of his friends or relatives on his lease. Otherwise, he risked losing his claim if he was absent from it for more than a specified number of days.

Another area of employment which, like prospecting, permitted an independent way of life, and where bush skills were useful, was wood cutting and charcoal burning. While this was hard work, and the wages were low, it was often the only employment available to Aborigines. Arthur Julbert Harris was fortunate in that he obtained a contract to prepare firewood for fuel merchants Bryant and Watters of Perth, at the rate of 3s 6d per cord of 108 feet. With the prospect of steady employment and payment to be made each week, Harris and his wife Maude Harris (née McCarthy) rented a house in Victoria Park. However, bad luck befell the couple when Harris became ill. He was obliged to approach the Aborigines Department for rations until he could work

again. His employers were prepared to hold his contract open for him, but his illness worsened. Rations and medical attention were given to him, but two weeks later he was still sick. The doctor advised that he should be hospitalized, to ensure that he received the medicines prescribed to him. Harris vigorously resisted this, and the Aborigines Department eventually insisted that if he did not improve he would be forced to go to hospital, or they would refuse to supply him with any more rations.

Harris was a strong-willed man, well able to stand up for his rights even during his illness. When the people who were to supply him with milk mixed it with condensed milk, Harris sent it back and complained to the Aborigines Department about them, determined that no-one would make a profit out of his disability by taking advantage of his situation.<sup>11</sup> (See Family Tree No. 22C.)

Like many other Aborigines who were prepared to work hard to make a living either by going on the land, prospecting, fuel carting, or doing any other work that was available, Harris's lack of economic resources made him very vulnerable when misfortune befell him. Moreover, the low rate of pay for the type of work available to Aborigines meant that it was virtually impossible for people like Harris to amass any capital. It was only the fighting spirit of these people which kept them going, when everything seemed to be against them.

## 5. EARLY HUSBANDS, MARRIAGE, AND THE 1905 ACT

As the Swan River Colony became established, the number of men arriving to try their fortune in the new land far outnumbered the women. Marriage was at times unofficially encouraged between these men and Aboriginal women who had received an education in the mission schools and who had adopted the Christian faith, because it was seen as a way of ensuring that the men settled down and provided the much needed trade skills and labour and that the women were 'looked after'. However, casual liaisons between settlers and Aboriginal women were strongly disapproved of and mostly discouraged when they did occur although from the earliest days of the colony Aboriginal women were the victims of these encounters.

The earliest recorded marriage between an Aboriginal woman and a European settler was that of Eliza Wobart and carpenter John Stokes, celebrated by Rev. John Smithies in 1845. Eliza was one of the first girls to be admitted to the Wesleyan school for Aboriginal children in Perth in 1840, and was also amongst the first converts to Christianity for Smithies and his wife. After attending the school for a number of years, Eliza worked as a children's nurse for Charles Symmons and his family. Symmons was one of the first two protectors of Aborigines appointed in 1840.

In 1845 the Wesleyan school was moved to a farming block at Wanneroo, where it was planned to run a self-supporting mission establishment with adult Aborigines as well as children. Eliza accompanied the move to the Wanneroo mission farm, and there she met Stokes who was acting as overseer. The couple fell in love and were married the same year. On their marriage, Eliza's friend Symmons requested a land allotment for the couple, to be in Eliza's name as a surety against the future. Eliza had learnt to read and write while at school, and so she was able to teach these skills to her husband, who was illiterate.

Unhappily, the marriage came to a premature and tragic end in 1850, when Eliza suddenly took ill and died. The couple had had two children, and they died soon after their mother, leaving Stokes without

heirs.' Stokes and his two sisters were deeply affected by the family's misfortune, and it was several years before he recovered from his grief and remarried, this time to a European woman.

The need for additional labour and skills increased as more land was taken up for agriculture, and in 1850 convict labour was introduced. Only male convicts were transported to the Swan River Colony, and as a consequence the number of men in excess of women increased disproportionately. As these men obtained their release, either as ticket-of-leave men or as conditional or fully pardoned men, the competition for brides became harder. A number of legal and de facto marriages with Aboriginal women and women of Aboriginal descent took place during this period. The husbands of these women were often the sons of European settlers who had grown up in the colony, often in remote locations, and who had come to know the Aborigines in the area. Other husbands were shepherds, woodcutters, and others whose jobs took them away from towns for long periods of time, and also ex-convicts whose jobs frequently put them into this latter category.

During the gold rushes of the 1880s and 1890s still more unattached men came to Western Australia, many of whom also found Aboriginal wives and settled in the state.

While several of these marriage unions endured over the years, not all husbands took their responsibilities seriously, and many abandoned their wives and children, who were then without economic support or resources. The marriages of Lucy Anderson née Bobbinet and Mary Jane Lewington are two such cases.

Lucy Bobbinet married a man by the name of Anderson at the Williams Court House around 1882. Lucy Anderson was of Aboriginal and European descent, while her husband was European, possibly a Russian or a Finn. The couple had a number of children but by 1899 Anderson had deserted his wife and family, and she had been forced to approach the chief protector of Aborigines, Prinsep, in an attempt to find him. Lucy Anderson's request was passed on to the police who

located two men, both called Alick Anderson, either of whom could have been the deserting husband, although both men disclaimed any knowledge of her. The police report reads:

1. Alick Anderson: found at Peak Hill (North of Meekatharra) square build age 47 (looks younger) height about 5 ft 7 in, fair or sandy hair, medium ginger moustache, light blue eyes, straight and rather short nose, square visage, florid complexion, front upper teeth slightly decayed, small scar under right eye, wears No. 7 boots, a carpenter, now employed as a miner, native of Finland, states that he arrived in this colony in 1894 from America.

2. Alick Anderson: found at Cue's Patch, near Lawler's (near Leonora). Broad shouldered, age about 44, 5 ft high, sallow complexion, sandy beard, grey eyes, bald head, lame in left leg, anchor tattooed on left thumb, has had both wrists broken and they are enlarged in consequence, an American of Swedish or Finnish descent, states that he came to the colony in 1892.<sup>2</sup>

Records of the Swan Native and Half Caste Mission for 1898 list three Anderson children, Maude, Eva and Leslie. Their father is recorded as 'European' and their mother as 'part-Aboriginal'. By 1908 these three Anderson girls were still in the mission. Their mother had apparently re-married, to a man by the name of Stephen. However, he had become invalided and been confined to an institution. Mrs Stephen (formerly Mrs Anderson), was anxious to have her girls with her, particularly the youngest who was suffering from consumption. However, the authorities were reluctant to permit them to go to her because she was in receipt of a pension and they feared she would not be able to care for the girls adequately.<sup>3</sup>

The unhappy story of Lucy Bobbinet was echoed by that of Mary Jane Lewington, also of Aboriginal and European descent, who married colony-born Robert Lewington in the Congregational Church of

Fremantle in 1886. The couple had one son, Fred, who was baptized in the Congregational Church, although his father belonged to the Church of England. It appears that Lewington obtained a block of land at Coogee, on account of having married an Aboriginal woman, and he seems to have held title deeds to the property.

This marriage failed, and by 1899 Lewington had turned his wife and son out, and was living on the land at Coogee. In the same year, Fred Lewington was put in jail. Mary Jane Lewington approached a farmer, Brockman of Cannington, to intercede on her behalf by signing a petition to have her son's prison sentence reduced, because she had no one to look after her. At the time she was living on the Native Reserve at Welshpool. Brockman passed the matter on to the chief protector of Aborigines, Prinsep, who took up the case.<sup>4</sup>

It was quite common in those days for people who had little or no education to engage someone else to write their letters for them, and Mary Jane Lewington obtained the services of someone who signed himself 'A.I.' to write to Prinsep stating the details of her marriage.

In 1908 Mary Jane Lewington was living in Maddington. Her health was failing, and she was an out-patient at Perth Public Hospital. Her son Fred was a fisherman at Woodman Point and her estranged husband was still living on the land at Coogee.<sup>5</sup>

As a reaction against the type of marriage experienced by Mary Jane Lewington, and in an attempt to prevent such marriages from taking place, Section 41 of the Aborigines Act of 1905 stipulated that no Aboriginal could marry a non-Aboriginal without permission in writing from the chief protector of Aborigines. Further, Section 43 of the Act made it an offence for a non-Aboriginal to live with Aborigines or, in the case of a man, to cohabit with an Aboriginal woman if the couple were not married. As a result, a number of couples found themselves in a very difficult and unpleasant situation where one of the parties was of Aboriginal descent. Many of these couples had been together for several years and had families of their own, yet under the



new Act they were breaking the law and the man was liable to prosecution. Several couples applied for permission to marry in order to legalize their position. However, in some instances marriage was not a possibility, in days when divorce from a previous marriage was difficult to obtain, or when questions asked may have raised difficulties with the authorities, such as in the case of men who had come to the state through unconventional channels or who had been in conflict in the past with the authorities. In other instances, this section of the Act gave encouragement to men to abandon their responsibilities to their families by providing them with an excuse to do so.

Alice Chipper, of Aboriginal descent, and Robert Cox of Numberling had been together for seven years. They held a deep affection for each other, and so when they heard of the 1905 Aborigines Act they applied for permission to marry. Their application was supported by the local police, whose job it was to enforce the Act, and the matter was referred to the Aborigines Department for comment. E. Pechelle, acting chief protector of Aborigines, replied that as Alice Chipper did not associate with Aborigines she should not be regarded as one, and the couple were consequently free to do as they pleased without encumbrance from the Aborigines Act of 1905.<sup>6</sup>

Section 42 applied to any proposed marriage between an Aboriginal and a non-Aboriginal, and so when Benedict Abdul wished to marry Mary Griffin of New Norcia in 1906, he had to apply for permission. This marriage had the approval of the monks of New Norcia, but the couple faced opposition from other people living there.<sup>7</sup> The objections which were raised appear to have been based on the fact that Abdul was an Indian, and the feeling that Aboriginal girls should marry within their group. The opposition to the marriage may also have been the work of a disappointed suitor and his supporters, possibly the worker who was alleged to have been dismissed by the mission because of his attentions to Mary. In any event, Mary and Abdul did marry and raise a family, leaving the mission and returning there after the birth of

their first child. Over the years, the spelling of Abdul has been modified to Abdullah. (See Family Tree No. 11C.)

The reaction of the chief protector of Aborigines to their application for marriage was one of concern that Asians would regard marriage with Aboriginal women as temporary affairs, and would abandon them and return to their homelands as soon as they were able to do so financially. This would then leave the woman and her children without means of support, and a cost to the Aborigines Department. As an attempt to see that this did not happen in this instance, Abdul was required to sign a bond of £50 sterling to the chief protector of Aborigines for Mary's support should he desert her or leave the state of Western Australia (see p. 155).

For some time after the introduction of the Aborigines Act 1905 many couples were unaware that they were committing an offence by cohabiting. This was so for Magnus Christian Hendrick Hansen and Lucina Parfitt née Ryan, whose wedding had to be delayed from the day on which it was to have taken place, while the bureaucratic requirement of permission to marry was sought from the chief protector of Aborigines. Hansen and Lucina Parfitt of Bridgetown were to have married on 12 August 1908. Their banns had been called in the Anglican church, Nelson district, but on the morning of the marriage-to-be they were informed that under the Aborigines Act 1905 they had to have the consent of the chief protector of Aborigines before they could be married. The marriage was postponed while Hansen wrote to the chief protector for the necessary permission. The police also submitted their customary report, in which they described Hansen, of German origin, as an honest, hard-working man and the owner of 8½ hectares of land. Consent was given on 21 August and the couple married a fortnight later than originally intended.<sup>8</sup> (See Family Tree No. 10C.)

While the Aborigines Act 1905 may have prevented some couples from marrying, it did nothing to discourage casual liaisons. It may even have encouraged men to regard affairs with Aboriginal women as

334/06.

April 12 30 90

Dear Sir we just  
written you a few lines  
to ask you to give us  
justice for there is a Indian man  
going to get married to  
Mary Griffin and she is under  
age and the law does  
not allow a Indian man to  
get married to a mission  
girl or any other man with  
out he is a aboriginal native  
But Sir they do just what  
they please and Sir we have  
warned them ~~and~~ not  
to married them they did  
give one man the sack over  
Mary Griffin so the Indian  
man could get her  
and Sir we don't want the  
to see our girls to get  
married to Indians or other  
farmers of any description

Sir we look to you for  
as a <sup>to the chief</sup> Native for us so we  
expect that you will give  
us justice the power is in  
your hand to stop this  
unmarried and if you don't  
we shall after to publish  
it in the Sunday time in  
all the <sup>other</sup> Papers Sir  
There have been call out  
these two Sunday and  
this Sunday is the last  
Sunday we want a reply on  
Day the next mail Sir  
the girl age is 14 years  
This want open Sir  
Expect you to stop this  
game from going on  
Sir so good Bye Sir  
we remain your  
obedient servants  
Mission people

Transcript

Letter to the Chief Protector of Aborigines, H. C. Prinsep, from Mission People, New Norcia Mission, 30 April 1906 (ADF 1906, 307)

Dear Sir,  
We just write you a few lines to ask you to give us justice for there is a Indian man going to get married to a Mary Griffin and she is under age. Sir the law does not allow an Indian man to get married to a mission girl or any other man without he is an Aboriginal native. But Sir, they do just what they please and Sir, we have warned them not to marry them. They did give one man the sack over Mary Griffin so the Indian man could get her, and Sir, we don't want to see our girls to get married to Indians or other farmers of any description. Sir we look to you for as a Native Protector for us, so we expect that you will give us justice. The power is in your hand to stop this marriage and if you don't we shall offer to publish it in the Sunday Times and all the other papers Sir.

There have been calls out two Sundays and this Sunday is the last Sunday. We want a reply by the next mail, Sir. The girl's age is 14 years. This wants stopping Sir, we expect you to stop this game from going in papers, Sir so good bye Sir,

We remain your obedient servants  
Mission People

Transcript

Letter from James Mippy, Woodlupine, to Amy Mippy, 14 October 1906 (ADF 1906, 979).

To Amy,  
Dear Daughter,

I write you these few lines hoping to find you in good health as it leaves me at present. I want to know if you would leave Miss Sutton to come up here with me to Woodlupine. I have a very nice place for you to stay with Julbert and his Missis, it will always be a home for you where you will be closer to your little brother and sister and visit them at any time, and I am always about there close [to] you. Ask Arthur to bring you up, if not, you write and let us know what day you are coming up and we will meet you at Canning Station. Please write as soon as you can, by next mail. Jack has been in the hospital but they are alright so far now. Herbert has gone from Julbert to the Salvation Army home in Collie. Julbert sends his love to Oliver and Arthur. Ned has gone to the Cue for a trip and is not back yet.

Dear daughter let me know by return mail if there is any news from Bunbury.

P.S. Write soon.

I must conclude with fondest love to you and Hilda. I am your loving father  
James Mippy

To Amy

Woodlupine  
Oct. 14. 1906

Dear Daughter

I write you these few lines hoping to find you in good health as it leaves me at present. I want to know if you would leave Miss Sutton to come up here with me to Woodlupine. I have a very nice place for you to stay with Julbert and his Missis it will always be a home for you where you will be close to your little brother's sister at any time and I am always about there. Close you ask Arthur to bring you up if not you write and let us know what day you are coming up and we will meet you at Canning Station. Please write as soon as you can by next mail. Jack has been in the hospital but they are alright so far now. Herbert has gone from Julbert to the Salvation Army home in Collie. Julbert sends his love to Oliver & Arthur. Ned has gone to the Cue for a trip and is not back yet.

Dear Daughter let me know by return mail if there is any news from Bunbury

Write soon

I must conclude with fondest love to you & Hilda. I am your loving father  
James Mippy

my address  
J Mippy Woodlupine  
Post Office

purely temporary arrangements for which they held no real responsibility, because these unions had no prospect of becoming socially sanctioned and hence long term. The protection which the Act sought to provide to Aboriginal women was not to be found in the practical administration of the Act. Moreover Section 34(2) stipulated that no man could be taken to be the father of a child upon the oath of the Aboriginal mother alone and this further removed any sense of responsibility for the consequence of an affair away from the men concerned.

Like a number of other girls, Amy Mippy had a romance with a European man, and became pregnant to him in 1906.<sup>9</sup> Her father, James Mippy, heard of her situation and feeling a deep concern for her welfare and knowing that she would not be able to claim maintenance from the father of her child, he asked her to come to Woodlupine where there would always be a home for her. His letter expresses the love and care he felt for his daughter, and his desire to help her with whatever resources he had at his disposal. (See Family Tree No. 33.)

The Aborigines Act 1905 replaced the Aborigines Protection Act of 1886, and was proclaimed by the governor in 1906. This Act applied to people of one-quarter or more Aboriginal descent, with the onus of proof falling upon any person who claimed to be outside its provisions. People thought to be Aboriginal were assumed to be so unless they could prove otherwise. This included people of mixed Aboriginal and European descent regardless of whether they associated with Aborigines, because in the terms of the Act biological makeup was the primary consideration.

While there was a clause in the Act enabling people of part-Aboriginal descent to claim exemption from certain sections, there was also provision for any exemption to be revoked at any time, without right of appeal. A number of families immediately sought information on exemption, and a group of Aborigines in Beverley hired a firm of solicitors to look into the Act and advise them on the matter of exemp-

tion under Section 63. In their enquiries the solicitors' firm of Neville and Roach of Beverley wrote to the minister for labour:

We have had a call recently from an Aboriginal in this district, who we believe is also the spokesman on behalf of a number of other Aborigines, asking on what terms the exemption provided for in Section 63 of the above Act can be obtained.

The native in question is the owner of a small farm near here and has lived in the district for many years. He speaks English well and bears we believe a good reputation. He is the father of grown up sons and wishes to obtain exemption for himself and his sons.<sup>10</sup>

Charles Wellard of Northampton also applied for exemption from the Aborigines Act of 1905, under Section 63. In his support of Wellard's application, the resident magistrate wrote:

A man whom I thought was a white man came to me today asking for exemption from the Act . . . . The police strongly support him and I would be pleased if the Minister would kindly grant this exemption—the man, whose name is 'Charles Wellard' is, I think, a quadroon, or even an octaroon; he is the son of a half caste and a white, which should be a quadroon, but he looks perfectly white.<sup>11</sup>

The resident magistrate's difficulty in reconciling Wellard's appearance and life style with the definition of him as an Aboriginal under the Act, was typical of the quandary that many people were faced with. Increasingly people of Aboriginal descent found that their appearance and way of life held little meaning when it came to the Act, as those with the task of putting its provisions into practice followed the tendency of administering the Act without paying regard to anything other than the question of Aboriginal descent.

## 6. INSTITUTIONS AND CHILDREN

As European settlement became established, attempts were made to teach Aborigines to speak English and also to learn the ways of the newcomers. A number of Aborigines quickly learnt to speak the language, and expressed much interest in writing. Literacy as such was a new concept for them, as up to then they had relied on an oral tradition to pass knowledge from one generation to the next. The settlers tried to convert them to Christianity, and to instruct them in skills that would be useful to the colony, such as animal husbandry and agricultural techniques, which were also new concepts to semi-nomadic hunters and gatherers.

An institution for Aborigines, called the Native Institution, was founded at Mt Eliza near Perth settlement in 1835, with F. Armstrong employed as native interpreter. This was where the mounted Native Police under Captain T. Ellis had been stationed and a ration depot formed in 1832, and where large numbers of Perth Aborigines, as many as up to 200, regularly camped at intervals throughout the year. Armstrong's duties were to mediate between Aborigines and settlers, assist Aborigines to learn the ways of the settlers, and in general to promote good relations between the two groups.

While adult Aborigines quickly adapted tools and techniques from European society, concerted attempts to provide Aborigines with a formal education were focussed on the children. Adult reluctance to change their ways and life style and to become converted to Christianity was interpreted by settlers as being 'set in their ways'. Children, on the other hand, were seen to be more malleable and open to change and new ideas. Moreover, in orphanages it was possible to separate the children from other adults for most of the time. It was thought by settlers and missionaries that this would be one way of overcoming resistance on the part of Aboriginal parents to their children learning things that would be relevant to colonial life, but not essential to a traditional Aboriginal lifestyle.

In addition, Aboriginal illness and death following the founding of

the colony resulted in an increasing number of children with no one directly responsible to care for them. These children could be placed in orphanages, and to many missionaries and others the only apparent, humane course of action was to teach them Christianity and to provide them with an education in the basic subjects of reading, writing and arithmetic. Other children were voluntarily left in the care of missionaries, while their parents followed their traditional lifestyle as best they could in the face of changing times. Rev. Smithies noted in 1843 that parents would regularly visit children in his school, and were very fond of them. On parting, they would often admonish their children to behave themselves.<sup>1</sup>

As time went on, the tendency to place Aboriginal children in institutions grew, particularly as the number of children of mixed Aboriginal and European parentage increased. These children were regarded by the settlers as having a special right to an education because of the European side of their ancestry, and especially in cases where they had been deserted by their European fathers, it was thought they should be brought up in orphanages rather than left with their Aboriginal relatives who were often in extremely poor economic circumstances.

The Wesleyan school for Aboriginal children, founded in Perth by Smithies and his wife in 1840, was the first of its kind in the colony. The school provided accommodation, meals, religious instruction and lessons. In addition Smithies and the schoolmaster Armstrong, formerly native interpreter, supervised an apprenticeship scheme under which the children worked in the colony for a number of hours each weekday. In the same year Abraham Jones started a school based on similar principles in Guildford, but it lasted for only a few months. Smithies started his school in the first year he arrived in the colony, and after it had been operating for a short time he wrote to the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society in London about the thirty Aboriginal children attending the school:

the whole of them have learned the alphabet, in a fortnight they were able to spell small words and sing in their own language 'Come to Jesus'.<sup>2</sup>

Smithies converted a number of the children attending the Wesleyan school. However, he and his wife were faced with many difficulties, especially the deaths of several of the children in their care. The cause of death was unknown at the time, and resulted in much heart-ache for the Smithies as well as for the other Aboriginal children who lost close

companions and playmates. In 1842 the disease was diagnosed by the colonial surgeon as a 'shrinking of the mesenteric glands', following a postmortem of five children who had died from it.<sup>3</sup> The disease has subsequently been diagnosed as *Tuberculosis peritonitis*, also a fatal illness in Europe at the time, particularly for children.<sup>4</sup>

Two instances where Smithies's ideals came close to realization in the christianization and education of his charges, were in the marriages of Mary Dwoyup to John Wyreup, and Eliza Wobart to John Stokes (see above, p. 35). Sadly, both unions started with great promise, but ended

Sketch of Rev. Smithies's chapel and school for Aboriginal children, sent to the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, London, c. 1842

This sketch shows the Wesleyan Methodist buildings situated on the corner of Hay, William and Murray Streets, Perth. The building in the foreground was the new chapel built in 1842, facing William Street. The building to the rear, facing Murray Street, was built in 1834 and served as a chapel and also as the school for Aboriginal children after Smithies's arrival in 1840. Smithies's house was situated behind the new chapel to the left of this sketch



in tragedy. The baptism of Mary Wanka is an example of the achievement of another ideal for Smithies, that of conversion.

Mary Dwoyup and John Wyreup were the first two Aboriginal baptisms for Smithies, in November 1841. The couple planned to marry, and so their baptisms were administered as a preparation for wedlock. Mary Dwoyup was approximately sixteen years old, and had been with the Smithies family for over a year. John Wyreup, around eighteen years old, had only been at the school for a few months, but showed great promise as a gardener and was liked by Smithies and his wife. This marriage represented a significant departure from traditional Aboriginal practice, where marriages were arranged between the two families while the girl involved was still a child.

After their marriage the young couple were accommodated in a small cottage at the mission, and while Mary worked with Mrs Smithies, John continued to garden for settler W. Shenton. Sadly, two months later, in January 1842, John contracted influenza and died.<sup>5</sup>

Fifteen months later, in October 1843, another girl from Smithies's school, Mary Wanka, had a dream that she was going to die and 'see Jesus' at two o'clock the next day. During the night she grew progressively more ill, and Mrs Smithies sat with her to comfort her. The following day Mary died within the hour of two in the afternoon. Her baptism took place shortly before her death, in the presence of the school children who had been called to her bedside to say their last 'goodbyes'. She was buried the following day in the bush near the school, where several other children who had died of illness had been buried. On her death, no reprisals were carried out by Aborigines, although revenge deaths of other Aborigines had taken place when children in Smithies's school had died previously. The absence of any similar occurrence after Mary Wanka's death underlined the profound changes taking place in Aboriginal society following on the arrival of the European settlers.<sup>6</sup>

In 1845 the Wesleyan school was moved to a larger property at Wan-

neroo. However, the unsuitable land resulted in many disappointments and the goal of the mission of becoming self-supporting was never realized. In 1851 the mission was again moved, this time to York, but because of the tension between the Aborigines of Perth and York, the Perth children ran away from the mission. When some of the York Aboriginal children died from illness, the others ran away too and the school was left virtually without pupils. In 1854 it passed to the control of the government, and closed within one year.

Another early school for Aboriginal children was the Anglican School for Natives, opened in Fremantle in 1842 by Rev. George King. This school was run along similar lines to that of Smithies, and continued until 1851 when it was moved to Albany. Good relations existed between the Anglican and Wesleyan schools, and in 1848 several marriages were celebrated between Aborigines from the two schools. Three girls from the Anglican school married three boys from the Wesleyan school, and a couple from the Wanneroo establishment married at the same time. The marriage ceremony was a group affair, with the visiting Anglican Bishop Short of Australia officiating.<sup>7</sup>

The Anglican institution for Aboriginal children in Albany was opened in 1852 by Rev. Keith Wollaston and Mrs Camfield. It was called 'Annesfield', and six years after it opened there were thirteen girls and five boys living at the orphanage and attending school there.<sup>8</sup> The children were taught reading, writing and arithmetic and the older girls were also given a good grounding in domestic duties. Some of the girls later married settlers in the Albany district. Others were sent to Victoria in the hope that they would find suitable husbands among the Christian Aborigines on mission stations there.

One of the girls who travelled across the Great Australian Bight to Victoria was Rachel, who lived with her husband, Pepper, at Lake Hindmarsh, Victoria. Pepper, of Aboriginal descent, was an educated man who had lived as a child on the mission and had also visited England. On his return voyage from England to Victoria his ship called at

Albany, where he first met Rachel. The couple became engaged, and Rachel later followed her fiancé to Lake Hindmarsh, where they were married.

In 1867, following in Rachel's footsteps, five Aboriginal girls—sisters Elizabeth 'Betsy' and Ada Flower, and Norah, Rhoda and Emily—sailed for Melbourne from Albany. Two of these girls, Norah and Emily, travelled on to Ramahyuck Mission Station, Victoria. There, they met their future husbands, Christian men of the 'Tara' tribe, and married and had large families. Rhoda also married in Victoria, but she contracted consumption soon afterwards. Ada Flower died on arriving in Victoria.

The most outstanding of this group of girls was Betsy Flower. Betsy Flower was born in 1851. She did extremely well in her studies at Mrs Camfield's school, and passed a public examination held at the government school in Albany with credit. She was also an accomplished organist, and played in the Church of England chapel. In Victoria she met Donald Cameron of Gippsland, and married him. Cameron was of Aboriginal and European descent, and acted in the capacity of overseer of the Ramahyuck mission. For a time the couple were in charge of the mission's home for Aboriginal orphans, and Betsy was also the regular organist for the mission's church. The couple had two daughters and then Betsy's younger brother also journeyed from Albany to Victoria to join them.<sup>9</sup> (See Family Tree No. 11D.)

In 1871 the Albany orphanage and school was transferred to Perth by Bishop Hale, and then in the late 1880s it was moved again, this time to the Swan district to become the Swan Native and Half Caste Mission. A number of people alive today spent part of their childhood in this institution, which provided a very good education, possibly the best of all the missions of its day. At times children were placed in the Swan Native and Half Caste Mission because they were orphaned or their parents could not care for them, but quite frequently parents placed their children in the mission to receive an education, while they



Elizabeth 'Betsy'  
Cameron nee Flower (11  
with her husband  
Donald Cameron  
of Victoria (11D),  
c. 1868





(above) 'The Albany School for Aboriginal Children'

This is Annesfield, situated in Serpentine Road, Albany. The Camfields and some of the children lived here, and the children attended school. This photograph was taken prior to 1871 when the school was moved to Perth. In more recent times, some of the buildings have been burnt down.

(above right) 'Mrs Camfield' 1870s

The baby in this studio portrait is unnamed, but bears a strong resemblance to Mrs Camfield. Mrs Camfield's husband was the resident magistrate of Albany, and she ran Annesfield, a Church of England school and orphanage for Aboriginal children

(right) 'Children at Ellensbrook', c. 1910

Second from left: Jane Jean Councillor. The other children are unidentified.



searched for work in the countryside. The report of the Swan Native and Half Caste Mission for September 1902, written by the manager, A. Burton, to Prinsep, reads as follows:

There are 42 at present under our care. Your Department maintains 38 of these.

The health of the inmates has been excellent during the last 12 months. Measles broke out about a year ago, but through the care and skill of the Misses Mackintosh the attack was successfully combated, and no ill effects have been left.

The work done at the institution is, of course, still mainly the ordinary work of the house and garden. All the girls work readily and vigorously with spade and fork, and those who milk are experts at this important work. The results from the mission cows reflect great credit upon both the matron and the girls who tend the stock. The best evidence of the amount of work done by the girls is shown by the fact that the whole staff consists of the two ladies above mentioned. I must regret that it has not been possible for you to pay a visit of inspection during the past year. If you could pay a surprise visit, as I do, at times, and go through the mission you would see that cleanliness and order are thoroughly inculcated.

Since my appointment as Manager in March last, I have sent out four girls to carefully selected places. These girls were all over 19 years old; two in fact are over 21 . . . . One is at Midland Junction . . . she is very highly spoken of by her mistress, and expresses herself as being quite happy and contented. Another is at York, and her mistress writes as follows 'I am very pleased with Maggie and find her very capable . . . I find her very thorough, and I think too much praise cannot be given to Miss Mackintosh for the care she has taken in training her.'<sup>o</sup>

Ellensbrook was established in 1879 by the Church of England, fifty-six kilometres south of Busselton. It received some financial assistance

from the Aborigines Department, and was a small institution with approximately eight children at any one time, most of whom spent long periods there.

6/27/02

17

Ellensbrook Farm Home

List of Inmates . 1st July 1902

Name	When Admitted	Sex	Age	years	Remarks
Mary	August 1899	F	21	9 <sup>1</sup>	of Busselton, deserted in London
Dave	-	M	6	6 <sup>1</sup>	Mary's son
Frank	-	M	3	6 <sup>1</sup>	Mary's son
Jane Councillor	June 1900	F	16	4 <sup>1</sup>	of Northampton, deserted home
Tommy Ah Moy	August 1900	M	8	1 <sup>1</sup>	of Williamsburg - principal clerk
Emil Peony	Sept 1901	M	5	6 <sup>1</sup>	nephew of Sabriaco
Dora Regina Hest	31 <sup>st</sup> May 1902	F	14	1 <sup>1</sup>	of Spring near Busselton
Szy Hadji	-	F	7	9 <sup>1</sup>	of Carnarvon (ind. p. 106-111)

Edith A. Bussell  
Superintendent

The children were schooled, and most of the girls entered domestic service and eventually married into settler families in the district. Edith Bussell, who managed Ellensbrook, was a niece of Prinsep, and he visited the institution regularly and received personal letters from the children. Jane Jean Councillor, who grew up at Ellensbrook, was one of the children to write to him.<sup>11</sup> At the time, she was being courted by a local boy, George Long. However, she did not reciprocate his affections and instead married Sam Isaacs, the son of the Sam Isaacs who played a crucial part in the rescue of passengers from the shipwrecked *Georgette* in 1876. (See Family Tree No. 22B.)

Ellensbrook closed in 1917, much to the distress of Edith Bussell, who fought to keep the institution operating as long as possible.

The largest and most adventurous and ambitious mission enterprise in the south-western area was New Norcia Mission, 130 kilometres north-east of Perth, established by the Spanish Order of the Benedictines. The monks sought to teach the Aborigines of the area to become peasant farmers, as well as convert them to Catholicism, and they placed a heavy emphasis on learning practical skills that would equip Aborigines for life in the settler society. Several cottages were built for Aboriginal families to live in, as well as church buildings and monastery, some of which still stand. Many Aborigines living today have been brought up at New Norcia, and accounts of life there in the late nineteenth century exist in living memory.

By 1904 New Norcia had forty-eight married people living there, who in turn had a total of forty children. In addition, there were thirty-five boys and thirty-five girls, two widowers and two widows, and one man over seventy years of age.<sup>12</sup> The orphanage aspect of the mission's work was receiving increasing emphasis, as a departure from the original idea of a village of family groups tilling the fields in the precincts of the monastery, and as a reflection of the growing number of children of mixed descent born of unions which did not persist over time.



'New Norcia Mission 1867': baptism

The principal purpose of the New Norcia Mission was to convert the Aborigines in the district to Catholicism. This photograph shows a priest baptizing two boys, with two other boys, who must already have been baptized, acting as altar boys.



(above) 'New Norcia Mission 1867': work

Emphasis was placed on learning through work, and the children were taught such skills as bootmaking and domestic duties, and other skills deemed to be useful in settler society and to enable them to take their place in it. One of these boys is William Monup (arr. N.N. 1864).

(right) 'New Norcia Mission 1867': scholarship

While reading and writing were given less priority than prayer and work, a school was nevertheless established and the children instructed in these subjects.

*Left to right:* Wirgid, Pangegla, Matbella, Brother Domingues, Wacora and Jebel.





'New Norcia Mission 1867': dress

The dress of these people exhibits the refinements and style of settler society. The man sports a pocket handkerchief in addition to a smart jacket and good boots and hat. The two girls are dressed in pastels, with posies of flowers, bonnets and ringlets. The woman wears an intricate lace collar, her hair is carefully curled, and she has a pretty bonnet. These three photographs represent the ideal held by the monks of remodelling the Aborigines in a European mould.

**Aborigines and Half-Caste Native Boys and Girls at New Norcia**  
**On the 25<sup>th</sup> August, 1899.**

**Boys**  
**Over 14 years of age.**

1.	Allen de Gray	Age 21	S. A.
2.	Joe Yulical	20	"
3.	Timothy Rengiman	19	"
4.	John Gillespie	19	H.
5.	Ernest Farrell	18	"
6.	Augustin Binghel	18	A.
7.	Marlin Walley	17	C. H.
8.	Albert Yapo	16	"
9.	Michael Yndich	16	"
10.	Andrew Woodley	15	S.
11.	Sylvester Nindimar	15	C.
12.	Jimmy Galery	14	S. A.
13.	Emilann Yndich	14	C. H.
14.	Bernard Cocabul	14	"
15.	Stephen Walley	14	A.

**Boys**  
**Under 14 years of age.**

1.	Hernard Devany	13	S. H.
2.	Generous Panan	13	C.
3.	Mauro Yapo	12	"
4.	Gabriel Willway	12	A.
5.	Arthur Farrell	12	S. H.
6.	Alexander Purcl	12	"
7.	Charles Cuper	11	"
8.	Walker Ellis	10	A.
9.	Frank Willigen	10	C. H.
10.	Thomas Tagliel	9	"
11.	Peter Kanowna	9	S. A.
12.	William Bolton	9	"
13.	Anthony Esperance Bay	8	A.
14.	William Headland	7	H.
15.	George Fitzgerald	7	"
16.	Frank Tagliel	6	C.
17.	Harry Esperance Bay	6	S. A.
18.	Venantius Ryder	5	C. H.
19.	Albert Cuper	4	"
20.	James Ryder	3	"
21.	Charles Fitzgerald	3	S.
22.	Michael Tagliel	2	C.

& 15. - as above -

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N. B. ~ The letter A. ~ means Aboriginal.  
 " " H. ~ " Half-Caste.  
 " " C. ~ " Certainly of Age.  
 " " S. ~ " Supposition of age.

**Girls**  
**Over 16 years of age.**

1.	Conception Yapo	Age 19	C. H.
2.	Philomena Yapo	17	"
3.	Mary Egan	16	"

**Girls under 16 yrs. of age.**

1.	Mary Ann Yates	15	S.
2.	Elizabeth Williams	15	"
3.	Agnes Williams	14	"
4.	Alma Yayen Geelong	14	A.
5.	Mary Assil	14	"
6.	Julia Eccie	14	H.
7.	Clare Coolmarie	14	A.
8.	Rose Munchering	14	"
9.	Alice Wanhin	13	"
10.	Scholastio Bolton	10	H.
11.	Mollie Knigh	10	"
12.	Sussie Yndich	10	C.
13.	Ellen Yapo	9	"
14.	Yda Warren	9	S.
15.	Lucy Wyndham	9	"
16.	Angela Willway	8	C. A.
17.	Rose Galghi	8	S.
18.	Dassie Headland	8	H.
19.	Johanna Isaacs	8	"
20.	Mena Bindan	8	A.
21.	Rose Walley	7	C. H.
22.	Alice Williams	7	S.
23.	Margaret Willigen	6	C.
24.	Florentina Warren	6	S.
25.	Ellen Fitzgerald	5	"
26.	Mary Clinch	5	"
27.	Winefred Wyndham	3	"
28.	Angelina Smith	3	"

& 3. - as above -

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**Aborigines and Half-Caste Native Families at New Norcia**  
**On 25<sup>th</sup> August, 1899.**

**First Row.**

1.	1 <sup>st</sup> Paul Piramino	Age 26	C. A.
2.	Philomena	21	S. H.
3.	2 <sup>nd</sup> Pius Jenghicoro	22	C. A.
4.	Adelaide	20	H.
5.	Mary Mercy	1	"
6.	3 <sup>rd</sup> John Nalgo	33	S. A.
7.	Dolores	30	"
8.	Marina	10	C.
9.	Alexius	7	"
10.	Roman	5	"
11.	Lucy	2	"
12.	4 <sup>th</sup> John Pickel	21	S. H.
13.	Johanna	18	C.
14.	5 <sup>th</sup> Charles Williams	20	S.
15.	Teresa	21	C.
6 <sup>th</sup>	Vacant		
7 <sup>th</sup>	Vacant		

**Second Row.**

16.	1 <sup>st</sup> Richard Wallo	27	S.
17.	Carmen	25	C.
18.	Theodosia	5	"
19.	2 <sup>nd</sup> Alfred Cuimara	33	S.
20.	Sarah	32	"
21.	Melchior	12	C.
22.	Thomas	10	"
23.	Alfred	8	"
24.	Benedict	5	"
25.	Mary	1	"
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Vacant		
4 <sup>th</sup>	Vacant		
5 <sup>th</sup>	Joachim Dide	24	S. A.
6 <sup>th</sup>	Mary Ann	21	C.
7 <sup>th</sup>	David Biggs	26	S. H.
8 <sup>th</sup>	Mary	21	C.
9 <sup>th</sup>	David	4	"
10 <sup>th</sup>	Felix Jackimara	48	S. A.
11 <sup>th</sup>	Sussie	45	H.
12 <sup>th</sup>	Emmanuel	16	C.
13 <sup>th</sup>	Joseph	12	"
14 <sup>th</sup>	Patrick	4	"
15 <sup>th</sup>	Dominic	1	"

**Third Row.**

37.	1 <sup>st</sup> Frank Norcia	25	S. A.
38.	Erma	22	"
39.	Edward	6	C.
40.	2 <sup>nd</sup> John Egan	24	S. H.
41.	Christina	23	C.
42.	Silvanus	7	"
43.	Freddy	6	"
44.	3 <sup>rd</sup> Peter Jaler	23	S. A.
45.	Emily	23	S. H.
4 <sup>th</sup>	Vacant		

**Third Row.**

46.	5 <sup>th</sup> Thomas Waber	Age 22	S. A.
47.	Magdalen	21	C. H.
48.	Charles	2	"
49.	Fortunale	2	"
6 <sup>th</sup>	Vacant		

**Fourth Row.**

50.	1 <sup>st</sup> William Ryder	31	S. H.
51.	Catharine	28	"
52.	Norah	11	C.
53.	Severo	7	"
54.	Martha	3	"
55.	Charles	4	"
56.	2 <sup>nd</sup> John Ryder	27	S.
57.	Teresa	25	C.

1.	Cocabul Widower	54	S. A.
2.	Nogulgol	72	"
3.	Tumunara	74	"
4.	Eliza Tainy Widow	35	"
5.	Rose Nordul	50	H.
6.	Margaret Purcl	43	"
7.	Carmen Ryder	25	C.

**Epitome General.**

Marrried Men and Women	32
Their Children (11 boys, & 7 girls)	25
Other Boys	37
Other Girls	31
Widowers	3
Widows	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>

Grand Total N<sup>o</sup>. as above.

New Norcia 25<sup>th</sup> August 1899.  
 + H. Salvado  
 Manager.



'New Norcia Mission, 1870'

A grouping of several families and some monks.

One of the more common reasons for children to be placed in institutional care was when one of their parents died. One example of this was the family of Mary Penny. Mary Penny, married to shepherd John Penny, was living in Albany when she fell ill in 1900. Her medical expenses were met by a Cingalese, Nickolas Armir, who formed an attachment to her. Mary Penny may have been deserted by her husband, or she may have decided to leave him. In any event, she took her two children, Annaline aged thirteen and Leeuwin Emil aged three, and travelled to Leederville with Armir. There, she died in February 1901.

By the time of Mary Penny's death, Armir had apparently grown very fond of her two children. However, an anonymous letter to the

Aborigines Department, written by a neighbour or someone who knew something of the Penny family, or possibly Armir himself, produced an enquiry into the welfare of the children. Both Armir and the children wrote to the children's aunt, Lucy Morden, on the same day, asking her to take them because otherwise the government would. Lucy Morden and her husband Johnny Morden were reported to be of all-Aboriginal descent.<sup>13</sup> Another relative of the children, Frank Davis, who had a farm at Wagin, wrote to the Aborigines Department stating that he would take care of the children. The children also had an uncle, Charles Penny, living in Broome Hill.

The children were not returned to their relatives. Annaline was

If you want to send them  
 about 100p each one day  
 to the Government and send  
 by they will send them  
 to my to be buried at  
 next week for you to  
 1. or by the Government  
 2. for 1 - will pay for the  
 3. for 2 - will pay for the  
 4. for 3 - will pay for the  
 5. for 4 - will pay for the  
 6. for 5 - will pay for the  
 7. for 6 - will pay for the  
 8. for 7 - will pay for the  
 9. for 8 - will pay for the  
 10. for 9 - will pay for the  
 Yours Sincerely  
 Nicholas Armir

11/20  
 Leederville  
 Feb 26 /01

Dear Aunty  
 Now that  
 Mother is dead we have  
 no one to look after us  
 she is dead over one month  
 dropped down dead one  
 night at work all day  
 Dear Aunty will you come  
 and take us home. Mother  
 said before she died for  
 you to come and take me  
 and Emil. You and Jamie  
 can come down and take  
 us away.

Transcript

Letter to Lucy Morden from Annaline Penny, Leederville, and Nickolas Armir, Leederville, 26 February 1901 (ADF 1901, 84).

Dear Aunty;  
 Now that Mother is dead we have no one to look after us. She is dead over one month dropped down dead one night. Nickolas is away at work all day. Dear Aunty will you come down and take us home. Mother said before she died for you to come and take me and Emil. You and Jamie can come down and take us away.

If you don't come down I can't keep them any longer as the Government won't allow me to. They will send them away to the Mission Station next week so you come down at once. Bring Grandfather with you and I will pay the train fare back and the Government wants to see who is going to take them and know the name. And when you come send me a letter or a telegram to let me know what day you will come and I will meet you in Perth. So you can send me a reply back whether you are coming or not.

Yours sincerely,  
 Nickolas Armir

171  
 Leederville St  
 26 Feb /01.

Mr Spratt  
 Sir

Now that  
 Mary (the Aboriginal) is  
 dead there is no one to  
 look after the children  
 (girl & boy). They are  
 running about the street  
 so I wish you would  
 shake their Aunt Lucy  
 Morden up, & tell her to  
 come and take them away.

Yours respectfully  
 One interested

Transcript

Letter to Mr Spratt, Aborigines Department, from One Interested, Leederville, 26 February 1901 (ADF 1901, 84).

Sir,  
 Now that Mary (the Aboriginal) is dead there is not one to look after the children (girl and boy). They are running about the street, so I wish you would shake their Aunt Lucy Morden up, and tell her to come and take them away.

Yours respectfully,  
 One interested



August 25

Kind Sir

I am writing you a few lines hoping they will find you in good health. I also want to tell you that we have settled down in a nice tent until we can find timber to put up a house of our own timber I see want you to do me a kind favour by letting me have little Willie back as I am so unhappy and home seems so dark and cold without him and I am feeling very ill and Mrs. Brockman says we are always staying here as our bright face little boy seems to make home so bright for home is nothing without him so please send him back as soon as possible and we will be

as happy as the days are long I want to also tell you that little Willie has got a little sister and I got on very well Mrs Brockman got me a very kind Nurse and she was very kind to me also I got on so well that I got up on the second day and was able to do a little work so I think that is all I have to say please dont forget what I asked you about little Willie I would be so glad to see his little bright face again do kindly send him at once I remain yours  
sincerely  
Emily Pious

Please excuse bad writing and spelling as I am feeling very weak yet  
so good by

Transcript

Letter to H. C. Prinsep, Chief Protector of Aborigines, from Emily Pious, 25 August 1903 (ADF 1903, 12).

Kind Sir,

I am writing you a few lines hoping they will find you in good health. I also want to tell you that we have settled down in a nice tent until we can find timber to put up a house of our own. Kind Sir, I also want you to do me a kind favour by letting me have little Willie back as I am so unhappy and home seems so dark and cold without him and I am feeling very ill and Pious also feels unhappy and he is always saying 'where is our bright face little boy that seems to make home so bright for home is nothing without him.' So please, kind Sir, let us have him back as quick as possible and we will be as happy as the days are long. I want to also tell you that little Willie has got a little sister and I got on very well. Mrs Brockman got me a very kind Nurse and she was very kind to me also. I got on so well that I got up on the second day and was able to do a little work. So I think that is all I have to say. Please don't forget what I asked you about little [Willie]. I would be so glad to see his little bright face again, do kindly send him at once.

I remain yours sincerely,  
Emily Pious

Please excuse bad writing and spelling as I am feeling very weak yet.  
So good bye

apprenticed as a general servant to a Leederville storekeeper, a Mr Fraser, and her little brother, Leeuwin Emil, was sent to the Swan Native and Half Caste Mission, aged four years old. Later in the same year he was transferred to Ellensbrook Farm Home.<sup>14</sup> Records also show two other people with the surname of Penny being admitted to Katanning hospital in 1901 and being cared for by Emily Palmer. These were Tim Penny and S. Penny. Tim Penny subsequently died, but S. Penny recovered.<sup>15</sup> (See Family Tree No. 8A.)

Children were sometimes placed in institutional care when their

parents were having difficulties looking after them, particularly in the case of single or widowed women. However, it often proved very difficult to obtain their release after their parents' circumstances had improved.

One tragic example of the reluctance of the Aborigines Department to return a child to his parents, was the case of little Willie Pious. In 1903 Pious and his wife Emily found employment with a settler, Brockman, and settled down on his property. Emily Pious had had one child, little Willie, before she married Pious. This boy had been placed at

September 15<sup>th</sup>

Mr Prinsep  
just a few lines hoping you  
will give me a answer as  
my poor wife has written to  
you and you havent sent her  
a line of anysort about the  
boy please Mr Prinsep if  
you have got any love or  
feeling for us please give us the  
boy back as my poor wife  
is so brokenhearted I am afraid  
I will lose her and the little  
one she has just got for her  
milk is poison for the baby  
while she is feeding so please  
be kind enough to give us the  
boy back I remain yours

sincerely Mr Pious

please write at once  
and let us know what you  
are going to do & do send  
him back as my poor wife  
is very ill and I dont think  
~~and~~ she will get over it  
if the boy is not back &  
be like a gentleman and send  
him back as we are so unhappy  
without him I will pay  
his fare back I do send him  
back for my poor wife sake  
have pity on her and send  
him back I remain yours  
truly Mr Pious

Transcript

Letter to H. C. Prinsep, Chief Protector of Aborigines,  
from Mr Pious, 15 September 1903 (ADF 1903, 12).

Mr Prinsep,

Just a few lines hoping you will give me a answer as my  
poor wife has written to you and you haven't sent her a  
line of any sort about the boy. Please Mr Prinsep if you  
have got any love or feeling for us please give us the  
boy back as my poor wife is so brokenhearted I am  
afraid I will lose her and the little one she has just got,  
for her milk is poison for the baby while she is fretting.  
So please be kind enough to give us the boy back.

I remain yours sincerely,  
Mr Pious

Please write at once and let us know what you are go-  
ing to do and do send him back as my poor wife is very  
ill and I don't think she will get over it if the boy is not  
back. And be like a gentleman and send him back as we  
are so unhappy without him. I will pay his fare back and  
do send him back for my poor wife's sake. Have pity on  
her and send him back.

I remain yours truly,  
Mr Pious

Ellensbrook as a temporary measure, until she and her husband could establish themselves. However, Emily Pious gave birth to a baby girl and became very sick. She fretted for little Willie and both she and her husband wrote to Prinsep seeking the return of her son.<sup>16</sup> Their letters express the love they felt for the small boy and their grief at not having him with them. Two years later Emily Pious again fell pregnant and her health deteriorated rapidly. At that time she was at New Norcia Mission, and her condition became so critical that plans were made for her to be hospitalized in Perth. Her husband was suffering from advanced consumption.<sup>17</sup> It seems that little Willie was never returned to his mother, and it is most likely that her other children were also placed in institutional care, and that both Pious and Emily died.

The Salvation Army opened a children's home for Aboriginal boys in Collie in 1906. In 1907 they extended this by providing a second dormitory for girls. In 1909 another home for Aboriginal children was opened in East Perth by the Australian Aboriginal Mission. The opening of these homes was largely in response to official encouragement to place the children of mixed Aboriginal and European descent in institutional care as an expression of the special sense of responsibility felt for them on account of their mixed parentage. This was clearly expressed in the Aborigines Report of the Aborigines Department of 1901 which reads:

One of the special points that has engaged my attention during the past year was the condition of the half-castes. During the past year agreeing as I do with the expression frequently heard that it is a most undesirable thing for half-castes to be allowed to grow up uneducated, and in all the wandering habits of their black mothers, which can only end in their becoming not only a disgrace but a menace to our civilization, I have been doing all I can, first to ascertain their numbers, localities and general condition, and second to get the consent of their parents to their being brought

into institutions for their benefit and education. Without any special authority by law much can be done by persuasion, but so far the natural affections of the black mothers have stood much in my way. One of the matters which I recommended for legislation on my last year's report was the 'future dealing with half-castes'. The number of half-castes reported in the recent tour of the travelling inspector, viz. the whole of the colony south of latitude 26 is roughly 86—44 males and 42 females. This however does not include those at New Norcia, Swan, Ellensbrook, and a few places in the eastern districts, and the south-western farming districts.

. . . I forwarded a circular to the Resident Magistrates . . . to ascertain . . . any half-caste children . . . who could be induced to enter one of the institutions . . . I received replies from 24 different Magisterial Centres, and learned of a few only whose parents were willing to give them up.<sup>18</sup>

Unhappily, the love that parents felt for their children was only regarded as an impediment to the carrying out of official policy. Many children were placed in the care of institutions with little thought given to their emotional needs, other than the care which concerned workers in these homes were able to provide. This could hardly compare to the bonds between the children and parents, most especially their mothers. Officials regarded the association of children of mixed descent with their Aboriginal relatives as undesirable. Fear that these children would adopt a similar style of life, based more on traditional Aboriginal ways than a European pattern, prompted them to seek a solution in legislation. However, without the support of their European family, these children had an unequal chance to make their way in the society of the settlers. The legislation which was designed initially to protect them, in practice enabled them to be separated from the group which accepted them and offered them love, while at the same time they were categorized as members of it.



'The Salvation Army Home, Collie, Christmas 1908'

This home opened in 1905, and girls were first admitted in 1907.

## 7. GUILDFORD, AND THE WELSHPOOL RESERVE

Earliest records indicate numbers of Aborigines in the Guildford area, which was the land of Molly Dobbin, Molly Megat, Weban (Weeban) and what was described in 1840 as 'other branches of the Dobbin family', while to the south of Guildford was the land of Benan, Yurgan and others, and to the west the land of Ngunyt, Wiap and others.<sup>1</sup> In 1841 two native constables were appointed in the Guildford area, Molly Dobbin and Djoogan.<sup>2</sup> As the land was taken up by European settlers, Aborigines were forced to camp in areas that were unoccupied by settlement. Increasingly, these tracts of land became scarce as more and more country was settled, and by the turn of the century definite camping sites had been established in the precincts of Guildford town, where Aborigines habitually camped unmolested.

While old-time settlers in the Guildford area accepted the Aboriginal presence, new arrivals, lacking experience in interacting with Aborigines, raised objections from time to time. In December 1900 a letter was published in the *West Australian* complaining that the Aborigines were allowed to wander about, camp in vacant land in the centre of town, disturb the sleep of other residents by their drinking and fighting; that their camps were unsanitary; and stating that the matter should be brought to the attention of the commissioner of police and the health authorities.

This letter produced an angry response from several Guildford residents who defended the Aborigines and accused the writer of making false statements about them. One resident in the area, James Savage, wrote:

[other neighbours] also state the Natives are not troublesome in any way. I am informed these are some fresh people arrived in Guildford . . . who do not seem to have seen many Natives and appear to be very much afraid of them and have asked on several occasions if the Natives would do them any harm at night.

I have never heard any noise made by these Natives at any time

and as for Natives moving about town at night that is false. You might see a stray Native making his way through town occasionally.<sup>3</sup>

The local sergeant of police investigated the complaints and wrote on 2 January 1901:

The report in the *West Australian* newspaper is incorrect, whoever wrote the paragraph did not confine themselves to the truth and the Natives are no nuisance and are not camped in the middle of town.<sup>4</sup>

In the same year, Guildford was the scene of a large gathering of Aborigines when the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York paid a visit to Western Australia. The chief protector of Aborigines, H. C. Prinsep, attempted to encourage Aborigines from all over the state to come to the city for this event, and wrote to the local protectors of Aborigines requesting them to supply him with the names of people in their districts who would like to be present for the royal visit. On hearing of this, and overwhelmed at the enthusiastic response, and also possibly concerned that a huge concentration of Aborigines would descend on the city and that other residents would object, the premier, Sir John Forrest, instructed Prinsep to cease his efforts to attract them. In his report on the visit to the premier afterwards, Prinsep wrote:

I beg to report that though I acted in accordance with your verbal instructions and ceased to take steps to attract Aborigines to the city during the late Royal Visit—a good many came.<sup>5</sup>

The Aborigines were accommodated at Guildford, and among the 110 who were present for the royal visit the following were from the south-west of the state:

Andrew	Bunbury	Annie	Bunbury	Willie	Victoria Plains
Ginny Kickett	Vasse	Marjie	Beverley	Ann	Newcastle (Toodyay)
William Gilan	Bunbury	Dick	Beverley	Elizabeth	Newcastle
William Brandy	Beverley	Sambo	Beverley	Johnny Shaw	Newcastle
Kennedy	Moore River	Joe	North Swan	Minnie Shaw	Newcastle
Billy Kickett	Bunbury	Fred Mead	North Swan	Garry Gilip	North Swan
Susy	Beverley	Fred Dando	North Swan	Mary Gilip	North Swan
Sarah	Beverley	Aglas	North Swan	Harry	Claremont
Larak	Bunbury	Sarah Mead	North Swan	Minmic	Claremont
Bob	Beverley	Isaac	North Swan	Rosey	Claremont
Fanny	Beverley	George Chitchup	Esperance	Jimmy Isaacs	North Swan
Orbain	Beverley	Liza	Mission	Henry Isaacs	North Swan
Sarah	Guildford	Lizzie	Mission	Henry Hill	North Swan
Mary	Guildford	Louise	Guildford	Molloly	Swan River
Amy	Guildford	Nancy	Guildford	Jimmy	Northam
Andrew	Northam	Fanny	Guildford	Walter	Gingin
Olive	Northam	Dasey	Cannington	Rob	Gingin
Christiana	Northam	Arthur	Cannington	Didong Abraham	Northam
Lischa	Guildford	Percy	Cannington	Tommy Newell	Northam
Fanny	Pinjarra	Clarty or C. Larty	Cannington	Naudall	South West
Willie	Claremont	Jutta	Victoria Plains	Billy Dowett	Northam
Paddy	Bunbury	Trilby	Victoria Plains		

Regrettably, full names of people have only been recorded in a few instances, making it difficult to connect these individuals with their present-day descendants.

Throughout the royal visit the Aborigines were accommodated in especially erected shelters, and remained in the area for a total of four months. Four constables were assigned to keep order at the camp, and appear to have exercised their duties with discretion. In his report to the premier, Prinsep wrote, somewhat defensively:

I prepared for their reception and supervision. Long iron roofed shelters were erected on the West Guildford Road, firewood purchased and straw for bedding and four special constables . . . One hundred and ten Natives (110) assembled and I gave orders that they were only to come into town when attended by constables and always to be in camp throughout the night.

They were brought in, in a body, to witness many of the functions, and behaved well—and I am happy to say not one report has been made of Natives loitering in town, drinking, or giving trouble



Guildford Aborigines, 1901

These photographs were taken during the visit to Western Australia of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York in 1901.

In the mixed group photograph there are 104 people, 38 people (two of them men) in the women's photograph, and 72 in the men's photograph. While all the people are wearing European-style clothing and have taken obvious care with their dress and appearance, several are holding traditional ceremonial sticks. These are made from young saplings, with the bark shaved down in strips to form fringes at various intervals. One small boy has been dressed for the occasion in a loin cloth. Two of the men in the men's photograph and four of the women in the women's photograph are wearing head-dresses. The women's head-dresses appear to be wreaths of flowers.

... They all expressed their satisfaction and enjoyment of what they had seen, of the way they had been treated and of their visit to the zoological gardens.<sup>6</sup>

Despite the sympathetic support of many residents, and the favourable report of the Aborigines Department on the royal visit in 1901, Aborigines in the Guildford area continued to irritate some people by their presence. Persistent complaints were made to the police and other authorities, and in 1905 the secretary of the West Guildford Local Board of Health wrote:

Although my Board are unable to trace any direct nuisance, likely to menace health, the said residents consider that latrines should be provided for the Natives' use.<sup>7</sup>

In July 1906 the police suggested to Prinsep that the Aborigines Act 1905 be enforced to move the Aborigines out of Guildford.<sup>8</sup> However, despite the complaints of local residents about the Aboriginal presence in Guildford, the preoccupation with the lack of health facilities in Aboriginal camping sites, and plans to force Aborigines to shift from these areas, the tradition of residence in the town vicinity has persisted to present times. There are still some people in the area who can recall hearing of the visit of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York and the events surrounding it from relatives and friends.

The problem of an ever-decreasing amount of land being available for Aborigines to camp on in the city area was one of the main considerations which led to the creation of the Welshpool Reserve in the Canning district in 1901. This reserve was Prinsep's idea, and he envisaged the 200 acres (81 hectares) as a place where Aborigines, as well as people of Aboriginal descent who were identified as Aboriginal, could live and develop work habits, and farming and domestic skills. He justified the cost of the reserve and the expense to the Aborigines

Department in assisting Aborigines living there to establish gardens and crafts by arguing that it would really represent a savings to the government. One saving was to be an old blind Aboriginal, Urian (Yughrin), who was living in Bunbury. Other Aborigines in Bunbury had apparently refused to look after him, and the Aborigines Department had had to pay a local woman £1 a week to care for him. Prinsep reasoned that if he was moved to the reserve at Welshpool, almost £40 a year could be saved as the superintendent could look after him as part of his duties.<sup>9</sup> It is not clear from the records why the other Aborigines in Bunbury were reluctant to care for Urian, although they may have feared his powers. Ngilgie (Nilgie), an Aboriginal woman living at Welshpool, refused to have anything to do with him because she believed he had killed her brother.

Another cost saving that the reserve was to represent was the appointment of T. Kelley of Cannington as superintendent in 1903, with a view to developing it further and accommodating a larger concentration of Aborigines into the one area. Kelley was to transport people to their hospital appointments and in this way save on their railway fares; cart stores; take produce to the markets; and give 'rudimentary instruction' to the children. Prinsep had a vision of flower gardens being developed on the reserve, as a means of providing employment for the Aborigines living there, and wrote:

the civilizing effect will be so great, especially if our proposed legislation gives me power to gather half-castes in from the bush.<sup>10</sup>

Kelley's appointment did not meet with the approval of many of the people living on the reserve who were very concerned about the mandate he would have. While he was to perform such tasks as instructing the children and transporting people and goods, the actual powers that he would have over people were unclear. James Cooper wrote to Prinsep requesting a clarification of Kelley's authority, and also expressing



1903  
Woodside  
1 Nov 23rd

The Chief protector of  
Aborigines Perth, W.A.

Dear Sir

I beg to inform you  
I am working for Mr  
E. Hammersley of Wilberforce  
cutting Hay -  
will be home at  
Dec. 21st Christmas please  
tell my wife & family  
I am enjoying good health  
Thank god.

Please to let me know how  
is my family - and oblige

I am your truly  
James Cooper

90 E. Hammersley  
Woodside.

Transcript

James Cooper to Prinsep, Chief Protector of Aborigines, 23 November 1903 (ADF 1902.36)

Dear Sir,  
I beg to inform you I am working for Mr E. Hammersley of Wilberforce cutting hay.

Will be home at Dec. 21st Christmas, please tell my wife and family. I am enjoying good health, thank god.

Please to let me know how is my family — and oblige.

I am yours truly,  
James Cooper

the dissatisfaction generally felt about his appointment, including the fear by a number of people that he would shoot their dogs. Moreover, in 1903 Kelley had advised the publican of the Coronation Hotel, Woodlupine, that 'half caste Natives' should not be supplied with liquor, and Cooper and others took umbrage at this and formed an opinion of him as a man who would wish to restrict their rights.<sup>11</sup>

James Cooper was a family man, with a reputation for being a steady and reliable worker. He and his wife struggled to provide a home for their son, who suffered an illness which left him invalided and unable to sit up without support. The boy was placed in his parents' bed, and they slept on the floor. Because of their meagre resources, Cooper was obliged to write to the Aborigines Department and request a double bed, and also a fall-back chair for the boy.

Illness befell Cooper himself in 1902, and he was unable to keep an arrangement to work for James Giblett. Giblett wrote to him:

I am sorry to hear that you are not well but trust you will be able to come in a few days. I will wait as it is not my intention to engage any one else as you have agreed with me. Come as soon as possible.<sup>12</sup>

Unfortunately, Cooper's illness progressed, and two weeks later he was still not recovered. However, this did not prevent him from trying to do what he could for the people on the Welshpool reserve, and he wrote to Prinsep on their behalf requesting a horse and trap for their use, as well as a railway ticket for himself so that he could visit the doctor in Perth. Cooper recovered, and a year later found employment at Woodside. This meant that he had to leave his family and the care of his crippled son to his wife while he was away on the job. He wrote to Prinsep to enquire about his family, during the time he was away.

Cooper died in the Guildford hospital in 1905. His family and friends raised the money to have him buried privately by a local under-

taker," according him in his death the dignity he fought for on behalf of himself and others during his lifetime.

Problems of administration beset the Welshpool reserve and Prinsep's plans for commercial flower gardens were never realized. In 1908 it was taken over by the Aborigines Inland Mission. It closed in 1911 and many of the people who had lived there moved to Guildford where some of their descendants still live.

*Transcript*

Letter to H. C. Prinsep, Chief Protector of Aborigines, from Mrs Cooper, Guildford, 30 March 1903 (ADF 1902, 153).

Dear Sir,

Would you kindly allow my late husband's body to be sent on to Guildford. We would like to bury him here as all his people are in Guildford.

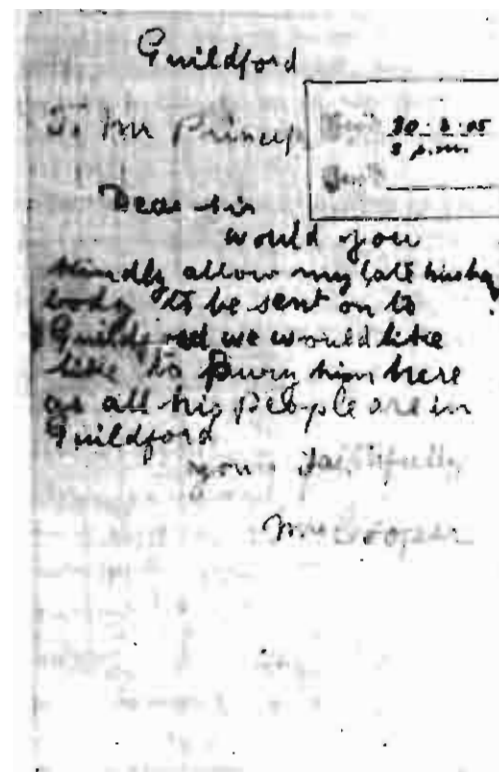
Yours faithfully,  
Mrs Cooper

*Notation*

This James Cooper (lately of Welshpool Reserve) who recently entered Guildford Hospital suffering from Bright's disease—

The relatives and friends of Cooper engaged the Guildford undertaker Mr Douglas Jones to bury this man as a private funeral.

H.C.P. 1.4.05



Miss James Cooper (lately of Welshpool Reserve) who recently entered Guildford Hospital suffering from Bright's disease—

Her relatives & friends of Cooper engaged the Guildford undertaker Mr Douglas Jones to bury this man as a private funeral — 1177  
1.4.05.

## 8. THE STATUS OF THE ABORIGINAL, AND THE RIGHT TO A BEER

Initially, Aboriginal matters in the Swan River Colony were dealt with through the mounted Native Police. In 1834 Captain Ellis died following a fall from his horse in the Pinjarra massacre, and the following year F. Armstrong was appointed native interpreter and based at the Native Institution at Mt Eliza. This position was abolished in 1840 when the system of an appointed native interpreter was replaced by one of protectors of Aborigines, the first of whom was Charles Symmons. Several native constables were also appointed in the 1840s, and then a number of elected Aboriginal 'Kings' in the 1850s. From around the end of the 1850s Aboriginal matters were dealt with mainly through resident magistrates and the local police. The Aborigines Protection Act of 1886 established the Aborigines Protection Board, and the Aborigines Department was formed when the state of Western Australia finally gained full control of Aboriginal matters in 1898.

The Aborigines Protection Act of 1886 distinguished between people of mixed Aboriginal and European descent who lived with Aborigines and who were classed as Aboriginal, and those who did not associate with Aborigines and who were therefore not classified as Aboriginal themselves. The 1880 Wines, Beer and Spirit Sale Act prohibited the supply of alcohol to Aborigines, but not to part-Aborigines. However, after the creation of the Aborigines Department in 1898, people of mixed descent were increasingly subjected to the same restrictions as Aborigines regardless of whom they associated with and irrespective of their life style.

One of these people who were affected by the encompassing web of bureaucratic control and who stood up for his rights was David Nannup. On 3 June 1900 he wrote to the chief protector of Aborigines, H. C. Prinsep, because he had been refused entry to the Busselton Hotel.' This was a new experience for Nannup who had lived in Busselton all his life and had had unrestricted access to the hotel, just like any other resident in the district, up to that time. Nannup previously had not been subjected to any restrictions applying to Aborigines because

of his life style and also because his mother's father was an American who had married an Aboriginal woman and she in turn had had a European grandparent. This categorization as non-Aboriginal had worked to the Nannup family's disadvantage in that they had been refused a rug issue by the Aborigines Department. Moreover, they had had to pay tax in the form of a licence fee for their guns the same as other people who were not classified as Aboriginal. Nannup argued that it was nothing short of a swindle if the family was to be refused benefits that were the entitlement of Aborigines, but at the same time be subjected to the restrictions placed on Aborigines, and he wrote to the Aborigines Department expressing his views in a very forthright manner.

David Nannup's protest did not result in any practical benefit to him, and in 1905 he was subjected to the attentions of the Aborigines Department again. At the time he was working in Lockridge, and a rumour spread that he was planning to induce Jubaitch's daughter, of Welshpool, to run away with him. This prompted an investigation of his private situation by the Aborigines Department, and Police Constable Fogarty, who carried out the investigation on behalf of the Department, reported:

I respectfully report having interviewed David Nannup who states he is employed by Mr Hugh Hammersley, Lockridge, and that he has not been to Midland Junction or Bellevue since he came to Guildford and that he never had any intention of inducing Jubaitch's daughter to run away with him . . . I . . . was informed by Mrs Hammersley that Nannup has been in their employ for over three months, has given every satisfaction and is well behaved and very seldom leaves the place to go anywhere . . . I know to my own knowledge that Nannup has been working since he came to Guildford and has never given any trouble to the police.'

David Nannup's father, J. Nannup, was also prepared to stand up for

Aborig.  
437  
79  
June 3. 1900  
Dear Sir  
would be as kind as to  
see further in to this matter  
I going to ask you to do  
for me. Sir I sooner for no  
Weather the can stop me from  
going in Pub<sup>l</sup>ic houses  
I Ben in Busselton all my  
Life an I difie any one in  
Busselton to say that the saw  
me only once in my life  
But it only latly the thry  
to stop me an Tonken  
the Pler told me I was  
not a lowet in the Pub  
an I ask him the reason  
why no he said I was a  
real aborigon I want your

see how they can bring  
me in or my brother  
as one my father is  
But my mother not  
hear father is a Mexican  
and her mother is a three  
quarter cast an the won't  
grant us rugs an  
we got to pay bizens  
for how guns  
an if that can stop  
me an my brother  
from going in. But  
it is a swindle just  
as good as robbing a man  
so I must bring my  
letter to Gene  
I remain your obedient servant  
David Nannup

Transcript

Letter to H. C. Prinsep, Chief Protector of Aborigines, from David Nannup, Busselton, 3 January 1900 (ADF 1898, 630).

Dear Sir,  
Would be as kind as to see further into this which I (am) going to ask you to do for me. Sir, I wonder now whether they can stop me from going in Public Houses. I've been in Busselton all my life and I defy anyone in Busselton to say that they saw me only once in my life. But it [was] only lately they try to stop me, and Tonken, the Police, told me I was not allowed in the pub, and I asked him the reason why. Now, he said I was a real Aborigine. I want your (to) see how they can bring me in or my brother as one. My father is, but my mother not. Her father is an American and her mother is a three quarter cast, and they won't grant us rugs and we got to pay licenses for our guns.

And if they can stop me and my brother from going in [to the] pub it is a swindle, just as good as robbing a man.

So I must bring my letter to end.

I remain your obedient servant,  
David Nannup

his rights. In 1899 he was working for a local settler at Busselton, breaking horses. One of the horses died, and the settler accused him of maltreating it and refused to pay him for the six months work he had done for him, alleging that this was the value of the horse.<sup>1</sup> Nannup took the matter to the Aborigines Department, in an effort to gain redress, stating that he had been treated 'worse than a prisoner'. In the same year, he was one of two Aborigines who assisted in a search for a lost boy, Thomas Anderson. After they had searched for eight days, they finally found the child's body in the Vasse River. However, neither Nannup, nor the other searcher, Williams, received any payment for their assistance, either in the form of money or food, except from neighbours in the district. Settlers in the area felt that they should be entitled to recompense for the time they had given, and so Joseph Bovell submitted a claim to the Aborigines Department on their behalf, for eight days wages, pointing out that other Aborigines who had been involved in the search really deserved some form of recompense too.

The Aborigines Department took a dim view of Bovell's claim on behalf of Nannup and Williams. They refused the payment outright, saying that they had not employed the two men and hence did not have any responsibility to pay them, and moreover the Aborigines employed by the police only received two shillings a day and hence a claim of five shillings a day was ridiculous.

The independence of spirit shown by David Nannup and his father was also shared by David Nannup's brother, Charles William Nannup. Charles William Nannup was also known as Charles Williams, and is most likely the Williams referred to in the search for the lost boy. In August 1908 he was employed in Mahogany Creek when his wife was expecting a baby. The resident magistrate, George Gannon, interviewed Nannup to see whether he required any assistance for his wife so that she could have her baby in a nursing home. However, Nannup stated that while he would appreciate it if his wife could have her baby in a nursing home, he would pay all expenses himself. At the time he

was working with Harris and Jones, on a contract tree pulling. The magistrate wrote: 'the three . . . half castes are educated men'.<sup>4</sup>

Mrs Nannup's baby arrived before arrangements for her to go to a nursing home could be finalized, and the local nurse attended her during the birth. Trouble arose for Charles William Nannup when the person who had employed him refused to pay for the work completed. With a young wife and new baby to support, Nannup was forced to write to the Aborigines Department for assistance while he tried to extract the wages owing to him.

Earlier, in 1874, another young man by the name of Nannup set out with a party of stockmen from Margaret River, intending to take cattle and horses overland to Nickol Bay near Roeburne in the Pilbara. During the fourteen months it took the party to arrive at their destination, Nannup proved indispensable and John Brockman, who became leader of the expedition on the death of the original leader, mentioned Nannup several times in his diary.<sup>5</sup> Nannup died while still a young man. His relationship to J. Nannup, Charles William Nannup and David Nannup is not known. (See Family Tree No. 22B.)

From 1898 onwards many people of mixed Aboriginal and European descent were affected by the increasing tendency to apply regulations relating to Aborigines to them as well. The right to enter a hotel became the focus for the feelings of discontent that resulted from this treatment. Probably more than any other single concern, this right came to symbolize the freedom of the individual as a citizen of equal worth.

In country towns the hotel was the centre of social life, and to be excluded from there meant that a man did not have the opportunity to mix with his fellow workers outside of working hours on an equal footing. Even other activities, such as sport and churchgoing, often involved a visit by the men to the hotel to 'have a few drinks together'.

William Hart was another person who took umbrage at the increasing control exercised by the Aborigines Department over the lives of

Northbrook 17 July 1902

My dear Sir,  
As my attention has been drawn to a prosecution lately in the papers where a publican was fined for supplying a half-cast with drink and being one myself I have been all ways under the impression that that we were not prevented from going to a hotel to get a glass of beer now Sir I have a wife and family here on my own land and I think it very hard if such is the case [we] have to go to the town to do our business at times and I think it very hard if I am debarred from going to a hotel to get refreshments for our families. We work hard and honest for our living and I don't see why we should be classed with the black that roams the bush. Now Sir, if such is the case you must write and let me know so as I will know how to act in the future.

to in hotel to get refreshments as our families we work hard and honest for our living and I don't see why we should be classed with the black that roams the bush now Sir if such is the case you must write and let me know so as I will know how to act in the future.

My Directions to  
William Hart  
Pingelly  
Great Southern  
Railway

I remain your Obedient  
servant W Hart

Transcript

Letter to H. C. Prinsep, Chief Protector of Aborigines, from William Hart, Pingelly, 17 July 1902 (ADF 1902, 552).

Sir,  
My attention being drawn to a prosecution lately in the paper where a publican was fined for supplying a half-cast with drink and being one myself I have been always under the impression that we were not prevented from going to a hotel to get a glass of beer. Now Sir, I have a wife and family here on my own land and I think it very hard if such is the case [we] have to go to the town to do our business at times and I think it very hard if I am debarred from going to a hotel to get refreshments for our families. We work hard and honest for our living and I don't see why we should be classed with the black that roams the bush. Now sir, if such is the case you must write and let me know so as I will know how to act in the future.

My directions for William Hart, Pingelly, Great Southern Railway.

I remain your humble servant,  
W. Hart

Aborigines in the early twentieth century. Hart was a literate man who owned his own block of land, worked hard, and had been accustomed to full acceptance in the Pingelly hotel as was any other farmer in the district. Like David Nannup of Busselton, Hart registered his protest. The Aborigines Department replied that when Hart himself was refused service in a hotel, it would be up to the local magistrate to decide whether the publican had been right or not.<sup>6</sup> In this way, the Aborigines Department added to the ignominy of Hart's position, as he then had to wait for discrimination to be used against him personally before he could attempt to do anything about it and he was chastised for taking up the cause of another person. The wide powers of the Aborigines Act 1905 meant that causes like Hart's were lost before the battle began. (See Family Tree 11B.)

Charles Simpson was also affected by the uncertainty of his status prior to the introduction of the 1905 Act. He was married to a European woman, and mixed wholly within settler society. However, he fell upon difficult times in 1902 and sought assistance from the state. The resident magistrate was in a quandary about whether Simpson should apply for aid to the chief protector of Aborigines, or the superintendent of charitable institutions. He wrote to Prinsep, who in turn referred the matter to the crown solicitor:

Section 45 of the Aborigines Act 1886 (50 V. No. 25) says 'every Aboriginal native of Australia and every Aboriginal half caste, or child of a half caste, such half caste or child habitually associating and living with Aborigines, shall be deemed to be an Aboriginal within the meaning of this Act.

Now there are many half castes and children of half castes who do not live with Aborigines, but inhabit houses, marry white people, and live white peoples lives.'

The vagueness of the wording of the Act, leaving it a matter of discretion who was to be considered Aboriginal to qualify for relief, or any

other purpose, meant that no firm resolution was arrived at by the crown solicitor in Simpson's case, although he expressed the opinion that any half-caste was entitled to relief from the Aborigines Department because of these very powers of discretion contained within the Act. However, that interpretation automatically excluded them from receiving assistance from other departments, which may have had greater financial resources than the low-budgeted Aborigines Department.

The 1905 Aborigines Act sought to settle the matter of who was Aboriginal by making the definition of Aboriginal dependent on biological make-up rather than an individual's social association and life-style. However this led to greater difficulties for people who had hitherto regarded themselves as outside any legislation affecting Aborigines because their life-style was the same as other members of the community who were not Aboriginal. The laws relating to the purchase and consumption of liquor in hotels became the focus for the subsequent discontent and frustration felt by these people.

Another man who was suddenly confronted with the new laws contained in the Aborigines Act 1905, which classified him as Aboriginal, was Edwin Turner of Bridgetown. On being refused a drink in the Farmer's House Hotel, where he was accustomed to stay when in town, Turner immediately wrote to the attorney general, bypassing the Aborigines Department, and appealing on behalf of himself and others in a similar position. The customary police report on him described him as 'an industrious, hard working man and bears a good character in this district'.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, the matter was still referred to the Aborigines Department, although Prinsep replied to Turner in apologetic tones, advising him to apply for exemption from the relevant section of the Aborigines Act under Section 63. Turner acted on this advice and an exemption was granted to him on 4 September 1906. However, this could be revoked at any time and no explanation had to be given by the Aborigines Department.



Bridgetown

24th July 1906

10/5/06

The Attorney General

I wish to emphatically appeal against what I consider a great act of injustice to myself and others in a similar position

I am a half caste, native of Western Australia, was educated in Albany and for the last fourteen years have occupied 400 acres of Conditional Purchase land, have paid all rates and registration fees and have notes for both houses as well as the local Road Board.

Briefly the facts of the case are these—I came into Bridgetown on Friday last to transact certain business in connection with my farm & put up at the Farmer's Home Hotel, which is my usual place of residence when in town. On Saturday the constable in charge of the district came to the hotel and informed the proprietor that under a new act he would serve me with liquor at his peril.

I consider this an unwarranted insult on the part of the authorities to a law abiding citizen of the state and feel that some great mistake must have been made. Although I feel that I should not be placed in a position to do so, I can produce references from men of the greatest standing in the district that my conduct has been at least as good as that of the average settler.

Apologizing for trespassing on your time & waiting so long. I beg to remain  
Yours respectfully  
Edwin Turner

Address  
of Farmer's Home Hotel  
Bridgetown

Transcript

Letter to the Attorney General from Edwin Turner, Bridgetown, 24 July 1906 (ADF 1906, 640).

Sir  
I wish to emphatically appeal against what I consider a great act of injustice to myself and others in a similar position.

I am a half caste, native of Western Australia, was educated in Albany and for the last fourteen years have occupied 400 acres of Conditional Purchase land, have paid all rates and registration fees and have notes for both houses as well as the local Road Board.

Briefly the facts of the case are these—I came into Bridgetown on Friday last to transact certain business in connection with my farm, and put up at the Farmer's Home Hotel, which is my usual place of residence when in town. On Saturday the constable in charge of the district came to the hotel and informed the proprietor that under a new act he would serve me with liquor at his peril.

I consider this an unwarranted insult on the part of the authorities to a law abiding citizen of the state and feel that some great mistake must have been made.

Although I feel that I should not be placed in a position to do so, I can produce references from men of the greatest standing in the district that my conduct has been at least as good as that of the average settler.

Apologizing for trespassing on your time and waiting a reply.

I beg to remain  
Yours respectfully,  
Edwin Turner

Address c/- Farmer's Home Hotel, Bridgetown



For Aborigines, the right to enter a hotel symbolized far more than the personal freedom to drink alcohol. It came to represent their exclusion from participation in ordinary community life. Awareness of this sharpened after the 1914 to 1918 World War when many Aborigines who had fought side by side with other Australian troops, returned. Back in their home towns, they were confronted once again by this discrimination. During the 1939 to 1945 World War, Aboriginal men and women once again served in the armed forces, frequently with distinction. While they were treated as equals when in the armed forces, on discharge they were subjected to restrictions which did not apply to the non-Aboriginal veterans with whom they had fought and served.

Full citizenship rights had been denied Aborigines from the earliest days of self-government of the state. In 1944 the Native (Citizenship Rights) Act gave adult Aborigines the right to apply for full citizenship rights. Aborigines had been able to apply for exemption from certain sections of the Aborigines Act 1905, and also from the 1936 Aborigines Act Amendment Act which superseded it. However, citizenship rights exempted the holder from all of the provisions of these Acts, although it could also be revoked. Those who obtained citizenship rights frequently found the advantages to be hollow indeed, as family and friends did not share in these rights and, furthermore, association with Aborigines was grounds for revoking citizenship, or refusing an application for citizenship in the first instance. Citizenship rights holders were constantly under suspicion of supplying other Aborigines with alcohol, an offence with which they could be charged, and were continually subjected to the humiliation of having to produce a certifi-

cate in order to prove their rights, including the right to be served in a public house.

In the post-World War II years many Aborigines, their sense of injury sharpened by the experiences they had gained at home and abroad, were joined by their non-Aboriginal friends and supporters who also felt a sense of shame for this denial to a section of the Australian population. However, it was not until the Native Welfare Act 1963 was proclaimed that Aborigines in the south-western part of the state could freely enter a hotel. This heralded the end of the days of prohibition and its attendant unfortunate consequences for Aborigines in the south-west. Returned servicemen and women with honourable discharges from the armed forces were automatically granted full citizenship rights and all Aborigines were able to enter a hotel along with any other members of the community. However, restrictions on the sale of alcohol to Aborigines in remote areas of the state remained in force for some time, and as well the licensing laws made it possible for publicans to refuse to serve Aborigines and to turn them off their premises. The pattern of discrimination established over the previous sixty years was difficult to break, and Aborigines still did not have free access to public houses in the way that non-Aboriginal members of the community did.

The years during which common rights were denied to Aborigines have left their mark on the attitudes of both Aborigines and others in the south-west, and what is happening today represents only the first steps in overcoming some of the disadvantages for Aborigines that the past has brought.

## 9. CONCLUSIONS

### 1. ECONOMIC POSITION

The most striking feature to emerge from the preceding documentary sources is the depressed economic conditions to which the Aborigines of the south-west have been subjected, conditions forced upon them by the particular circumstances of the colonial experience of the region. From the earliest days of European settlement Aborigines have been displaced from their lands and denied access to their accustomed food sources. In the earlier years of British colonization this was a matter which troubled the conscience of some settlers, but on the whole they exhibited a callous disregard for the Aborigines, and very little understanding of, or interest in, their circumstances. The land was assumed to belong rightfully to the new settlers, and while Aborigines were seen to have a natural right to native flora and fauna, restrictions were placed on them as soon as this right conflicted with settler interests. The shooting of Aboriginal dogs and the destruction of their fish traps are only two examples of this.

A number of European settlers did defend the Aborigines' right to a living, championing their cause, but overall these people were a minority which had little effect except in the individual cases of certain Aborigines for whom they were able to obtain government relief, or assist in their struggle against the all-extensive bureaucratic control of Aborigines. The sum of individuals thus helped never amounted to an improvement of conditions for Aborigines as a group.

European settlers did see Aborigines as having a place in the overall social order, but only as it suited their convenience and served their interests. Domestic and farm labouring positions were available to Aborigines, provided they lived according to the behavioural expectations of their employers. Seasonal work was also always available, and in this Aborigines were less constrained by European social demands simply because the wandering lifestyle which this type of employment necessitated put them on the very fringe of settler society and ensured they remain there.

Low wages for labour was another feature of Aboriginal/European relations in the workplace, and were justified by the unthinking and unrealistic expectation that Aborigines would maintain themselves on bush food, even as sources of this were being dried up by expanding European settlement. This meant that Aborigines had to rely on hand-outs and charity to supplement what they had, wherever these could be solicited, and in the process they had to suffer the ignominy that was a concomitant of this dependency.

As many Aborigines acquired agricultural skills, those who became established on properties were particularly vulnerable to seasonal vicissitudes because of the smallness of their blocks, and the lack of capital to give them a start. Others who were working on small farms were also affected by changes and fluctuations in the economy of the day, through the effects this had upon their employers' inability to offer them any sense of permanency in their employment.

In addition to the implications for employment, the economic knife-edge on which Aborigines lived meant that they had few tangible resources to tide them through periods of personal misfortune such as accident and illness. Circumstances such as these forced a number of people to turn to welfare for relief but because of their classification as Aboriginal, assistance was generally denied them and the poorly funded and serviced resources of the Aborigines Department had to be stretched to cover an impossible number of cases.

### 2. TRADITIONAL PRACTICES

The economic position of Aborigines made the retention of certain traditional bushcraft skills essential, including hunting and camping. At the same time other traditional practices persisted as a matter of preference, no doubt because they gave a dignity and meaning to Aboriginal existence which could not be found within settler society. In particular, death and burial practices stand out as retaining elements of

traditional practice over time. The increase in communication between Aborigines from other areas of the state from the first days of European settlement, such as the Kimberleys and Eastern Goldfields, provided a source of refurbishment in an area of waning traditional cultural practice.

### 3. POPULATION

As in the case of the usurpation of Aboriginal land, settlers often felt no responsibility for their liaisons with Aboriginal women, either towards the women concerned or for the children resulting from these affairs or encounters. There were a number of individual exceptions to this, but there are many more cases which fit this general rule.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century the increasing number of children of mixed descent combined with their placement in institutions is a reflection of the change in composition of the Aboriginal population of the region, and also of the disregard for Aborigines by many settlers.

In addition to the changes in composition of the Aboriginal population brought about by the birth of numbers of children of mixed descent, the Aboriginal population was disastrously affected by introduced diseases. This was a major part of the impact of European colonization, and possibly extended to diseases affecting flora and fauna, which had direct economic implications. Increasingly, the population of people of mixed descent replaced the original Aborigines, living on the periphery of settler society and drawing on a tradition of experience in both Aboriginal and European contexts.

### 4. INSTITUTIONS

The decline in the physical resources of the Aboriginal population, combined with the reluctance of many fathers to provide support for

their offspring, meant that the demand for the institutional placement of children grew steadily over the nineteenth century and into the twentieth. The tendency developed to continue this institutionalized care in adulthood, and was expressed most vividly and tragically in the operation of the Moore River and Carrolup Government Settlements throughout the 1920s and thirties. Here, adults and children were summarily moved into inadequate facilities run by an administration which offered no vision of a future because it offered no hope of their ever resuming independent lives.

### 5. RESISTANCE

In the initial stages of contact with Europeans, Aborigines resisted the takeover of their lands vigorously. However, technological superiority ensured that this was a futile effort. As agricultural settlement was established and Aborigines were subjected to government regulation, and the issue of state sovereignty gained momentum, Aborigines increasingly became subject to government and bureaucratic controls. Many individuals challenged this, writing to government departments, arguing with police, and querying the right of officialdom to interfere in their lives. Given their meagre economic resources, their fight is all the more remarkable for the courage it took to battle with officialdom. This battle was intensified after the introduction of the 1905 Aborigines Act, but to little avail for those involved: the rights of individuals were stripped from them by legislation and vested in a government department in which the accountability of its servants was not a major concern.

### 6. IMPLICATIONS FOR TODAY

These early years of European settlement of the south-west laid the foundation for Aboriginal and European interaction in the twentieth

century. Settler attitudes, born of aggressive land occupation and agricultural establishment, became firmly entrenched and enabled Aborigines to be exploited and depressed by subsequent waves of immigrants to the state, first the convict labour of the 1850s and 1860s, and then the gold seekers of the 1880s and 1890s. This has been followed by repeated waves of planned population intakes throughout the twentieth century.

Over this time, a tradition of interaction and treatment has been built up and passed on from one generation of experience to the next. Today, this affects Aboriginal and European relations and explains, largely, the contemporary attitudes and expectations of both Aborigines and Europeans in their dealings with each other.

*PART II*

*NYUNGAR FAMILY TREES*

## 10. FEATURES OF THE FAMILY TREES

The following sections outline some of the most outstanding features of the Nyungar family trees. They should be seen and understood in the light of the historical experience of the Aborigines of the south-west and their descendants, and the legislation relating to Aborigines over this same period. Both of these points have been given emphasis in the preceding part of this work.

### 1. FOUNDING MEMBERS

The most striking feature of these contemporary Nyungar family trees is that they are founded by unions between Aborigines from the south-western region of Western Australia on the one hand, and newcomers to the area on the other. These newcomers were representatives of European colonization of the region, and as settlement spread they also came to include Aborigines from other parts of the state who came, or were brought, into the south-west for a variety of reasons. In this sense, the trees represent a fusion of cultural traditions, that of the south-western Aborigines with those drawn from many other parts of the world and of diverse racial and cultural origin.

Settlers came to the Swan River Colony from Britain and Europe, and from New Zealand, America, the Pacific Islands and Africa. They brought with them in their households people from these countries and from China, South-East Asia and South Asia. Others came as labourers and servants, in search of gold, with camel teams, and as ships crew. Many of these people stayed, and today they make up the ancestry of those who trace their ties back to the early days of the state. This provides a feature in common with the Nyungar families, who nevertheless also have a distinctiveness based upon cultural links with the traditional Aboriginal past.

Apart from a few instances of seafaring contact along the southern coastline, these early unions took place in the first seventy years of European colonization from 1826 to the turn of the twentieth century.

In many instances they were fleeting affairs. The resulting children were either brought up by one of their parents, usually an Aboriginal mother, or else placed in institutional care in orphanages which were founded to care for them. At other times the relationships endured, with a pattern of family life modelled on the European settler model. Sometimes, relationships between young colonial men and Aboriginal women ended when the man turned to his own group to make a 'respectable' marriage in his middle years, while the Aboriginal woman was left to fall back on the resources of her own kinsmen and friends.

The number of unions between Aborigines and others accelerated from the 1850s onwards when male convict labour was introduced to the colony. By then, the first impact of European settlement had passed in the more densely populated areas where many children of mixed unions were living as part of the new social order. At the same time Aborigines in the region, including the more remote localities, were becoming increasingly more dependent on European goods as a result of the encroachment on their lands by farming communities, and hence were an easy prey to exploitation by the unscrupulous. During this later period many children of mixed descent were placed in institutional care, and grew up with 'ideals of life', as one of these people expressed it, the same as those of the general community.<sup>1</sup>

### 2. ABORIGINAL INPUT

Another feature of the Nyungar family trees is the number of Aborigines from other areas of Western Australia, and later on from other parts of Australia, who have married into these families and remained in the south-western area. In some places, such as New Norcia, once the mission was established and breaks made with the traditional Aboriginal past, children of mixed descent at times married Aborigines from that locality. At other times Aborigines from as far apart as the Kimberleys and Esperance were sent to orphanages in Perth, Albany or

Busselton as children. Other Aborigines were confined on Rottnest Island, or later, in Fremantle prison, and both men and women were brought to the south-west as domestic servants, trackers and farmhands. These people passed on features of their traditional cultural background to friends and family in the south-west. At the same time the development of communications throughout the state, especially towards the end of the nineteenth century, meant that the exchange of information and ideas between various groups of Aborigines was accelerated. Mass institutionalization of Aborigines from all over the state in the Moore River and Carrolup settlements in the 1920s and 1930s, and in other missions and reserves during this period, increased this Aboriginal cultural exchange and input into the south-western region.

This steady incorporation over time of Aborigines from more tradition-oriented areas of the state has been extremely important for Nyungar families. It has provided a means of keeping alive some elements of Aboriginal culture during the period in the south-west when Aboriginal society was undergoing dramatic change and losing much of its traditional knowledge. Possibly the most important contribution that these people from outside the region have made, has been to foster ties with other regions and through this a sense of overall Aboriginal identity.

### 3. MARRIAGE

The frequent occurrence of marriages between Nyungar families is another feature to emerge. This has arisen out of a combination of circumstances. Missions and other institutions encouraged the marriage of people of mixed Aboriginal and European descent, particularly between those brought up in missions or orphanages, because they were thought to be socially and culturally compatible as a result of their Christian upbringing. This was taken to the extreme by sending girls

from Albany to Lake Hindmarsh, Victoria, in the hope that they would find partners among the mission-trained youths there. In addition, the opportunities for these young people to mix socially and form affections for each other was greater than they were with either settler or Aboriginal society. Increasingly, this was the case towards the late nineteenth century as the orphanage function of such institutions as New Norcia Mission became predominant. In country centres, distances also placed limitations on opportunities to meet people from the outside, and predisposed Nyungar families to intermarry.

There has been remarkably little cross-generational marriage between Nyungar families, considering the generally large number of children born in any family and the overlap of ages between generations.

A common occurrence has been the 'exchange' of children of one family as marriage partners with those of another family. This has also been a feature of European families in country districts, where circumstances forced young people to look for marriage partners within their local communities prior to the development of modern rail and road transport. The 1905 Aborigines Act strongly encouraged Nyungar families to turn to each other for marriage partners, particularly Section 43 which made residence or cohabitation between an Aboriginal and a non-Aboriginal illegal. The restrictions of this Act relating to marriage were not fully lifted until the Native Welfare Act of 1963 came into effect, although moves in this direction began with the Moseley Royal Commission into Aboriginal Affairs in 1935.

The net effect of this inter-family marrying has been to perpetuate a distinct group of Nyungar families in the south-west, associating frequently with each other and sharing in common the historical experience of the last 150 years. Moreover, certain Nyungar families have become associated with particular localities, for example the families of the Albany district, the Mount Barker area, or York and Quairading.

#### 4. NAMES

In traditional Aboriginal society, surnames were not utilized although individuals had tribal and group affiliation names, in addition to personal names. Personal names did not carry over from one generation to another in any linear sense, and may have changed several times during a person's lifetime. There was a prohibition on the use of names of deceased members of the group, and when a death occurred people bearing the same or similar personal name as the deceased were given new names.

From the earliest time of European settlement Aboriginal names have been Anglicized, or in the case of New Norcia Mission, Latinized. One example of this is provided by Moore who described how an Aboriginal, Gear, left his son Tunagwirt to work on Moore's property. Tunagwirt was called 'Tommy' for short. It is not clear from the account whether Tunagwirt was a personal name or a group affiliation name. Five years later in 1840 Moore hired Tunagwirt for ten shillings a month, and entered him in the paybook as Thomas Gear. In this way, 'Tommy' was changed to Thomas and Gear, the name of the youth's father, was taken as a surname.<sup>2</sup> When Salvado first brought an orphaned Aboriginal girl to Perth to be cared for by the Sisters of Mercy, he retained her Aboriginal name, Kookina, as a surname and gave her the personal names of Mary Christian.<sup>3</sup> Many other documented instances of this process are in the records.

It is not known how many contemporary Nyungar family names are derived from Aboriginal names. The monks of New Norcia made a conscious effort to retain some semblance of the Aboriginal name, and the same may have happened in other places. However, inconsistencies in spelling over the years make it difficult to determine the origins of family names, as well as to sort out whether different spellings are really versions of the one name. For example, Boota and Buda may be two totally different names, or the same name spelt in alternative ways. Living memory does not always recall which is the case. The generally

low level of literacy among Nyungars and within the general community over the period has added to the confusion. At times this reflects differences in accent, for example, one girl brought up at New Norcia Mission and called Rosie, was nicknamed 'Rossi'. The names Indich and Narrier were recorded at New Norcia as 'Yndich' and 'Narrea', although it is possible to establish that they are the same names by tracing their descendants. Moreover, Narrier was originally recorded as Tagliol, but was later changed to Narrier. To add confusion, the spellings Wallo and Wally seem to be the same name, but both spellings occur on the same New Norcia lists. Moreover, Wally was originally recorded as Wale, the same as that of an English colonist. Taylor was originally recorded as Quimera, and was changed later.

This example highlights the difficulties of drawing inferences about contemporary Nyungar names, even when records have been kept. These difficulties are magnified where record keeping has been of a poor standard, or where word of mouth alone is relied on. For example, in 1866 Nanup appears as a man's name on a list from the Vasse.<sup>4</sup> While the contemporary family name Nannup could possibly have been derived from this person's name, in the same way that Gear became a surname, the evidence supporting this connection is very slight. Also Nannup is a place in the south-west, and the surname might have arisen out of association with that locality.

While the early records contain listings of Aboriginal names, over time the later records show an almost total abandonment of this practice, and a shift from using Aboriginal names or words as surnames, to using them purely as personal names. The use of Nyungar names as nicknames is general within certain Nyungar families of today, although it is not universal.

Aborigines are often arbitrarily given European names, for example at Smithies's school in the 1840s on some occasions pupils who had been called by their Aboriginal names were given unrelated European names on baptism, to mark their change in identity and status.<sup>5</sup>



Some Aboriginal names, relatively easy for English speakers to pronounce, or similar in sound to European names, may have been retained although today they are unrecognizable. At times Aborigines were named after the area from which they originated, such as Gascoyne after the Gascoyne region, and Pindan (Pindown) after the Pindan country of the north-west Kimberleys. Some of the New Norcia names of the late 1890s show a clear relationship with contemporary Nyungar names and may have been local Aboriginal names in the first instance. These include Yapa (Yappo), Yndich (Indich) and Willaway (Williway, Willwill), Jater, Norbut and Jackamarra. Other names clearly indicate the European affiliation such as Warren, Farrell, Gillespie and Wally (Wale).

A common story, recounted by Nyungars and others, is how Aborigines in particular districts came to adopt the name of the farmer for whom they worked, or on whose property they lived. How often this was actually the case is not clear, although in a number of instances where names are shared between Nyungar and European families there is also a family connection. One explanation for the reluctance to recognize these family ties lies in the social and legal disadvantages of association with Aborigines, brought about by the 1905 Act. This had the effect of splitting families and causing people to deny their kin to avoid incrimination under the Act, and affected the generations of people who grew up while the Act and its subsequent amendments were in force.

In addition to the British system of surnames, Nyungar families have adopted the tradition of naming children after their parents or other relatives. Hence sons and daughters may be called by the same personal names as their fathers and mothers, aunts and uncles, cousins and other relatives. Names are also typically shortened or abbreviated, for example Elizabeth becomes 'Lizzie' and Edward changes to 'Ted'.

Aboriginal women have been forced to say they were married in order to prevent their children being taken from them on the grounds

that they, as single women, were either unfit or unable to care for them. On other occasions, children have been given their mother's name, and subsequent children of a different union have taken their father's name. Those children born of long standing de facto relationships have been registered in their mother's name at times, but children born after the couple married formally have been registered in their mother's married name. At times, children who have been informally 'adopted' by another family have assumed that family's name. Instances have also occurred where non-Aboriginal relatives have persuaded their Aboriginal relatives to change their name or adopt another one, in order to disguise the association between the branches of the family especially after the 1905 Aborigines Act came into effect.

##### 5. FAMILY TIES

Another feature of the Nyungar family trees is the enduring nature of family ties once unions have been created, regardless of whether these unions have persisted over time or not. This is combined with the frequent occurrence of re-marriage for many individuals following marital separation or death of a partner. These marriages and remarriages may have been celebrated in a church or registry office, or they may have been of a de facto nature, but the social implications remain the same for the families united by them.

Confinement in institutions did much to break up nuclear family life, particularly where children were removed from the care of their parents. At the same time, this often arbitrary dispersal of nuclear family members possibly strengthened extended family ties by forcing members onto the resources of their relatives. The requirement to travel away from home in search of employment, especially seasonal work such as shearing, also placed strains on many marriages. Nyungar families do not stand out as different from the general

population with regard to re-marriage, but considering the historical period of the trees, the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Nyungars did exhibit greater acceptance of this pattern and children were always accepted by the families concerned, without stigmatization based on bastardy or adoptiveness. This is partly explainable in that the morality of nineteenth century colonial society was never fully accepted by the Aboriginal population. Also, the harsh economic, social and legal restrictions and realities made it impossible for many people to put into practice any European ideal of family life that they may have been taught in orphanages or Sunday School.

In the early twentieth century the requirement under Section 42 of the Aborigines Act 1905 that people of mixed descent obtain the permission of the chief protector of Aborigines in order to marry meant that many couples simply avoided the red tape involved in seeking permission. Also church and civil marriage held less meaning for those who still adhered to traditional Aboriginal marriage practices, albeit in modified form, or who were granted no place in the general society and hence could see little reason to seek involvement in this area.

#### 6. GEOGRAPHICAL SPREAD

Today, Nyungar families have spread throughout the south-west, and into other regions of the state and overseas. This has resulted largely as a product of the twentieth century, but the beginnings of this trend are to be found in the movement of Aborigines accompanying the earliest European exploration and settlement. This was followed by the opening up of the state as a result of grazing and farming activities and goldmining, and the development of the railways, which also employed

many Aborigines, and which made travel between regions possible and at times essential when in search of employment.

#### 7. TEMPORAL

Despite the extent backwards in time that it has been possible to trace the Nyungar family trees, generally the memory of living descendants does not reach beyond the grandparental generation. The depth of the trees has been established through information given by certain exceptional individuals including a number of old people; by meticulously piecing together fragments of information provided by different people; and where possible by recourse to written records. This is largely accountable by the mass institutionalization of Aborigines in the first half of the twentieth century, with the associated dispersal of families and consequent loss of contact, together with the high death rate for this period. It is confounded by inconsistencies in spelling and pronouncing names; the arbitrary allocation of names on missions and settlements; multiple marriage with associated name changes, poor record keeping; the destruction or loss of some records, and the generally low level of importance placed on Aboriginal history up to recent times. However, the knowledge of lateral relatives, that is, cousins and aunts and uncles, nephews and nieces, is extensive.

It cannot be overstressed that the following trees are only a beginning, from which individuals may work in extending their own knowledge of their family links with the past, wherever that may take them. Also, that it has not been possible to consult and research all the records which may contain clues to identity such as dates of births and deaths. This latter task is for a future research undertaking.

## 11. NYUNGAR FAMILY TREES

### EXPLANATION

The information contained in these trees, and the photographs and personal anecdotes, have been given by people belonging to these families. In some instances this has been supplemented by reference to other records, for example, in order to establish dates. However, the vast bulk of the information is drawn from living memory and from accounts handed down orally from generation to generation within Nyungar families. Where written records have been used they have not always been found to be accurate; one set of records may conflict with another, and they may not necessarily agree with what people know and remember.

While all care has been taken to avoid inaccuracies, the knowledge held by any one person may conflict with what is shown here. This is inevitable because information passed by word-of-mouth over time is always subject to the failings of human memory, and to conscious or unconscious re-interpretation to suit the person giving it. The only way to overcome this is to draw on the knowledge of several people, and in this way arrive at a consensus on what actually was the case.

Each of the family trees presented here has been seen by several family members, and can be said to represent a reasonable consensus between these people.

Nevertheless, not all of the family trees are complete, and not all Nyungar families are represented by the trees. It is hoped that further work may be carried out in this area by family members themselves, so that future generations of Nyungar descendants may have a more complete record of their ancestry.

The family trees cut off at around 1914, that is, it has been the intention to include the generation of people born in the early twentieth century, but not the next generation after that. It is left to the present generation to establish their ties with the trees, by tracing back through their own parents and grandparents.

### HOW TO READ THE FAMILY TREES

△ male

○ female

┌───┐ married

↑     ↓  
└───┘ couple married

b. = date of birth, e.g. b. 1975 = born 1875

d. = date of death, e.g. d. 1965 = died 1965

m. = date of marriage, e.g. m. 1900 = married 1900

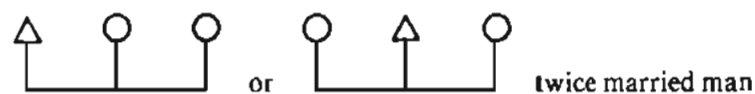
app. or approx. = approximately, e.g. b. 1890 app. = born 1890 approximately; d. 1895 approx. = died 1895 approximately

arr. = arrived, e.g. arr. 1875 = arrived in Western Australia 1875

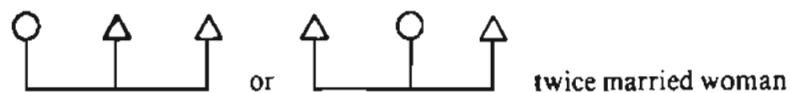
B. = Baptized, e.g. B. 1892 = Baptized 1892

No distinction has been made between tribal, legal, civil, church or de facto marriage, as the family ties created by these various types of marriage are the focus of concern rather than the form of marriage.

Marriages of any one person are not represented in order of occurrence, i.e. no indication is given of whether a marriage is a first, second or third marriage for the individuals involved.

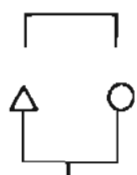


twice married man

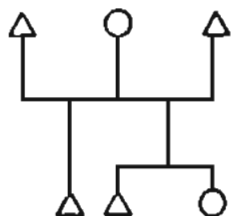


twice married woman

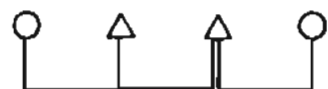
descent. Births are not presented in order of occurrence.



couple with two children, a boy and a girl



woman with a son by one marriage, and a son and a daughter by another marriage



woman who married twice. One of her husbands has also married a second time



a presumed relationship



two women, presumed to be sisters, although this is not absolutely certain

### Nationality

Aboriginal founding members of family trees are described as Aboriginal. Where it is known, the area of origin of these individuals is given, e.g. Esperance, Quairading. Tribal locality or group names have not been given because it has not been possible to identify people with any accuracy as belonging to particular named groups prior to, and in the early days of, European settlement of the region, with few individual exceptions. Where nationality of a non-Aboriginal family member is known it is given, e.g. American, Chinese, Irish, Australian (when born in Australia). Otherwise, these people are referred to by their broad area of origin, e.g. European, Pacific Islander.

### Alternative Names

Where individuals have Aboriginal names, these are indicated by inverted commas. Nicknames or abbreviations of names are also indicated in this way. Where an individual is known by more than one name, this is indicated by 'or', e.g. Pindown or Humes.

### Photographs and Stories

These have been included for those individuals for whom they are available. The anecdotes are intended to throw some light on the lives of Nyungars in general, and to indicate the contribution that various people have made. It is hoped that the contributions made by other people, for whom stories do not appear, will be collected by their families for the future.

### Cut-off Point

While 1914 is the cut-off point for these family trees, where it is known that individuals born within this period have married people born later, their partners have been included. Also generally where it is known that one or more children of a couple have been born up to 1914, all the

children have been included as it is generally not known which other children were born before, or after, that date.

The year 1914 has been chosen as the cut-off point to coincide with the *Dictionary of Western Australians*, edited by Rica Erickson, whose volumes cover the period 1829-1914.

#### HOW TO LOOK UP A FAMILY TREE

How to look up a relative or friend, and trace his or her family tree.

1.

Check the list of names appearing on the family trees. If the name you are looking for is not there, look up the name of a relative such as mother or one of the grandparents if known.

2.

The trees are numbered. Turn to the number indicated and then locate the person and trace the family tree following the lines of marriage and descent. Look up the number in bold print first, and then try any other numbers listed.

3.

Individuals are cross-referenced where they appear on more than one tree. For example, an individual may appear as the child of a family on one tree, and then be represented on another tree with his or her spouse

and their children. You will need to look up both trees in this case, to get a complete picture.

4.

Some people appear on photographs but are not on any trees. Where people in photographs are also on family trees, the number of the tree is listed after their name.

5.

The numbering of the trees is purely to identify them, and does not represent any apparent system.

6.

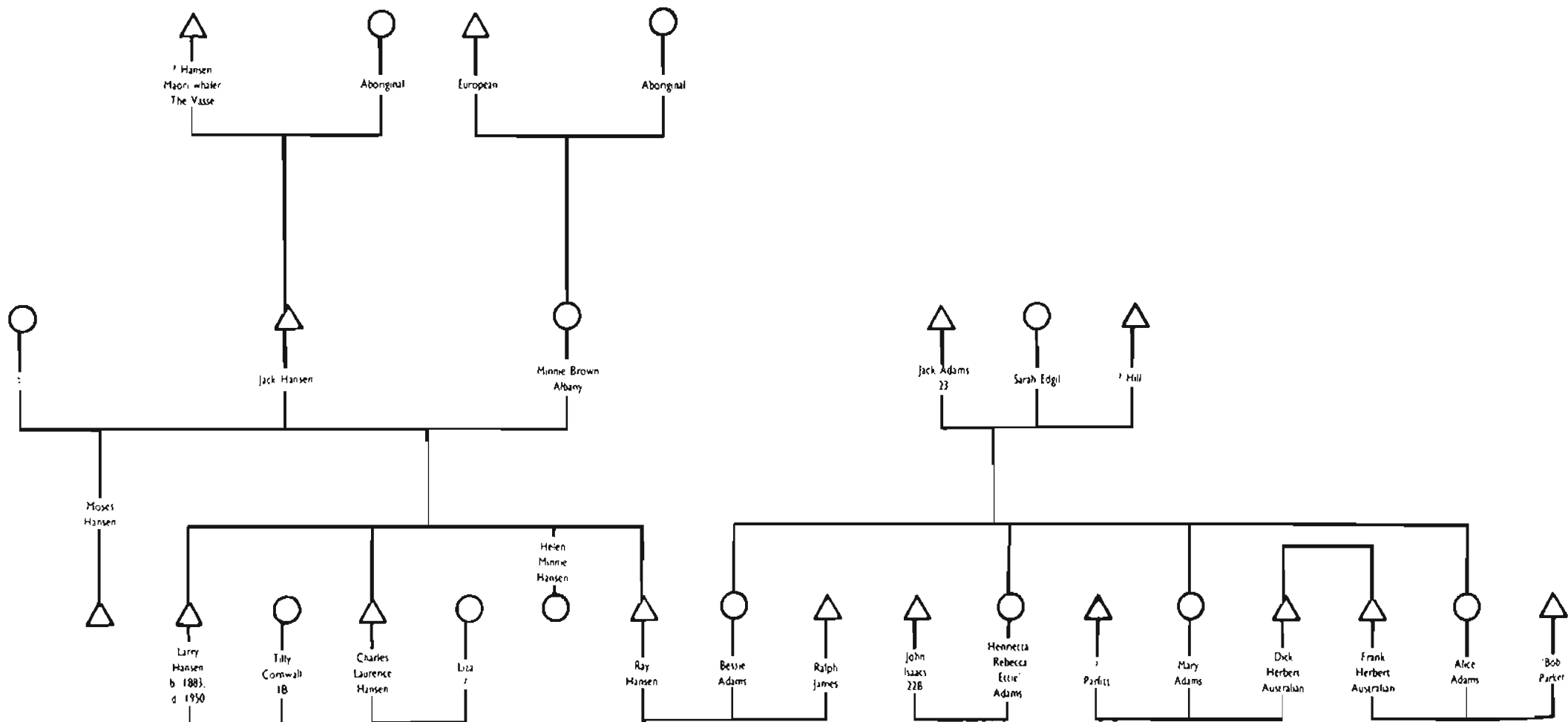
Remember, the cut-off point for the trees is 1914. To look up the family tree of someone born within the last fifty years or so, you will need to know the names of their parents, and possibly their grandparents.

7.

Remember, too, the custom of naming children after other relatives. To avoid becoming confused you must keep in mind that the names appearing on the trees refer to the older people, and not the young people of today. Even then it is possible that two generations may be merged together accidentally because of the same names being used over time.



# TREE 1A





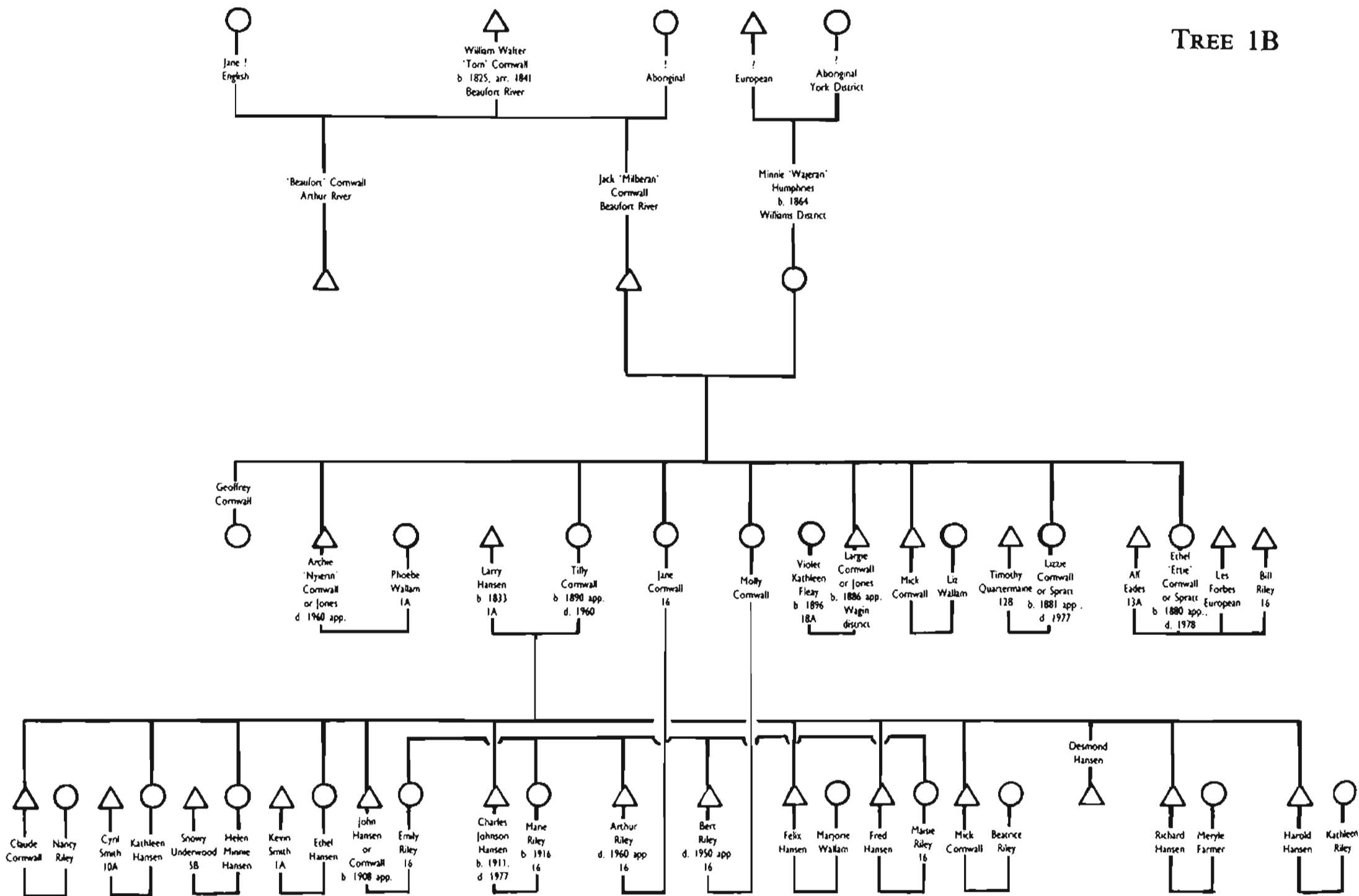
Bessie Hansen or James nee Adams (1A), 1940s.



Moses Hansen (1A), portrait by Brenda Holland.



# TREE 1B



## FROM CORNWALL TO JONES

In 1841 William Walter Cornwall, a sixteen-year-old lad, journeyed to Western Australia from England. He worked hard, and as soon as he was able to look up property in the Beaufort River district. Here he came to know many of the local Aborigines whose skills were useful on his farm, and he had a son, Jack 'Milberan' Cornwall, by one of the Aboriginal women. By the time he was thirty-five years old, William Walter Cornwall had established himself as a successful farmer. He then married an English woman, and had nine children including a son 'Beaufort' Cornwall.

Jack 'Milberan' Cornwall grew up in the same district as his half-brothers and sisters. He married Minnie 'Wajeran' Humphries and had nine children, all bearing the surname Cornwall.

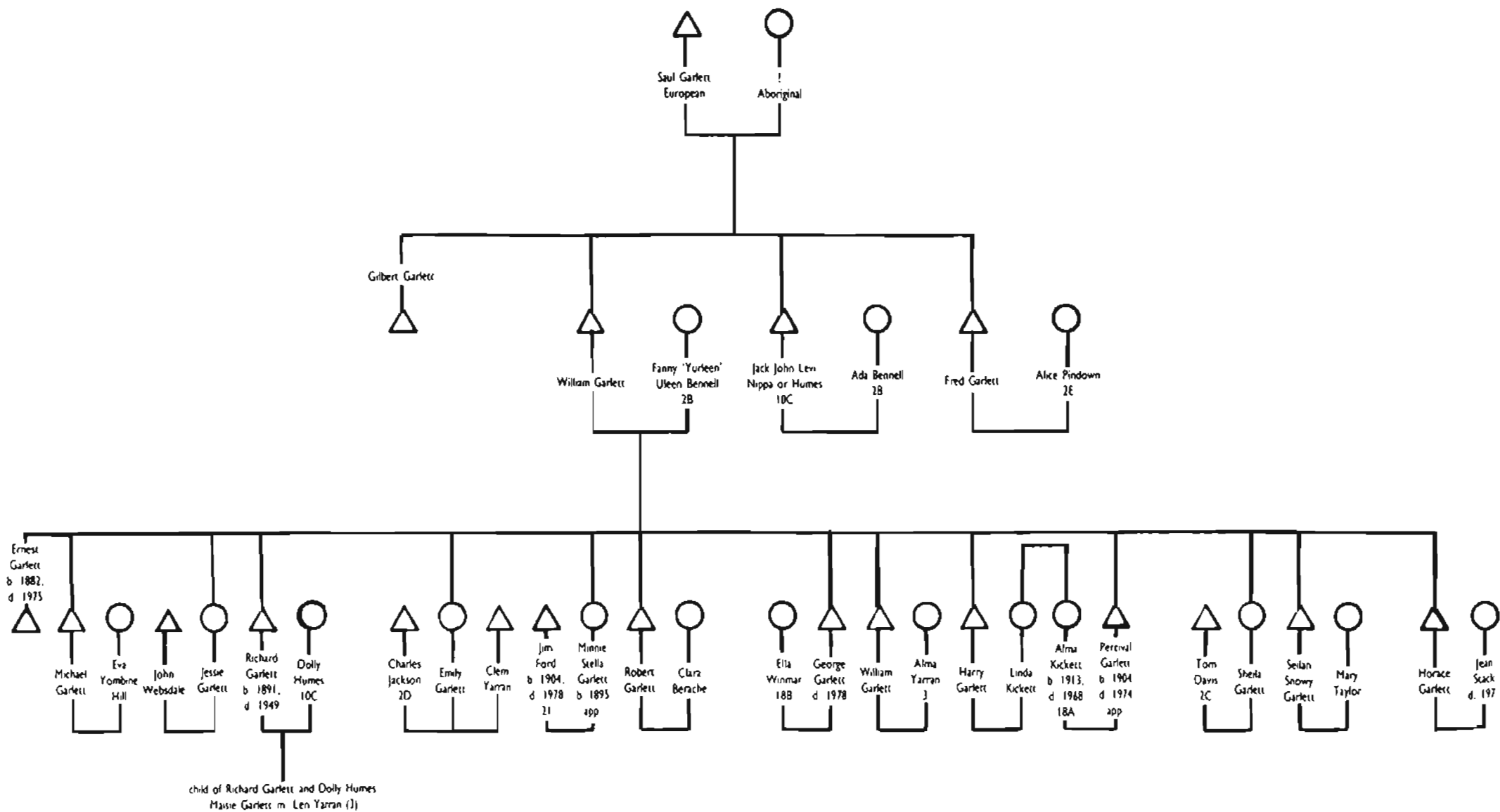
A story is told of how the Cornwall children's uncle 'Beaufort' was not keen about recognizing the other branch of the Cornwall family, and paid two of his nephews £5 each to change their name to Jones. This was around 1915, after the introduction of the 1905 Aborigines Act made it a legal stigma to be classified as Aboriginal. This is how Largie and Archie Cornwall became known as Largie and Archie Jones.

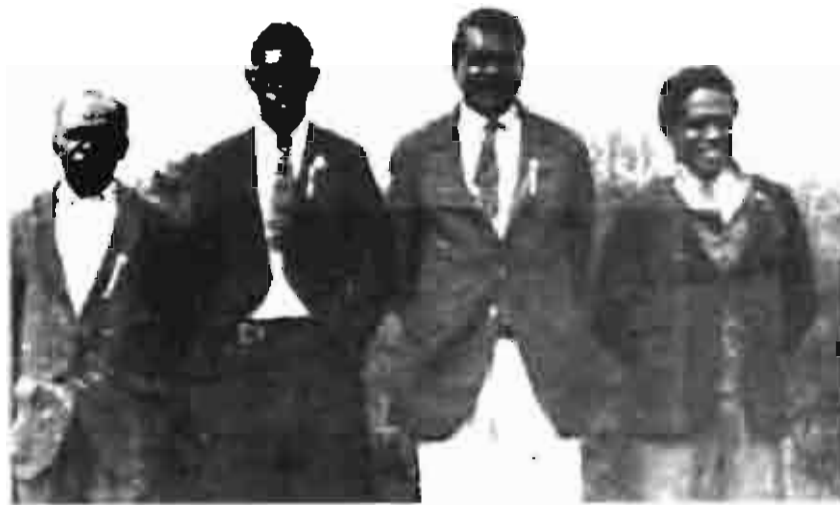
However, the Cornwall name continued to be passed on by Jack 'Milberan' Cornwall's other sons, and also by some of the girls whose children were registered as Cornwalls. Two of his daughters were known as Cornwall or Spratt, although the reason for this is unclear.



*On left: Lizzie Quartermaine nee Cornwall or Spratt (18).  
Fourth from left: Eva Rodney (12). 1930s.*

# TREE 2A





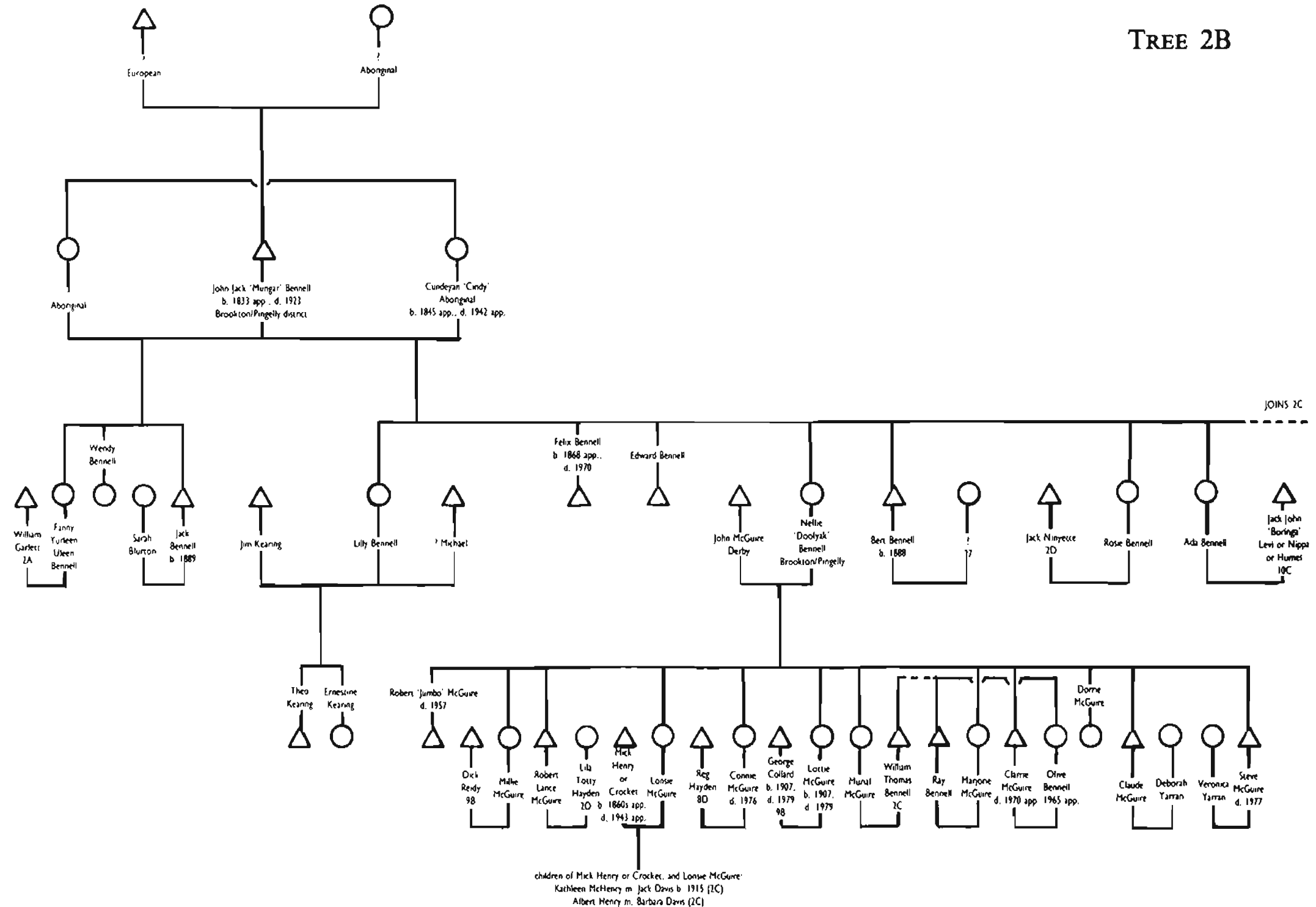
*(above) Back row, left to right: Unidentified, Miss Belshaw, William Garlett (2A).*

*Front row, left to right: Beatrice Yarran nee Winmar (18B), Minnie Winmar nee Phillips (3), Fanny 'Yurleen' Uleen Garlett nee Bennell wife of William Garlett (2B), Kenny Garlett, Mary Kickett nee Fleay (18A).  
Badjaling, 1930s.*

*(top left) Bob Mead, George Garlett (2A), Lionel Yarran (3), and Jack McKay, at Badjaling Mission, 1930s.*

*(left) Murray Garlett, William 'Bill' Garlett (2A), Max Websdale, Betty Websdale nee Narrier and her husband Syd Websdale, Jessie Websdale nee Garlett (2A), sister of William 'Bill' Garlett, 1950s.*

# TREE 2B





Janet Bolton and Murial Bennell nee McGuire (2B) with their horse Ginger Bob and a catch of rabbits, Brookton, 1930s, taken by Tom Bennell.

Rabbits were an important addition to many farm incomes during the late 1930s. Murial Bennell would load the family's 4'6" by 2'6" (1.37m x .78m) spring cart and, harnessing Ginger Bob, would travel the fourteen kilometres along the Perth road to Brookton to sell the rabbits for one shilling a pair.

#### MICK HENRY

In Wyndham, the port founded in 1886 for the Northern Kimberleys, a young Aboriginal was charged with spearing a bullock and sentenced to Fremantle prison, 3000 kilometres away. He was escorted south by a policeman by the name of Crocket, and so he too became known by that name and his traditional name fell into disuse. However, on reaching his destination the police employed him as a 'black tracker', so that he was never actually placed in confinement.

Aboriginal trackers, or 'black trackers' as they were commonly called, assisted the police to capture wanted men and lost livestock, by using their traditional tracking and hunting skills. They were usually employed to follow the trail of other Aborigines who were being sought by the police and whose knowledge of bushcraft made their capture extremely difficult. In this way, skill was pitted against skill as the pursued tried to cover their trail, while the trackers searched for every minute sign which would indicate the direction the wanted men had taken.

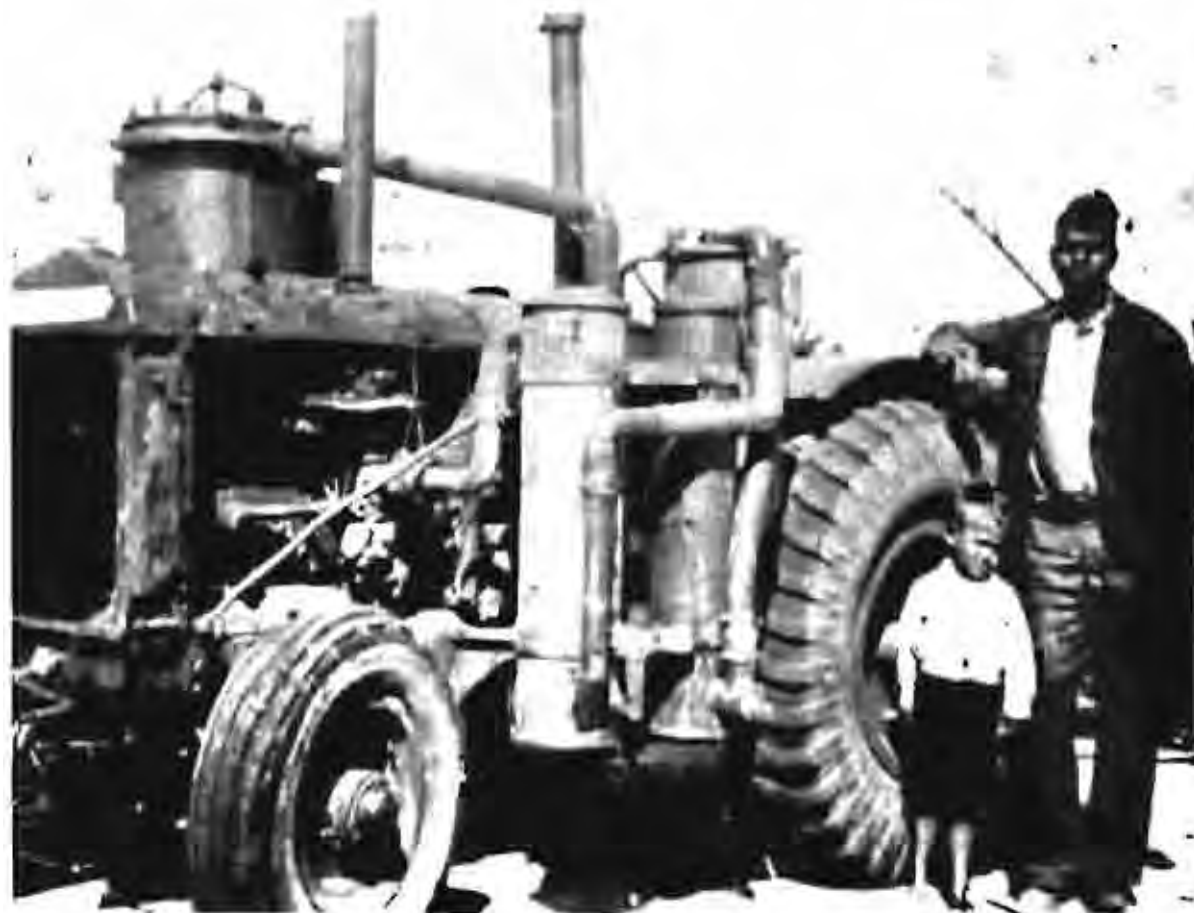
In those days it was customary to assign Aboriginal trackers to individual policemen, with whom they worked regularly. Crocket was assigned to Constable Michael Henry at Yoondiden Police Station near Tammin, and from then on he became known as Mick Henry.

Mick Henry married Lonsie McGuire, whose own father had come from Derby, the port for the South Kimberleys. It is possible that he came to the south-west under similar circumstances to those of his son-in-law, Mick Henry. The Kimberleys region was opened to European settlement in the early and mid-1880s, and there was often violent conflict between the European pastoralists and the local Aborigines, who resented and resisted the intrusion onto their lands.

While all of Mick Henry's children took the name of Henry, two of his sons changed their name. This happened on their wedding day in Quairading when, in all the excitement, their name was recorded as McHenry, possibly 'Mick Henry' misheard as 'McHenry'. Later on when the error was discovered the two 'McHenrys' were advised to change their names legally, and their children all took the name of McHenry.



Robert Lance 'Pop' McGuire (2B), Brookton, 1930s.

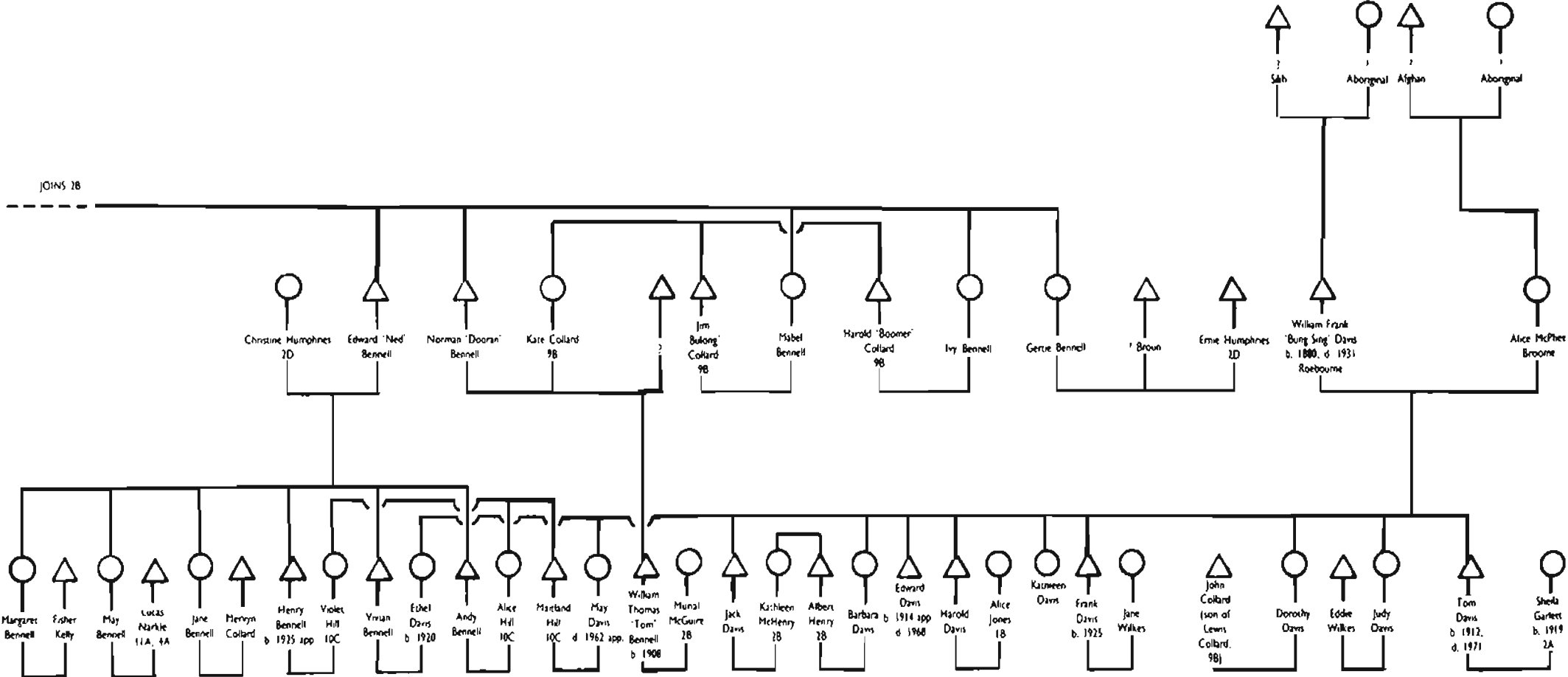


Max McGuire with his father, Robert Lance 'Pop' McGuire (2B), 1942.

Robert Lance 'Pop' McGuire had a good understanding of mechanics and worked with many different types of heavy duty machines, including this gas-producer tractor, in the York-Beverley-Brookton area. He also owned a T-model Ford. He was forced to turn to other employment in the 1940s after he lost his right arm when a train ran over it and severed it, in an accident.



# TREE 2C





(above) Norman 'Dooran' Bennell at Brookton Reserve, c. 1950.

Norman 'Dooran' Bennell (2C) did not smoke, but he placed a cigarette in his mouth for a joke while having his photograph taken.

(right) Jack Davis, 1981.

Jack Davis (2C), with close ties to the traditional Aboriginal past, and living all his life in the south west, has made the question of Aboriginal identity the focus of much of his work. He has striven to combine a sense of the special Aboriginal heritage, with the tradition and experience of living in society at large.



#### THE DAVIS AND MCPHEE LINES

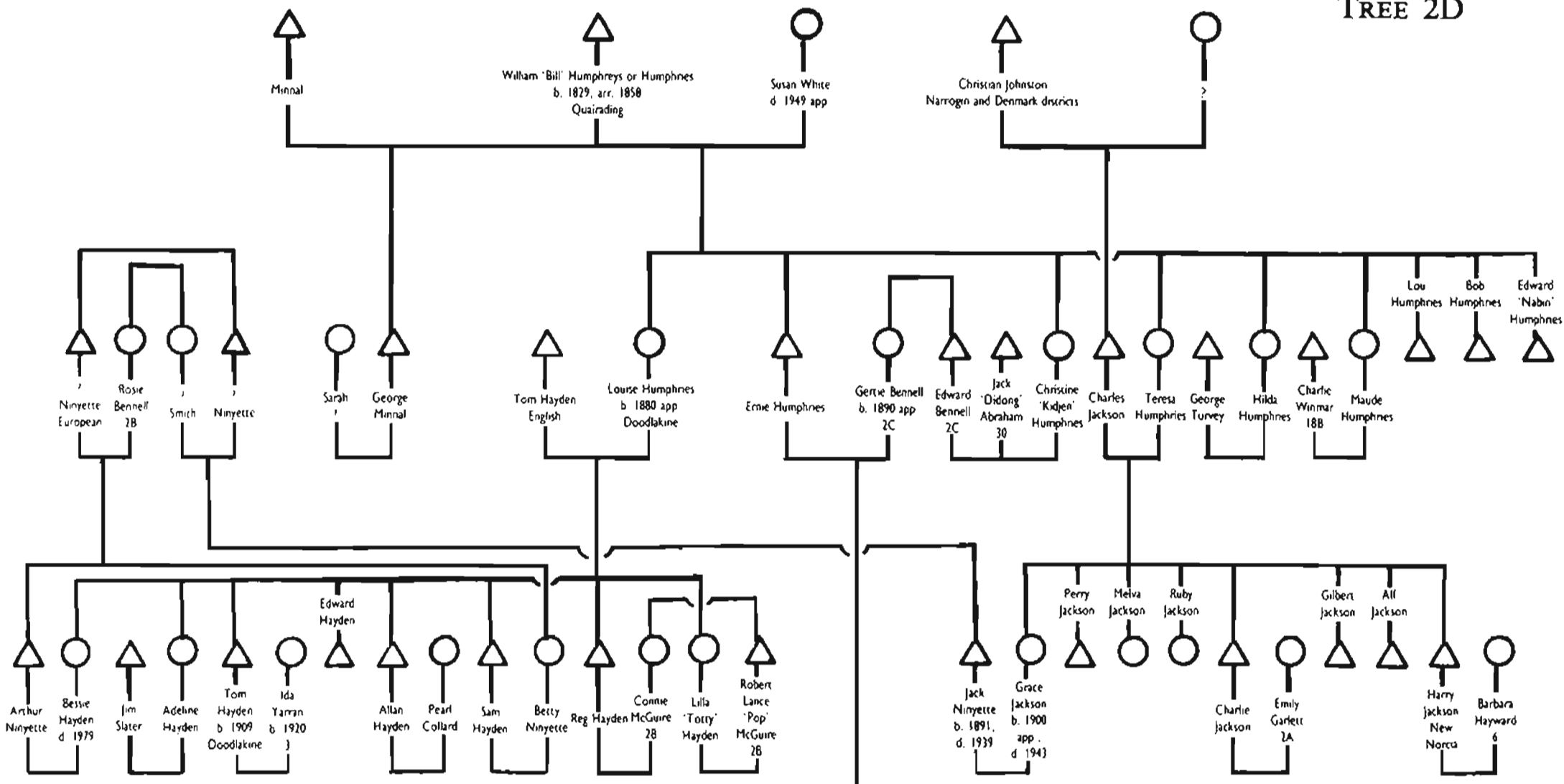
During the 1870s and 1880s European settlement spread throughout the Pilbara region and into the Kimberleys. In the harsh environment of the north-west, camels were used extensively as pack animals, and their Indian teamsters played an important part in the changes taking place in the region. A number of these men, like other newcomers, had children by Aboriginal women.

William Davis, 1880-1931, was the son of a Sikh and an Aboriginal woman. He came to Perth as a young man, and obtained a job at the Fremantle wharves. Later, working in Narrogin in the south-west, he met Alice McPhee and married her. Work took the Davis family to Yarloop, where William Davis was employed as a foreman at the Yarloop Timber Mill. It was here, during the depression of the 1930s, that tragedy overtook the family. William Davis was killed by a bull in 1931 while he was crossing through a paddock. His body was found late the same night, when searchers heard his dog Ruffy barking. They found Ruffy licking his master's face, as though trying to wake him up.

Alice McPhee was one of six daughters of an Afghan living in the Broome area. All of these girls had different tribal Aboriginal mothers. Alice was taken from her mother when she was only four years old, and placed with a European family to be brought up by them and taught to do domestic work. She never attended school, although the children of the family all went to the local school. When she grew up, Alice found employment with the local bank manager and his family, as a domestic. Her employer was later transferred to Pingelly in the south-west, and Alice went too. The next transfer was to Narrogin, and it was here that she met and fell in love with William Davis.

William Davis and Alice McPhee had a large family of eleven children. One of their sons, Jack Davis, has achieved international fame as an author, poet and playwright. He has taken an active stand for Aboriginal rights, and campaigned vigorously for this cause over the years.<sup>1</sup>

# TREE 2D



children of Ernie Humphnes and Gertie Bennell:  
 Cliff Humphnes b. 1910 m. Letisha Abraham (30)  
 Hazel Humphnes m. Harry Winmar (188)  
 Archie Humphnes m. Emily Jetta  
 Albert Humphnes m. June Michael  
 Kevin Humphnes m. Alma Taylor  
 Edith Humphnes m. 1. Tony Taylor; 2. Vincent Jetta  
 Myra Humphnes m. Clem Jetta  
 William 'Bill' Humphnes m. Sheila Taylor  
 Oswald Humphnes m. Frances MacIntosh



Family gatherings were an important and much enjoyed feature of country life. This family photograph was taken at Durling Mission near Kellerberrin, c. 1910.

*Back row, left to right:* Charles Jackson (2D), Tom Hayden (2D), George Turvey (18B), Adeline Slater nee Hayden (2D), Harry Jackson (6), Don Jackson, Edward Hayden (2D), Ernie Humphries (2D), Percy Winmar (18B), unidentified, Charlie Jackson (2D) holding his son Perry next to his wife Emily Jackson nee Garlett (2A), Edwin 'Nabin' Humphries (2D).

*Middle row:* Bill Humphries (2D), Susan Humphries nee White (2D), baby Ron Turvey, Hilga Turvey nee Humphries (2D), Teresa Jackson nee Humphries (2D), Agnes 'Aggie' Winmar (18B), Gertie Humphries nee Bennell (2D), Louise Hayden nee Humphries (2D), Cliff Humphries son of Ernie Humphries (2D).

*Front row:* Allan Hayden (2D), Hazel Humphries, Gladys Winmar (18B), Ruby Jackson (2D), other three children unidentified.



Teresa Jackson nee Humphries (2D),  
c. 1920.



Tom Hayden (2D), married Louise  
Humphries, n.d.



Connie Hayden nee McGuire (2B) with Herbert William Harris or  
Dyson (22C) and her mother-in-law Louise Hayden nee Humphries  
(2D), 1940s.

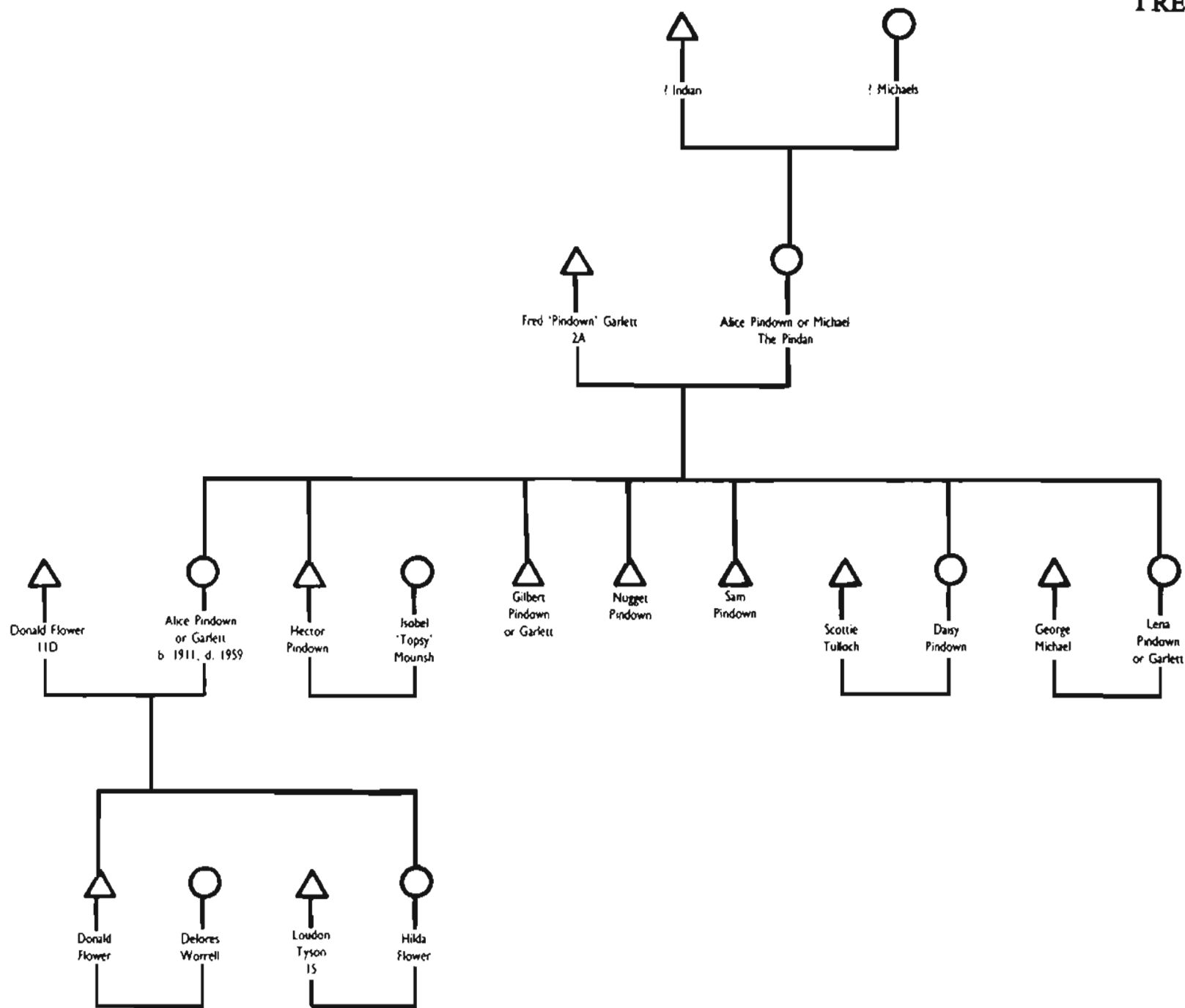


Edward Hayden (20) with his mother Louise Hayden nee Humphries (20), and two of their farm horses, c. 1915.



Four generations.  
Left to right: Peter Humphries, his father Reverend Densell Humphries, grandfather Cliff Humphries (20), and great-grandmother Gertie Humphries nee Bennell (20).

# TREE 2E





Isobel 'Topsy' Pindown or Garlett nee Mourlah (2E) with her daughter Jacqueline 'Pangy' Garlett and their pet dog, n.d.

#### THE PINDAN

Pindan is a type of open savannah which occurs in the coastal country between the De Grey and Fitzroy Rivers of the Kimberleys region. Alice and Fred Garlett came originally from the Pindan country, and so were called after it. Over the years the spelling of their 'name' changed from Pindan to Pindown.



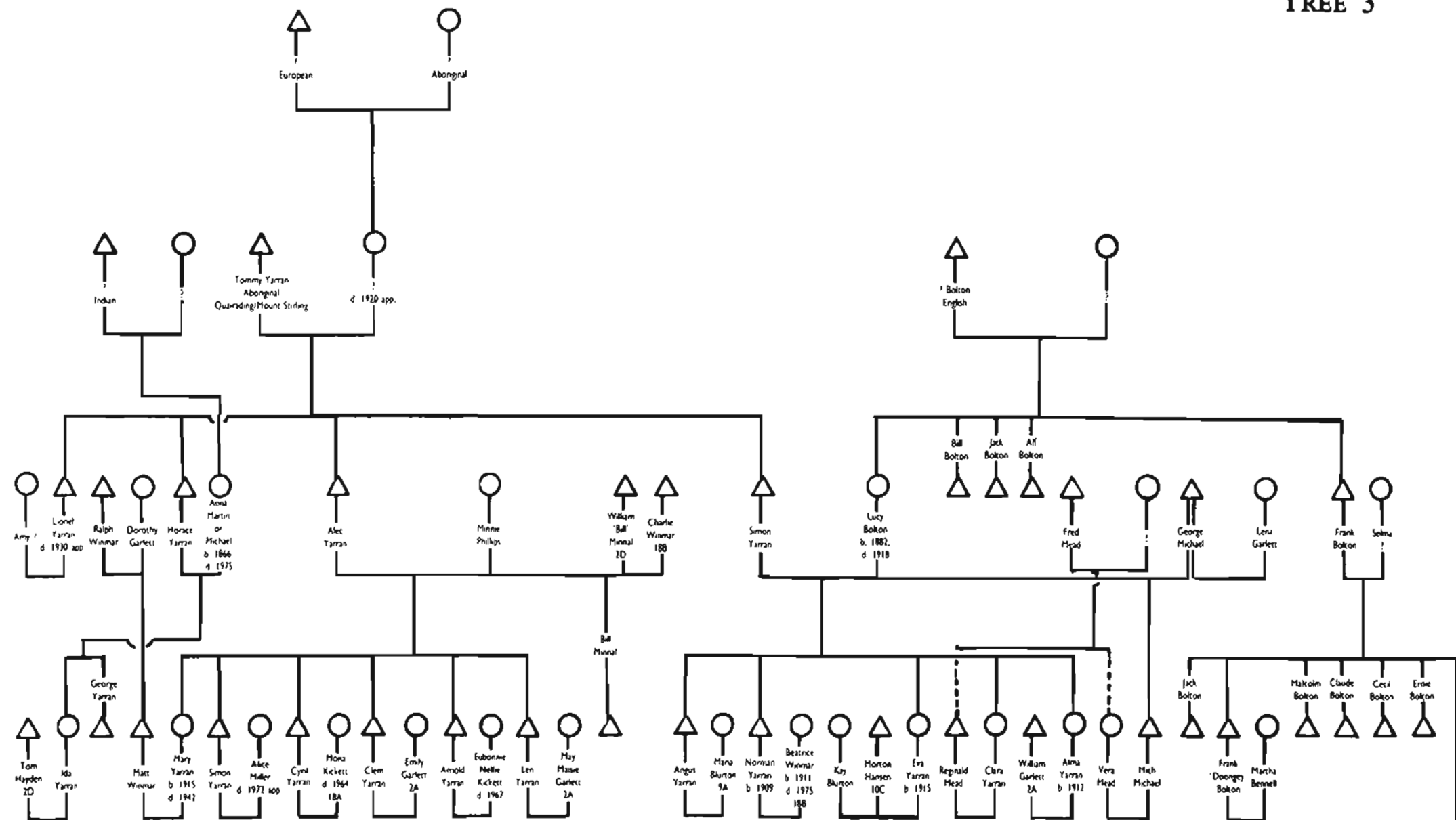
Hector Pindown or Garlett (2E), n.d.



Nugget Pindown (2E), with the farm horse and cart, 1950s.



# TREE 3



## SIMON AND LIONEL YARRAN

When Simon Yarran died at Quairading his brother, Lionel Yarran, took responsibility for the family. Work became available on Scott's property at Yilgorngen, and the Yarran family moved there and were employed as domestics and shepherds. In 1930 at the onset of the great depression, they moved to Badjaling Mission, newly established by the United Aborigines Mission, and brothers Horace, Alec and Lionel worked as shearers at Glenrowal, near Gwambygin. Lionel Yarran, a big, strong man, was leader of the shearing team.

Lionel Yarran developed cancer, and when the pain became so great he could no longer bear it or the anguish of his family, he shot himself.

The Yarran name appears in the 1842 census of Aborigines in the York district. It is one of the few Aboriginal names which have survived to the present day.



(right) Lionel Yarran (3) with two women missionaries (unidentified), Badjaling Mission, c. 1930.

#### FRED MEAD

Fred Mead was one of the many Aborigines who worked on projects of vital importance to the state. In 1901 he obtained employment on the Paddy Hannan Pipe trench. This was a major engineering enterprise to pump water 600 kilometres from Perth to Kalgoorlie and the Eastern Goldfields. Because this job meant living in makeshift accommodation for an extended period, the Mead children were placed in the Swan Native and Half Caste Mission where they would be looked after and be educated. On hearing nothing about the children for some time, Mrs Mead began to fret, and so Mead took matters into his own hands by writing to Prinsep to enquire after them and to request that they write to their parents.

The search for work was always a difficult one, particularly after the gold rushes when jobs were scarce and many people were unemployed. Mead was one of the many Aborigines prepared to travel to any part of the state where they might be able to find employment. In 1906 he decided to try his luck on the goldfields as he had heard work was available there. He took his wife and children to Kellerberrin, and then journeyed on to Kalgoorlie by himself. However, this proved to be a disappointment for him, as by this time there was a high rate of unemployment on the goldfields and Mead was unable to find a job. He decided to return to Cannington and settle there permanently, on land which had been declared a Native Reserve in 1901. Mead wrote to Prinsep for assistance in moving his family and their two dogs back from Kellerberrin to Perth, as the stretch of unemployment, plus the cost of the journey, had taken up all of his resources.<sup>2</sup>



Mary Mead, one of the granddaughters of Fred Mead (3), Badjalling Mission, c. 1940.



Arnold Yarran (3), with his wife and some of the children of his brothers Simon (3) and Clem (3).

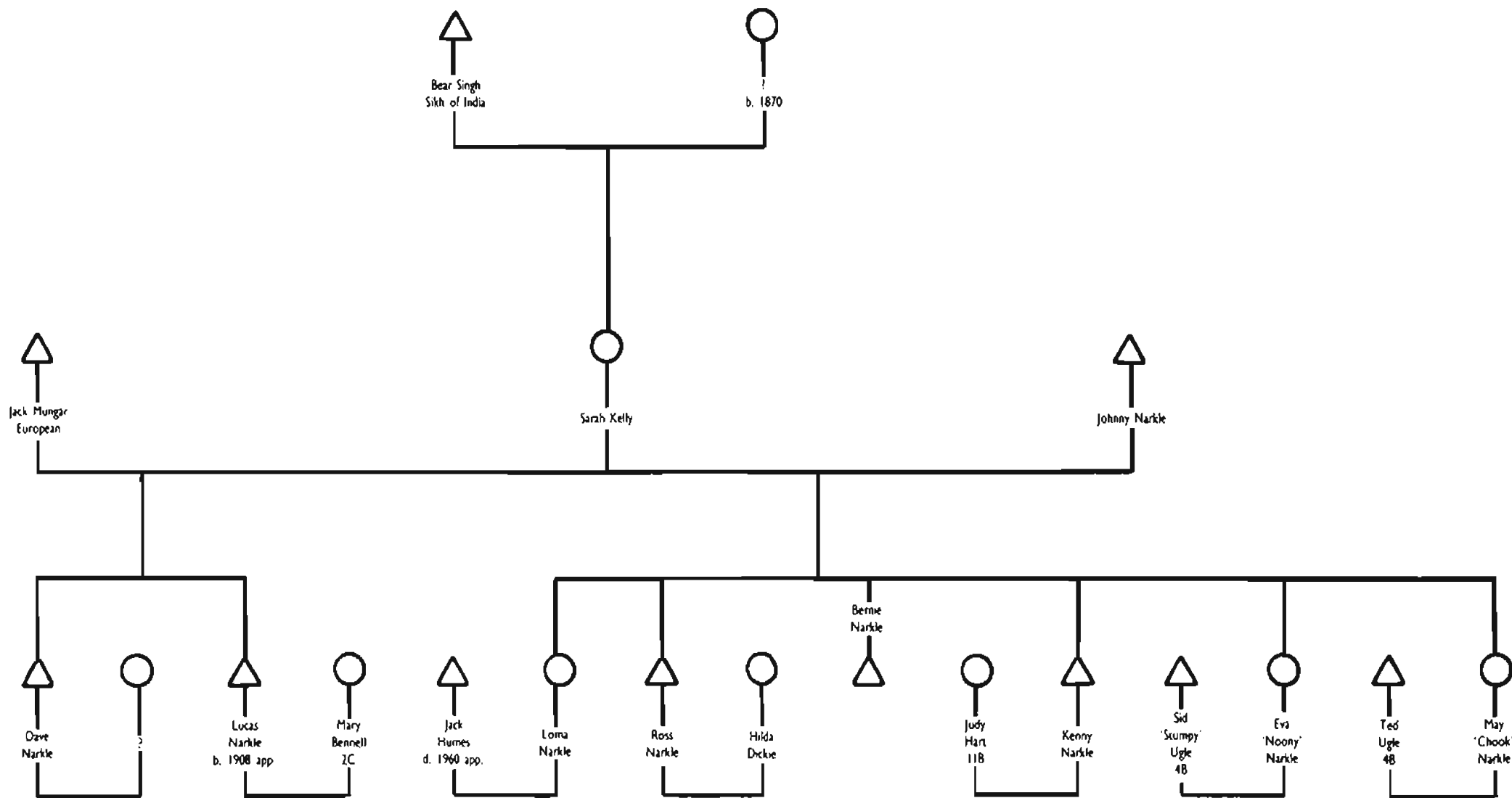
*Left to right:* Arnold Yarran (3), Fred Yarran, Ellen Yarran, Gloria Jackson (a friend), baby Margaret Yarran, Eubonnie Nellie Yarran nee Kickett wife of Arnold Yarran (3), Jerry Yarran. Yoting, near Badjalling, 1930s.



*Back row, left to right:* Ruth Hansen (18B) and sister Lucy Hansen (18B) (with washing), their mother Eva Hansen nee Yarran (holding baby) (3), husband Morton Hansen (10C), missionary Miss Belshaw.

*Front row, extreme left:* Charlie Hansen (son of Eva Hansen nee Yarran and Morton Hansen) with his dog. Other children unidentified. Badjalling Mission, 1930s.

# TREE 4A

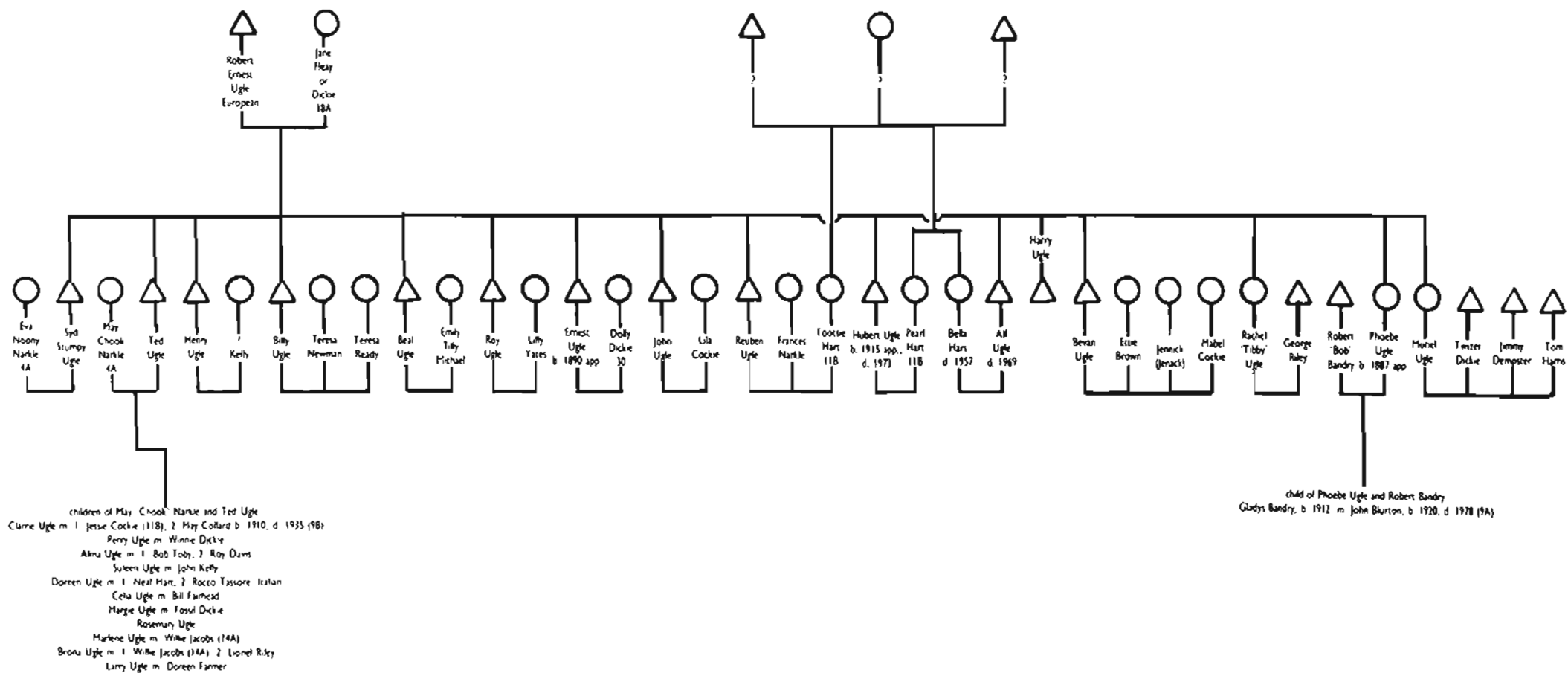




*Back row:* Tim Quartermalne (12), Ted Ugle (4B), Bailis Narkle (son of Lucas Narkle, 4A), Marge Narkle nee Hayden, Cella Fairhead nee Ugle.

*Front row:* Clarie Ugle (4B) (son of Ted Ugle), toddler unidentified, 'Porky' Kelly, May 'Chook' Ugle nee Narkle (4A) wife of Ted Ugle, Mark Ugle (child in front of May 'Chook' Ugle nee Narkle), Edward Ugle, Billy Fairhead, Marlene Ugle (4B), 1950s.

# TREE 4B



**BEAL UGLE AND THE UGLE BROTHERS**

Beal Ugle owned 800 acres (324 hectares) of land, twenty-four kilometres west of Brookton, which he cleared and used for grazing approximately two hundred sheep. He went shearing and crutching in the district to earn money to develop his property. He was a gun shearer, a skill he shared with his brothers and taught to his sons, one of whom could hand shear two hundred sheep a day. However, like many small farmers, during the depression years of the 1930s he was forced off the land by economic circumstances.

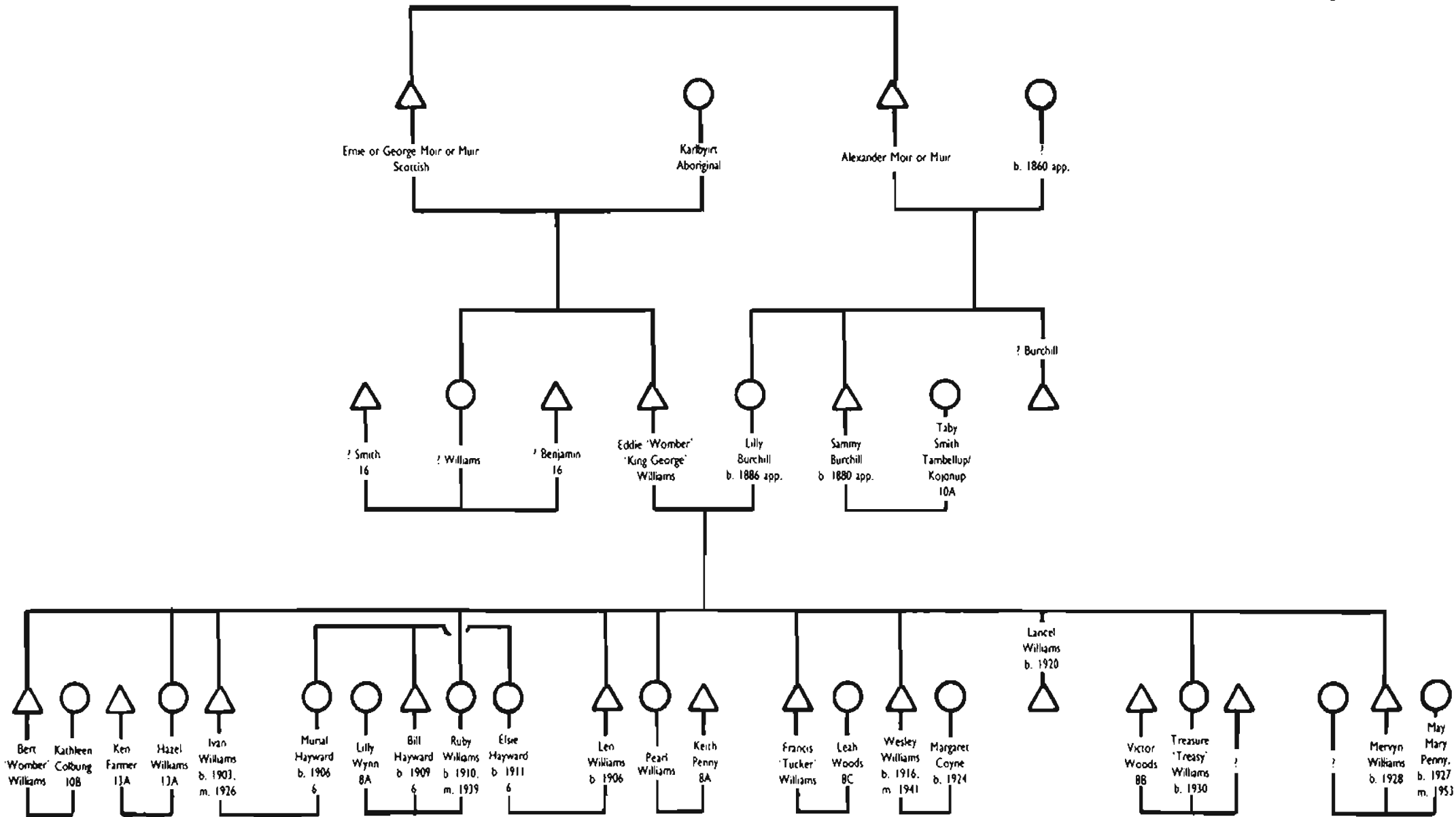
A story is told of how many of Beal Ugle's brothers came to live in the Narrogin district. Before the depression, the story goes, these brothers were living on Beal's farm when a farming company from Narrogin hired them for the shearing season, and sent a truck to pick them up for the job. The Ugle brothers proved such good shearers that the farming company refused to return them to Brookton, and insisted that they stay on in Narrogin and shear for the company. The Ugle brothers agreed, and settled in the district and had large families.



(right) Syd 'Stumpy' Ugle (4B), Darkan Show, n.d.



# TREE 5A



Family group.

Left to right: Winston Penny, his grandmother Lilly Williams nee Burchill (6), and his sister Mena Penny. Winston and Mena Penny are the children of Pearl Williams (5A) and Keith Penny (8A). Late 1950s.



LILLY BURCHILL AND EDDY 'WOMBER' 'KING GEORGE' WILLIAMS

Lilly Burchill and her husband, Eddie 'Womber' 'King George' Williams, were cousins as their fathers, who were early European settlers in the Albany district, were brothers. Their mothers were local Aboriginal women, one of whom was called Karlbyirt. The reason for the children not taking their fathers' name is not known, although possibly to hide the stigma as the unions were never formalized in marriage. However, memory of the name was passed down through the large family of eleven children that Lilly and Eddy Williams had.

(below) Back row, left to right: Brother Wright, unidentified, Fred Winmar senior (16B), Henry Woods (8C), unidentified, unidentified, Mervyn Williams (5A), Ivan Williams (5A), either Francis or Lancel or Wesley Williams (5A), others unidentified.

Middle row, fourth from left: Elsie Williams nee Hayward (6) holding baby; sixth from left: Lilly Williams nee Burchill (5A) holding baby, Eddie 'Womber' 'King George' Williams (5A), others unidentified.

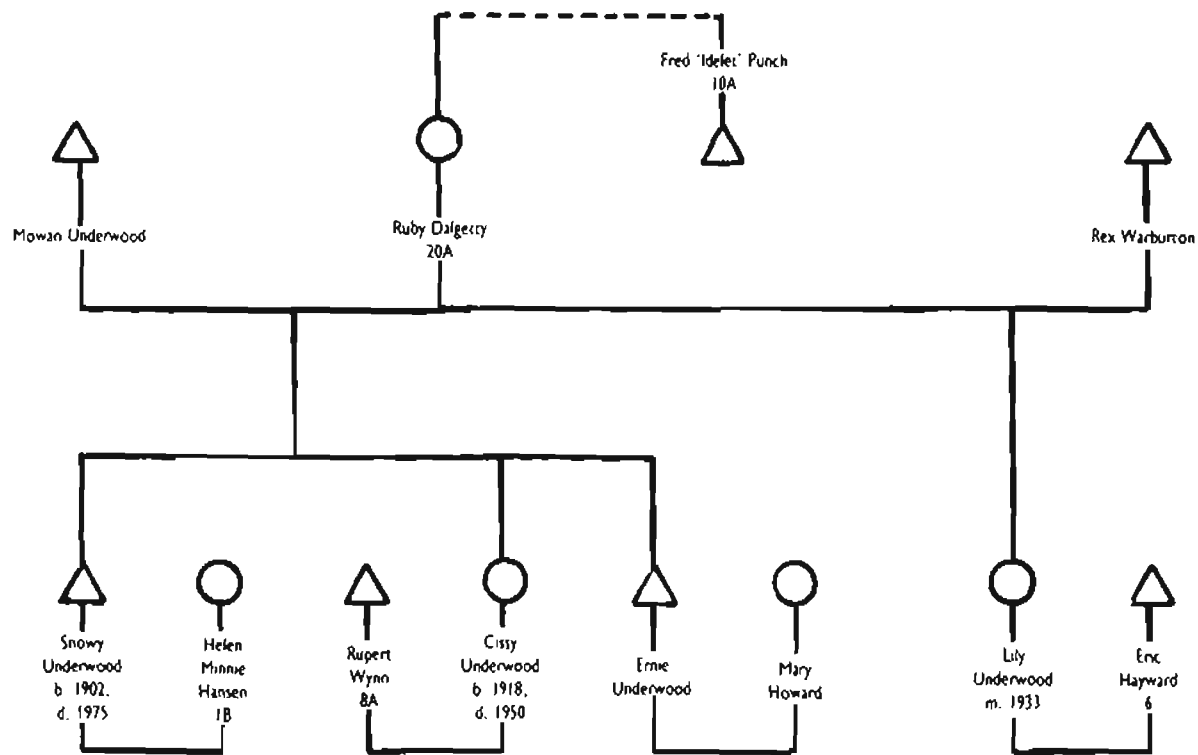
Outside the Gnowangerup Mission Hall, Gnowangerup, c. 1935.



Rosie Starlight, Harry Starlight and Hughie Williams (possibly Bert 'Womber' Williams), c. 1950.



# TREE 5B





Certificate of Citizenship of Lily Hayward nee Underwood, 1952.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA  
 NATIVES (CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS) ACT, 1944, REGULATIONS  
 Form 4

## Certificate of Citizenship

Pursuant to the  
 Natives (Citizenship Rights) Act, 1944,  
 and Regulations I hereby  
 certify that

LILY HAYWARD  
(full name)

(whose photographic likeness is affixed here-  
 to) having fulfilled to my satisfaction the  
 requirements of the said Act and Regulations  
 is hereby granted full rights of citizenship  
 as provided by the said Act.

Dated at KATANNING this  
15 day of APRIL 1952  
 I, W. J. ...  
 Resident Magistrate  
 Received the fee of 10/-

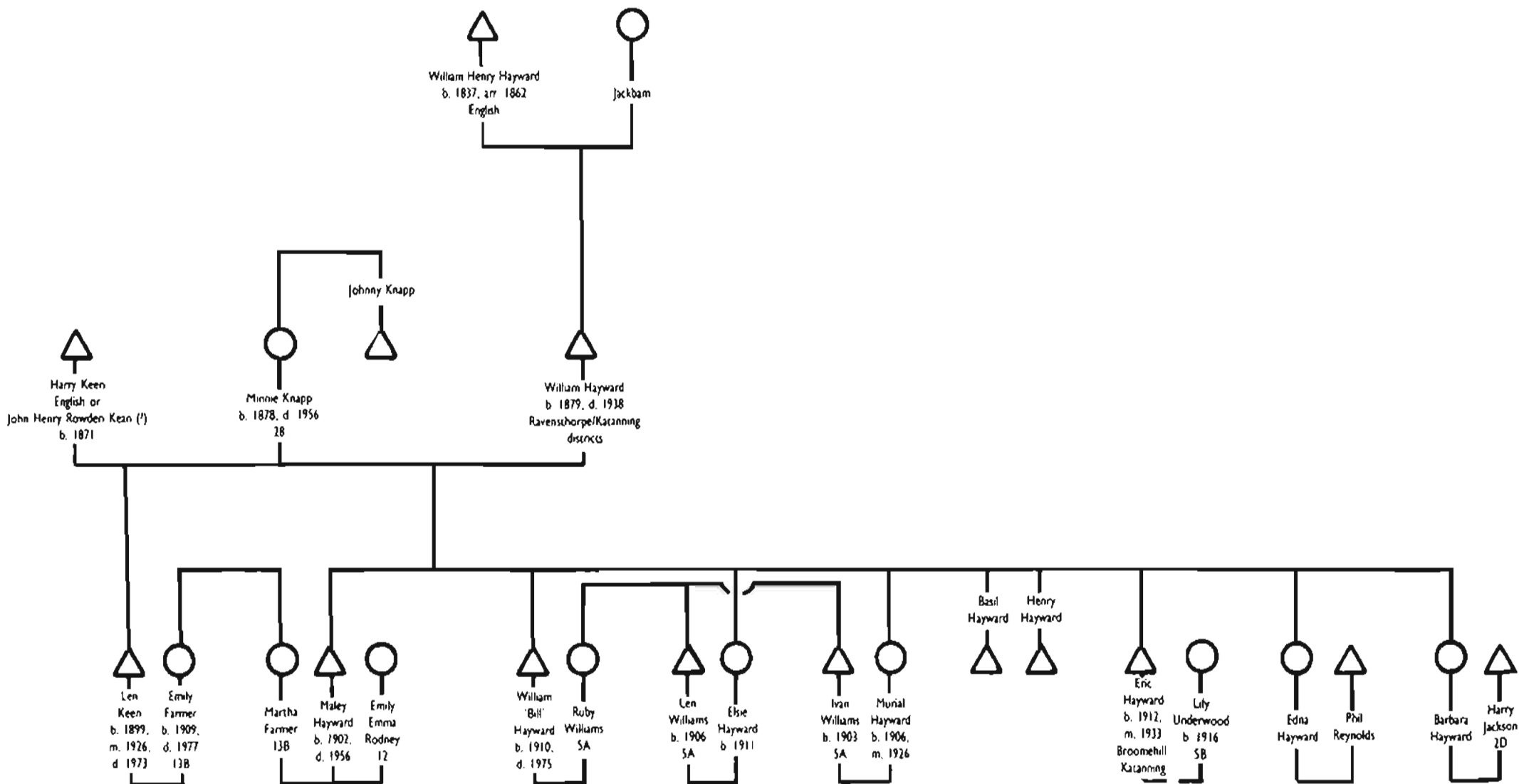
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Two men in the moon: Charles Lawrence Hansen (1A), Snowy Underwood (5B), c. 1940.

# TREE 6



## WILLIAM HAYWARD, THE BATTLER

HAYWARD/KEEN

William Hayward (1870-1938) and his wife Minnie Knapp (1878-1956) had a large family of nine children. William Hayward worked in the Katanning/Broomhill area for many years, tree pulling, stump burning, and doing general farm work. In the 1920s the couple saved and bought a small farm of 500 acres (202 hectares) in the rich farming country of Broomhill. Here, they planned to bring up their children. However, the depression of the 1930s hit the Haywards very hard, and like many other farmers they had to give up their property.

Backed with the small amount of money William Hayward had been able to sell the farm for, the Haywards moved to Ravensthorpe, where they pegged out and claimed a goldmine. They were able to make a modest living from the mine, although the boys were reluctant to work it because they did not like going underground.

Towards the late 1930s the years of hard work began to tell on William Hayward, and his health started to fail him. The family moved to Gnowangerup mission to live. By that time, the restrictive provisions of the 1905 Aborigines Act and its amendments were in full force, and many Aboriginal families who had previously led independent lives were forced onto missions as the combined results of economic circumstances and government policy. Shortly after this move, William Hayward died.



(above) Sisters Edna Hayward (6) and Elsie Hayward (6), with their mother Minnie Hayward nee Knapp (28), c. 1920.



(left) Elsie Williams nee Hayward (6) and her mother Minnie Hayward nee Knapp (28), and with five of Elsie and Len Williams's children, c. 1945.

#### ERIC, MALEY AND WILLIAM HAYWARD, THE SPORTSMEN

Three of William Hayward's sons, Maley, William junior and Eric, were first-class sportsmen. Eric played football for Gnowangerup for three years. In 1935 he was playing in the Great Southern Football Carnival in Narrogin. Scouts from the South Fremantle Football Club were present at the match, and they spotted him and his brother William and invited them to play for South Fremantle.

Commitment to football meant that Eric Hayward had to sacrifice much of his family life. While he was paid £3 a game for playing football, he had to live in Fremantle during the week so that he could train every evening. The only opportunity he had to see his wife and family was on weekends, after the match. This separation from his family was the main reason why Eric Hayward decided to give up league football after two years, even though for the second year the club found him, his wife and children a house in Fremantle. However, he kept on playing for the Broomehill football team with several of his brothers, after his two years with the South Fremantle Football Club in 1936 and 1937.

The period of separation from his family was not over for Eric Hayward after he returned to Broomehill. The only work he was able to obtain was contracting to clear land, which meant that he had to live away from home during the week, and visit his family on the weekend. As his sons grew up, they accompanied their father to help him with his work. In this way, the family was able to earn good money for the work they did. Eric Hayward and his sons were also able to save money on food while they were away working, as they could shoot kangaroo for meat.

As well as being a talented footballer, Eric Hayward was a good all-round sportsman. He won a silver medal for coming first in a running competition in Ravensthorpe when he was twenty-five years old. When he was thirty-two he won a gold medal for being the most versatile player of the day, in a football match for Tambellup against Katan-

ning. His family was justifiably proud of his sporting achievements, and always went along to barrack for him when he played or entered sporting competitions.

Maley Hayward was a brilliant sprinter, and his brother Eric was his trainer. Maley Hayward won the state sprinting championship and was at the peak of his career between 1926 and 1930, when he was under twenty-one years of age. He played league football for Claremont, and then transferred to the South Fremantle Football Club to play for the same team as his brothers.<sup>3</sup>



*Second row (from back), third from left: Eric Hayward (6), on tour in Narrogin with the South Fremantle Football Club, 1936 or 1937, outside the Hordern Hotel, Narrogin.*



(above) Barbara Hayward (6), Eva Rodney (12), Len Keen (6) (half brother to Barbara Hayward), Katanning, c. 1920.

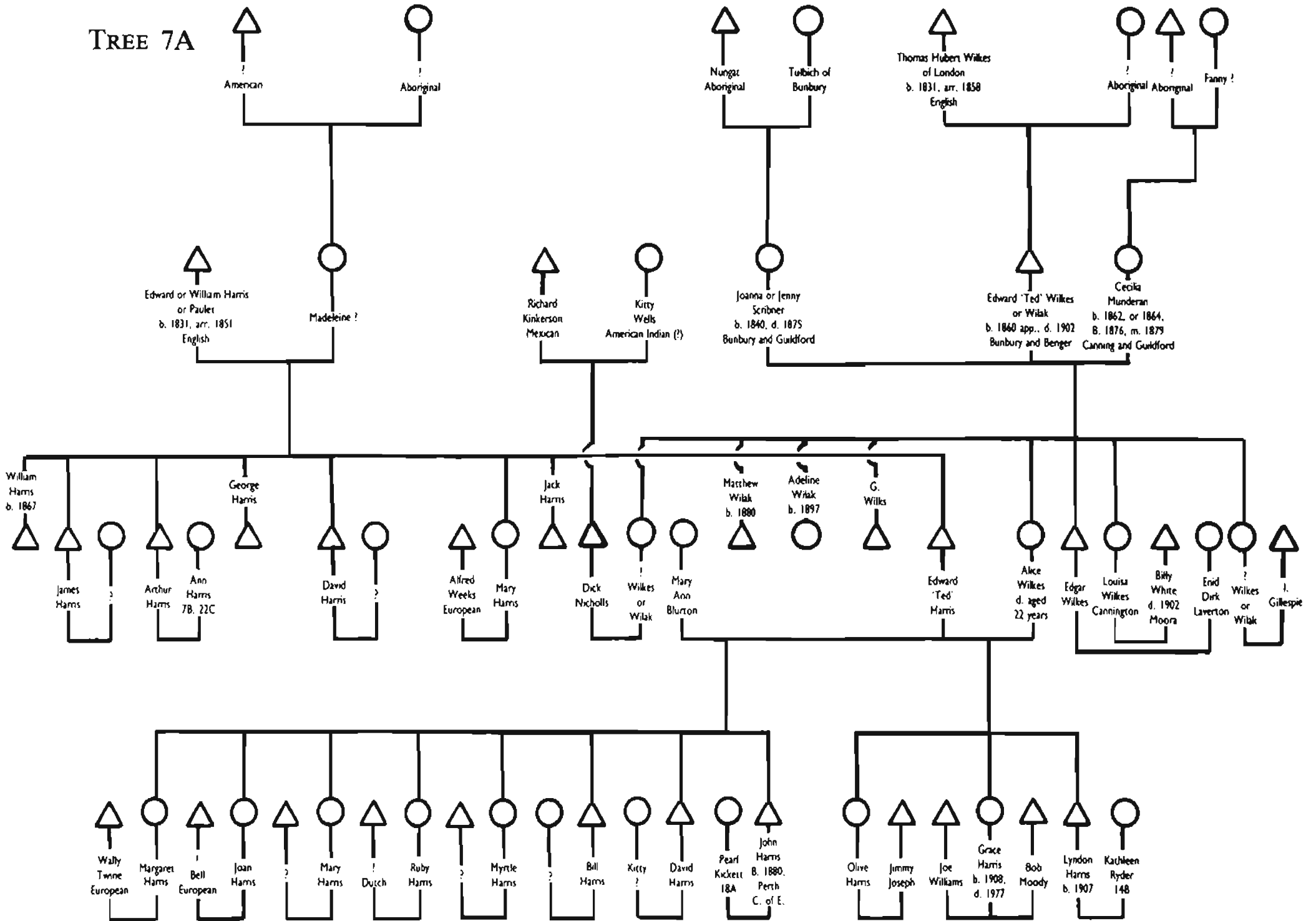
(top left) Ray Davis and Eric Hayward (6), c. 1936.

(left) Maley Hayward (6), on the far right, with three of his friends, c. 1936.





# TREE 7A



## WILLIAM HARRIS, FOR JUSTICE AND FAIR PLAY

William Harris was born in 1867 and died in 1931. His father was Welsh, and his mother was said to be of American and Aboriginal descent. William Harris's father placed him in the Swan Native and Half Caste Mission as a paying student, to receive an education. His brother Edward was sent to 'Annesfield', the school run by Bishop Hale and Mrs Camfield in Albany. The educational standard of these schools was comparable to other schools of the day, and pupils sat for public examinations and passed them with credit.

William Harris never married. He and his relatives farmed at Morawa, and also mined in the north-eastern goldfields area around Yalgoo and Paynes Find. The plight of Aborigines throughout the state concerned him deeply, and over the years he wrote several letters to local newspapers to draw attention to this and to the question of Aboriginal civil rights. He was appalled at the treatment of Aborigines on the goldfields, having first-hand information on this along with his brothers Arthur and Jack who, with Arthur's son Norman Cleaver Harris, operated a goldmine at Rothsay. He championed the cause of the goldfields Aborigines by objecting to the police shooting their dogs which they relied on to capture game for meat and skins for sale. He proposed that the government provide medical care and rations to these people, so that they could live without having to beg from the mining camps now that mining had destroyed most of the native foods in the area. The government could pay for this, he argued, with the proportion of state moneys that was to be set aside for Aboriginal welfare under the terms of the Commonwealth constitution.

In 1906 William Harris made a special trip to Perth to have an interview with the premier in order to seek a solution to the problems being experienced by the goldfields Aborigines. He carried letters of support from three public figures: the mayor of Kalgoorlie, and the mayor and the justice of the peace of Malcolm. This was the first time that formal channels had been used by a person of Aboriginal descent from the

south, to present the case of the goldfields Aborigines to a premier of the state.

William Harris's concern extended to the people of Aboriginal descent living in the south-west of the state to see that they should have full and equal civil rights including the rights to vote and to enter a hotel, just like their fellow countrymen in the region. In 1926, after many years of campaigning for this cause, he decided to form a union to fight in the political arena for Aboriginal civil rights. He was assisted by several members of his family and by friends who gathered financial support from other Aborigines so that a lawyer could be employed to advise them on points of law.

On 9 March 1928 William Harris led the first-ever Aboriginal deputation to a premier of Western Australia. His main aim was the repeal of the 1905 Aborigines Act although he realized he would have to work towards this, and he especially deplored the establishment of the Moore River Settlement, where people classified as Aboriginal could be confined without their consent or agreement and families broken up.

Members of the eight-man deputation were William Harris, his brother Edward Harris, nephew Norman Cleaver Harris, and also Arthur Kickett of York, Edward Jacobs of Quairading, Wilfred Morrison of Toodyay, and William Bodney of Perth. William Bodney was not an Aboriginal as his father was European and his mother Zulu. However, he sympathized with William Harris and firmly believed in his cause. Both the Kickett and the Jacobs family had had a long battle with the Education Department to have their children accepted into state schools, and so had first-hand experience of discrimination against them on account of being classified as Aboriginal.

The deputation presented itself proudly. The men left off their farming clothes and dressed in suits for the occasion, and argued their case in a deliberate and scholarly manner. The premier listened sympathetically and promised he would look into the matter by referring it to the Aborigines Department. Unfortunately this was a time of impending

economic crisis and the reforms William Harris fought for did not come into effect until several years later.

In 1935 Edward Harris gave evidence to the Moseley Royal Commission, still fighting in the tradition of the Harris family for the rights of Aborigines in the south-west and condemning the Moore River Settlement.

Arthur Harris, brother to William and Edward, enlisted as a soldier and fought overseas in the First World War, while his grandson Norman Harris was a member of the RAAF during the Second World War.\*



*On the right: Jack Harris (7A) with his nephew Norman Cleaver Harris (7B) in front of their goldmine at Rothsay. In the background are several employees, n.d*

#### GRACIE WILKES, 'TENNESSEE GIRL'

Gracie Wilkes of Moora had the reputation of being an extremely charming woman, and she was called 'Tennessee Girl' as a compliment. She was in Moore River Settlement around 1920, the same time as Dave Gentle who fell in love with her. By then, Gracie was married to Frank Narrier. The competition for Gracie's favours was very strong, and a big 'Aboriginal style' fight started between the two men, both of whom armed themselves with throwing sticks while a large crowd gathered around, shouting out encouragement and warnings. After a long battle Dave Gentle emerged the victor, and won Gracie's heart.

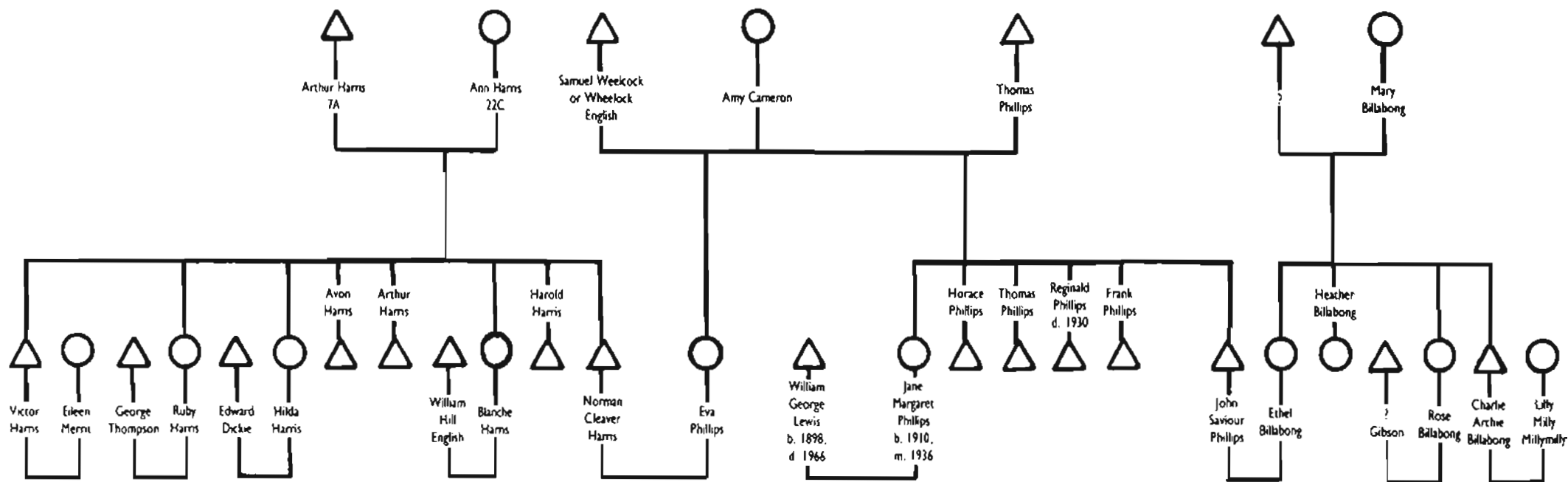
It appears that all the Wilkes women were very attractive. In 1902 Billy White of Moora became infatuated with Louisa Wilkes, an older relative of Gracie Wilkes. Louisa did not reciprocate his feelings and Billy White, unable to bear the torment of her continual rejection, is said to have taken his own life.

Louisa Wilkes's sister captured the heart of a stranger, Dick Nicholls, who was a visitor with the circus. He had come to Western Australia in 1898 from New South Wales, where he had been with the circus since he was a child. His parents were from America and were also circus people.'



(right) World War II soldiers: Jack Poland (25) and Arthur Harris (7A), on honourable discharge, 1945.

# TREE 7B





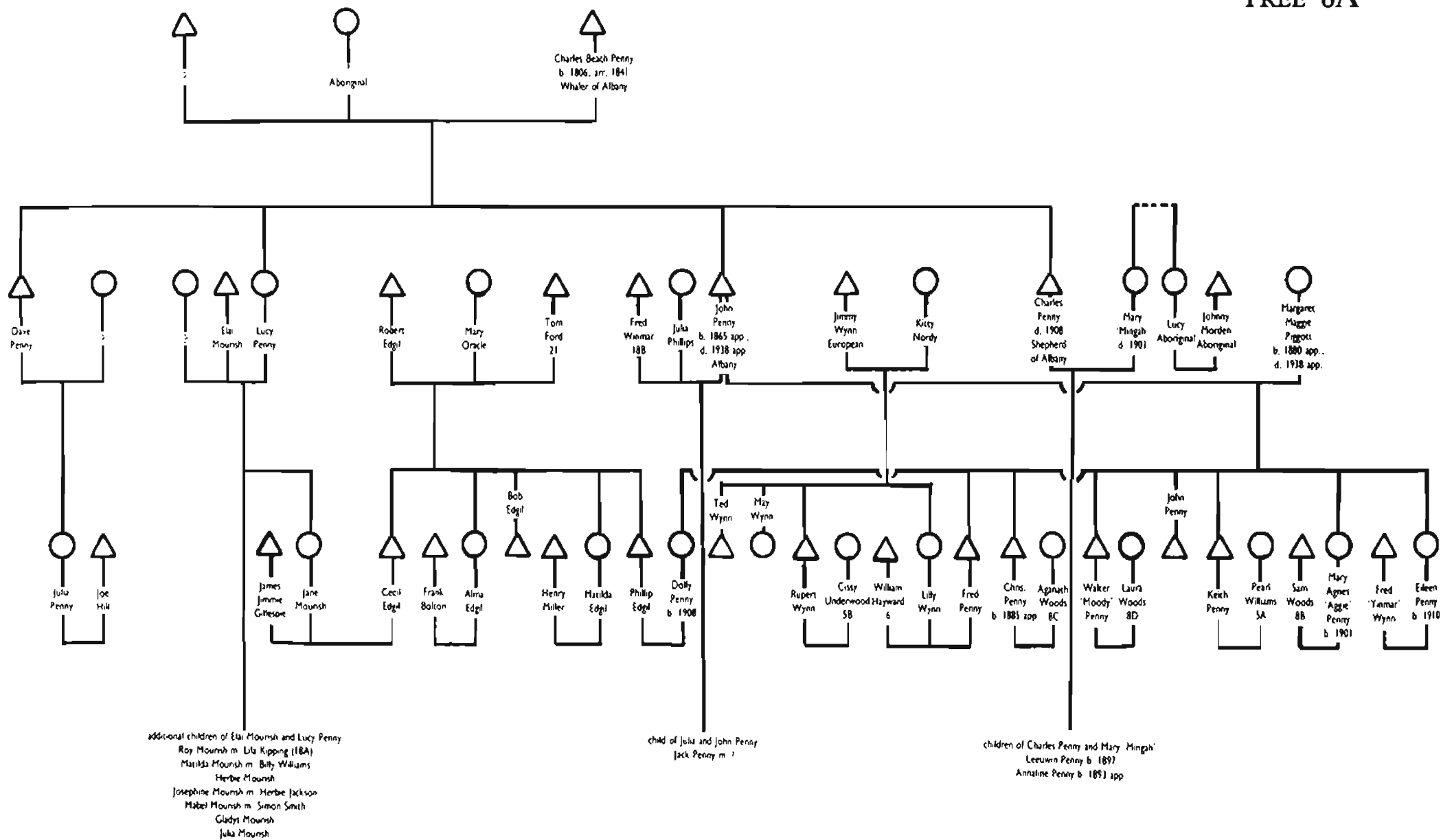
*(above)* Back row: Norman Cleaver Harris (7B), cousin Bill Harris (7A), friend 'Nobby' Clark, wife Eva Harris nee Phillips (7B) and brother Harold Harris (7B).

*Front row:* Myrtle, Ann and Norman Harris, children of Norman Cleaver Harris and Eva Harris nee Phillips, n.d.

*(Right)* Norman Cleaver Harris (7B) with his uncle Lyndon Harris (7A) at Perth, n.d.



# TREE 8A



**MOURISH/MOURICH**  
**(Mourache, Mourish, Morich, Morish)**

The name Mooritch or Mooritche, appears in the census of Aborigines in the Avon district, 1841. This is possibly the origin of the name Mourich, which is said to be Aboriginal in origin. However, Mourache is also a familiar European name.



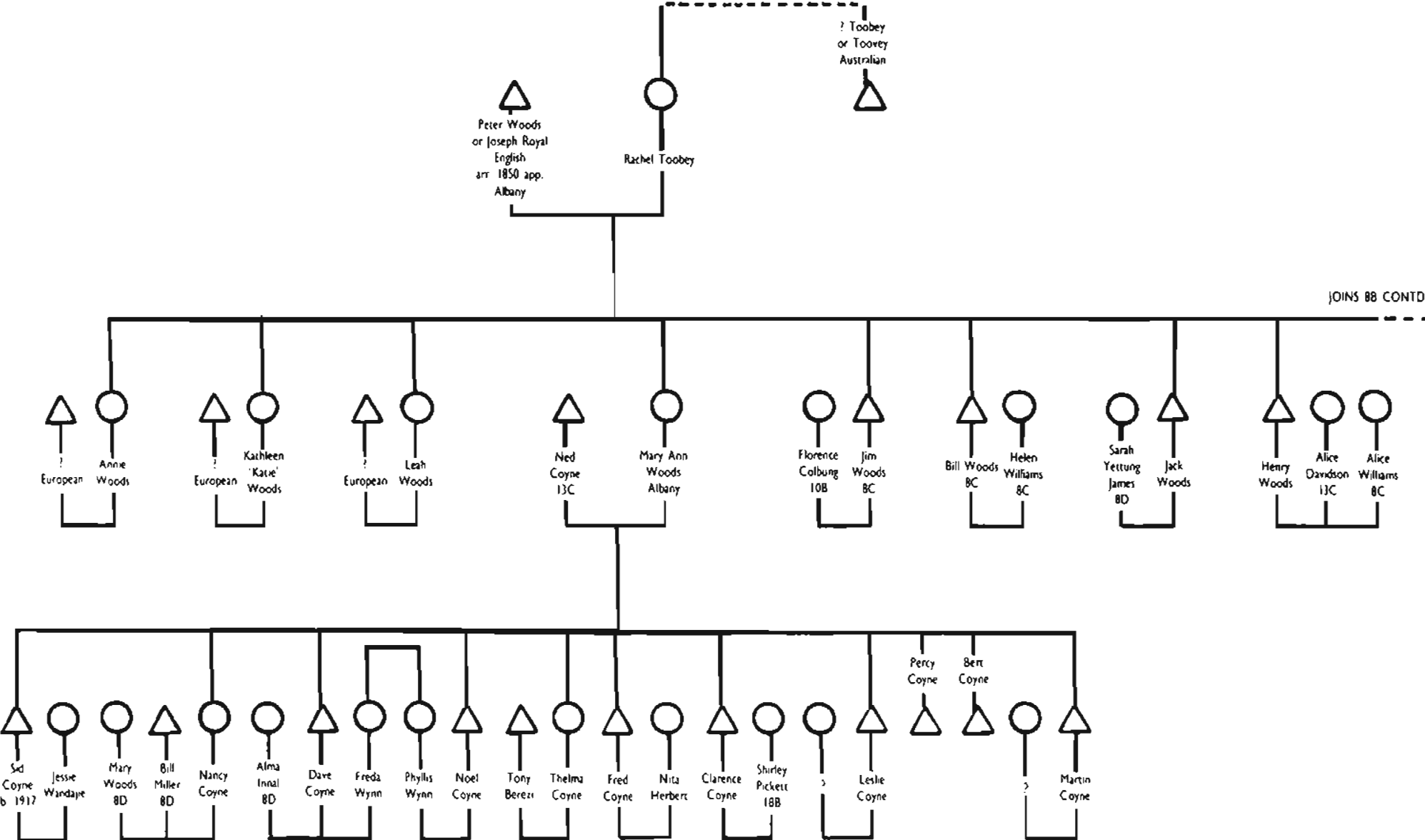
*(left)* Agnes Morich, daughter of Jane Mourish and James Jimmie Gillespie (10C). Agnes was born in 1925. She was only twenty-eight years old when she died, a leukaemia sufferer, at Marribank Mission (formerly Carrolup Government Settlement) in 1953.

*(right)* Back: unidentified. Front: 'Wonga' Howard (brother of May Howard, photo on 8D), John Penny senior (8A), c. 1930.





# TREE 8B



JOINS 8B CONTD.

**PETER WOODS OR JOSEPH ROYAL**

A young Englishman, Peter Woods or Joseph Royal, is said to have jumped ship at Albany around 1850. Another story is that he was transported to Western Australia on a charge of forgery, although his name does not appear on the lists of convicts. He remained in the area woodcutting, and became known locally as Peter Woods because he lived and worked in the bush, or woods. His family name of Royal, with its connotations of the life he had left behind, fell into disuse. By the time he married Rachel Toobey he was known generally as Peter Woods and his young wife, and later his children, took the surname Woods.



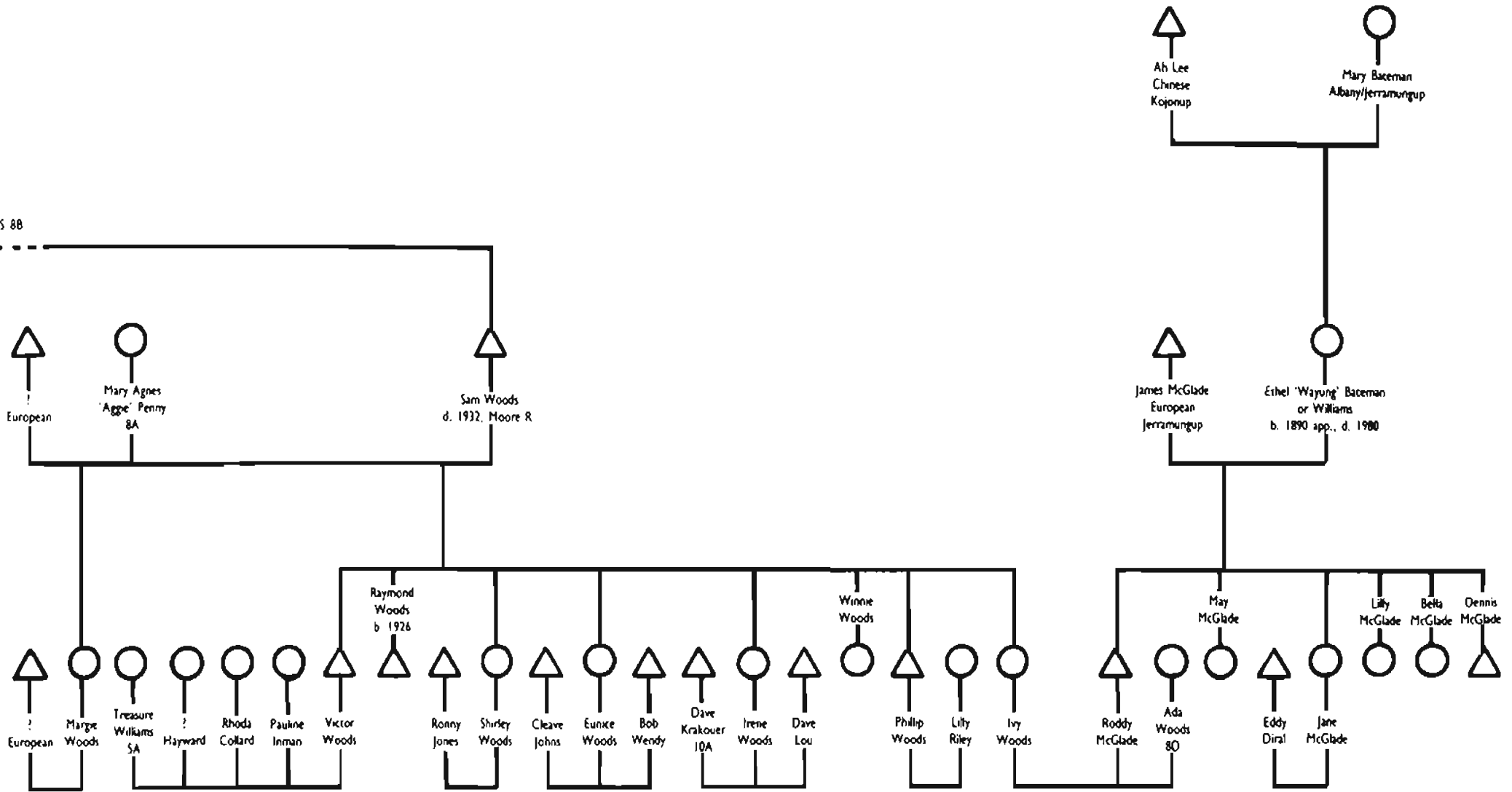
(above) Sisters Leah Woods (8B), Kathleen 'Katie' Woods (8B), and Annie Woods (8B), 1920s.

(centre) Mary Ann Coyne nee Woods (8B), c. 1960.

(left) Syd Coyne (8B) with his small son Lester Coyne, and their dog, sitting on the mudguard of Syd Coyne's truck, c. 1940.

TREE 8B CONT.

JOINS 8B



ETHEL 'WAYUNG' BATEMAN OR WILLIAMS

WOODS/MCGLADE

Ethel 'Wayung' Bateman or Williams grew up on the Hassell property at Jerramungup. It is thought that her father, Ah Lee, either came to the goldfields during the early gold finds of the mid-1870s and 1880s, or that he was brought to the colony as a labourer or cook at an earlier period. In any event, he travelled to Jerramungup where he met Mary Bateman, and started a family.

As a young woman Ethel 'Wayung' was employed as a shepherdess, and also to clear loose stones from the paddocks of the Hassell property. When picking up stones she wore a large stiff leather apron with a pocket in front, like a pouch. Small stones were placed in this pocket until it was full, and then emptied at the edge of the paddock.

Ethel 'Wayung' met her husband, James 'Jim' McGlade, when he came to work for the Hassell family as a stockman and general farm-hand. He would frequently go on hunting expeditions with Aborigines living on the property, whose tribal lands extended through the area, while Ethel 'Wayung' remained behind to look after her children and to mind the sheep.

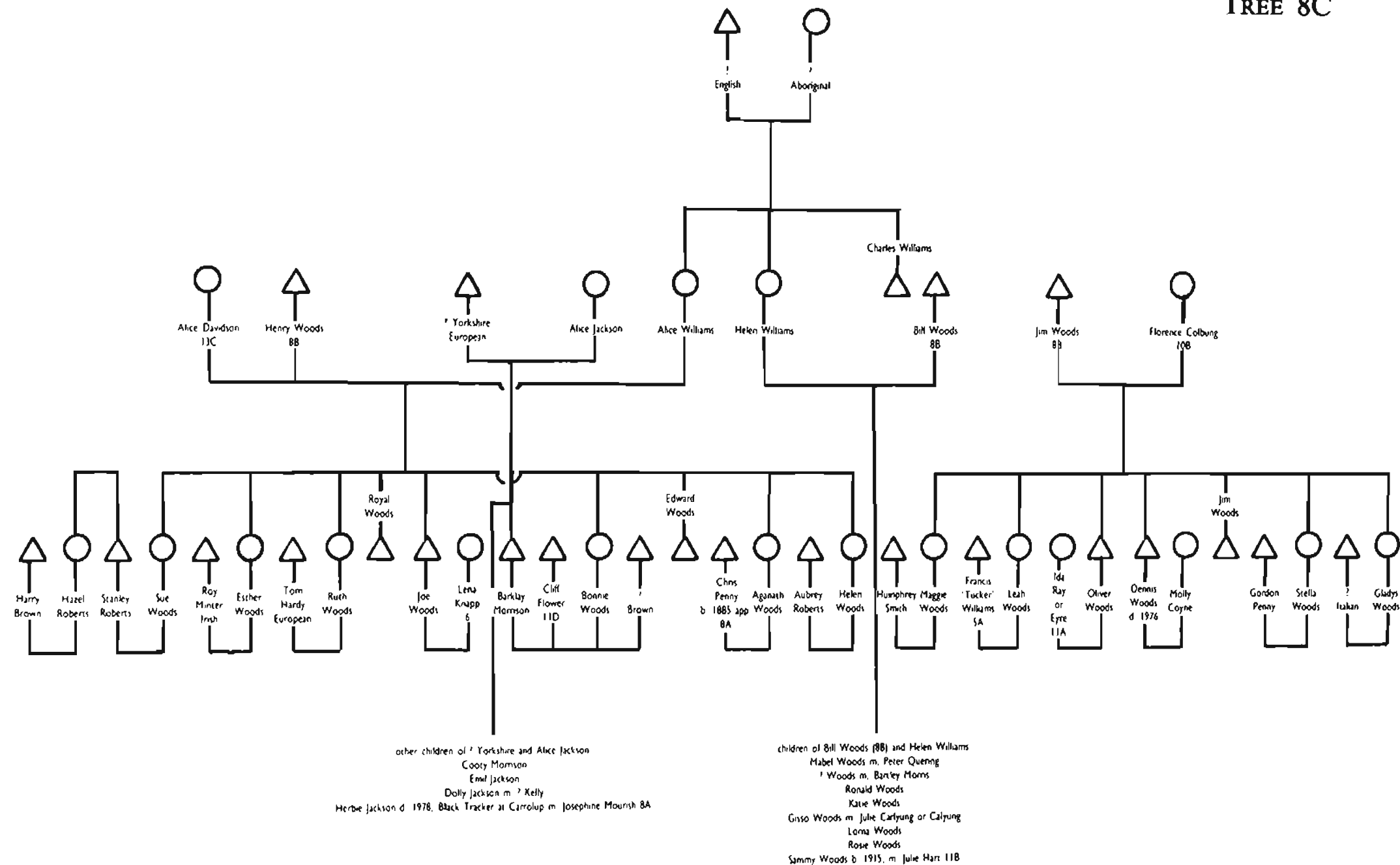


Roddy McGlade (RB cont.), n.d.



Ethel 'Wayung' Bateman or Williams (BB cont.), baby unidentified, Jerramungup, n.d.

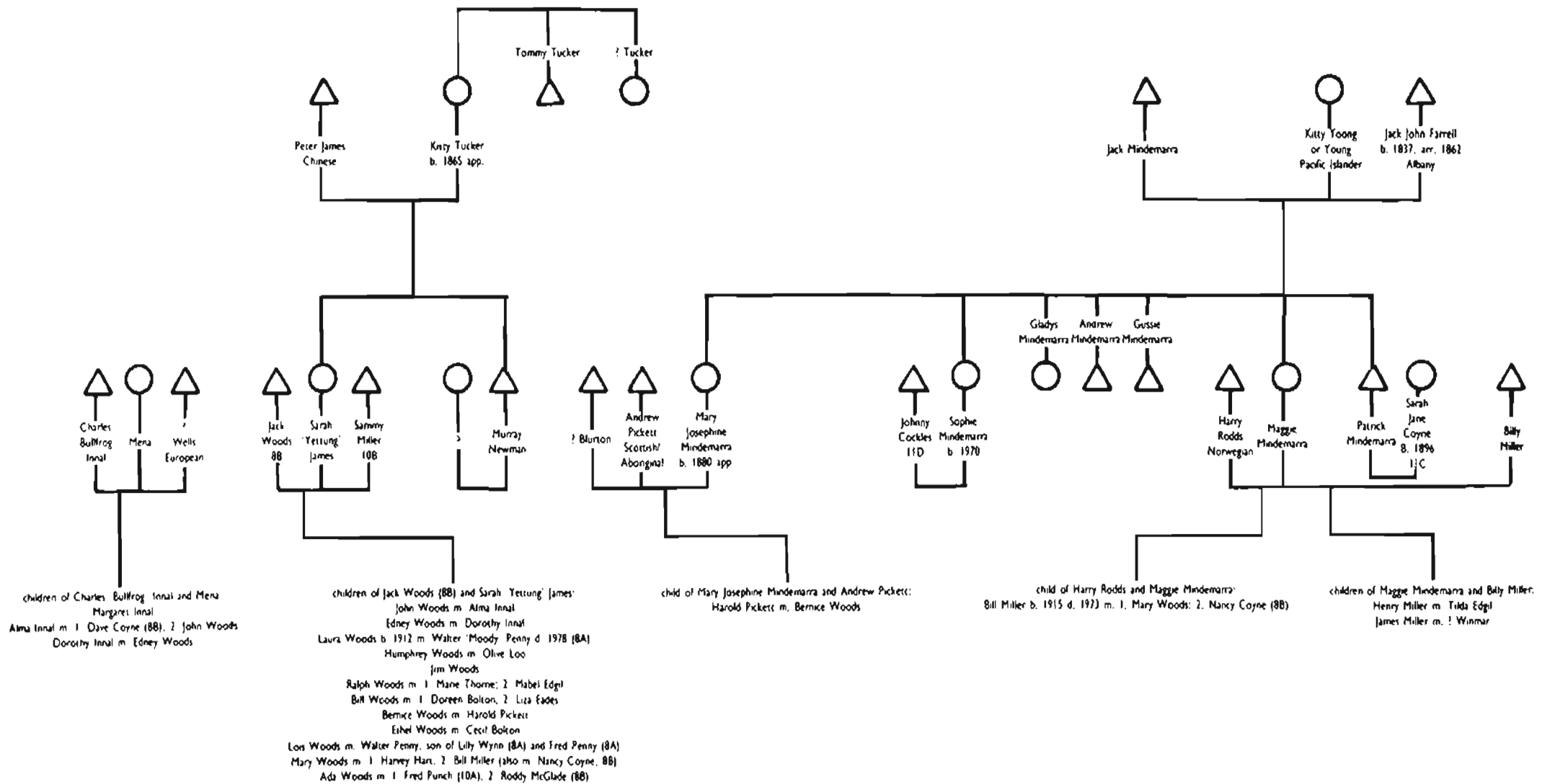
# TREE 8C





Aganath Penny nee Woods (8C), with three of her daughters.  
*Left to right:* Ayplen Eades nee Penny (13A), Aganath Penny nee Woods, Mary Williams nee Penny, Kate Riley nee Penny, n.d.

# TREE 8D



#### THE ISLAND WOMEN

Throughout the early and mid-nineteenth century there were several accounts of women being captured by sailors, usually sealers and whalers, and taken far from their homelands. One of these is of a group of five women who were brought to Fremantle in the late 1860s. It is thought that they were originally from an island in the Pacific Ocean, as they all had very straight noses and their dusky skin had a reddish, or coppery, undertone.

The women were left in Fremantle to make their own way in a strange land. One, Kitty Yoong or Young, lived with a European, Jack Farrell, for a time. Later, she met and married Jack Mindemarra and had a large family. It is not known what became of the four other women, although their story continues to be passed on.



*Left to right:* Laura Woods (8D), Jack Woods (8B), Sammy Burchill (5A), Sara 'Yeltung' Woods nee James (8D), Bernice Woods (8D), 1916.





*(left)* Ethel Bolton nee Woods (8D), n.d.

*(right)* Brothers-in-law Les Eades (13A), Patrick 'Paddy' Mindemarra (8D), n.d.

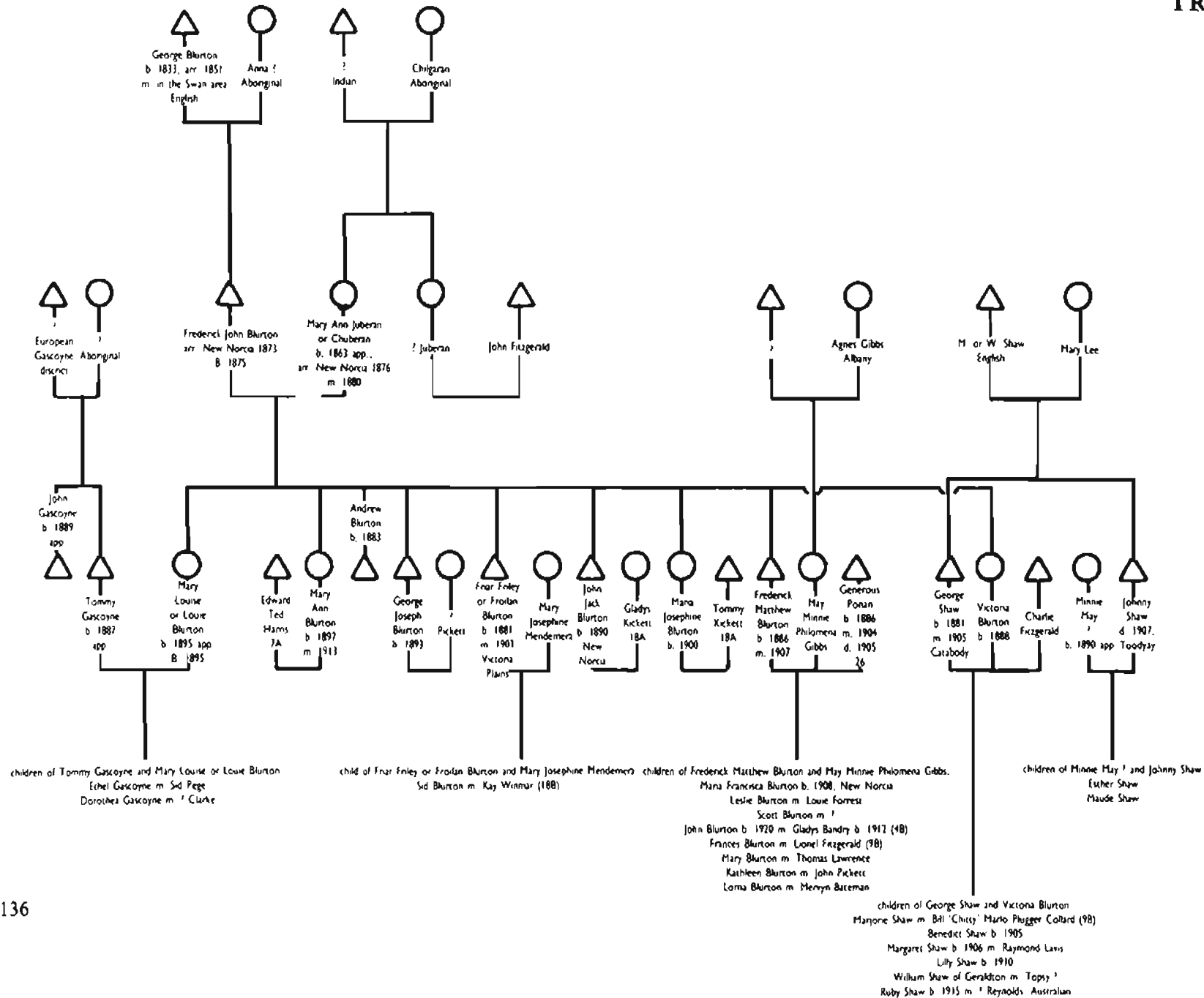




*Back row, left to right:* Charlie 'Bullfrog' Innal (8D), Mary Agnes 'Aggie' Woods nee Penny (8B), Lilly Williams nee Burchill (5A), Jim Woods (8C), May Howard (sister of 'Wonga' Howard, photo on 8A).

*Front row, left to right:* Bernice Pickett nee Woods (8D), Lois Penny nee Woods (8D), Mena Innal (married to Charlie 'Bullfrog' Innal) (8D), Mavis Eades nee Penny (13A), n.d.

# TREE 9A



## VICTORIA BLURTON

Victoria Blurton, born in 1888, grew up at New Norcia mission where her parents occupied a cottage. She was one of a large family of seventeen children. Later, her family moved to a farm at Wyening, and also purchased a farming property at Quairading. Victoria Blurton married George Shaw, who had also grown up at New Norcia. The couple obtained a homestead block which they cleared and farmed, raising a family of six children. George Shaw met an untimely death at the age of forty-four.

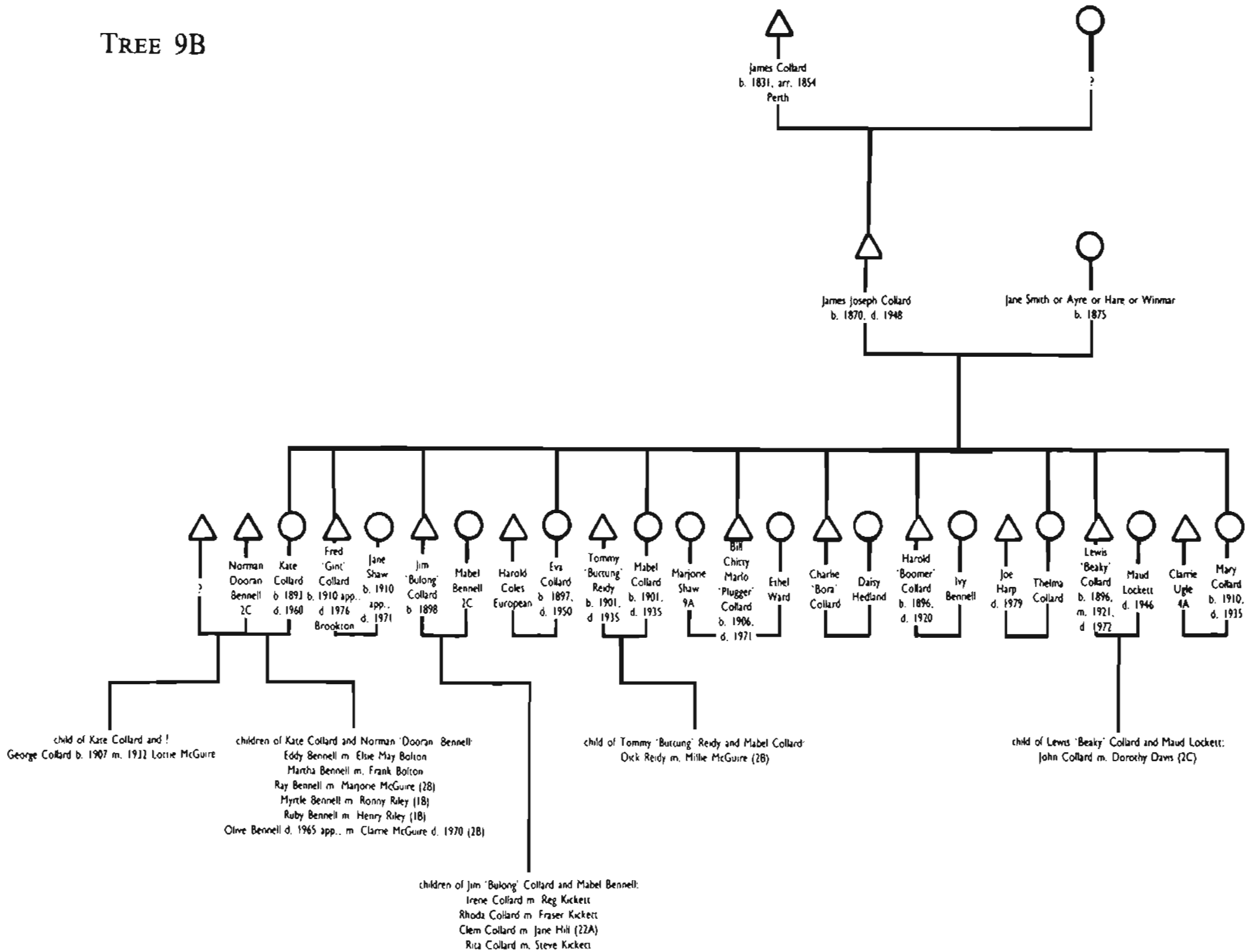
Victoria Shaw mourned her husband for two years before marrying for a second time, to Charlie Fitzgerald. As her husband had a Chinese vegetable garden in Perth, the family moved to the city. One girl was born, and then Victoria Fitzgerald died giving birth to a second girl who also died.

Widower Charlie Fitzgerald found he was unable to look after his family and at the same time tend to his gardens. Wishing to do what was best for them, he made an arrangement with New Norcia mission for some of the girls to be sent there, where they would be cared for and receive an education.

The girls were placed on the train, and were to be met at the station and driven to New Norcia by their uncle. On the same day that they were travelling, a number of children were being sent to Moore River Settlement on the train. When they arrived at the railway station, the girls' uncle was late. The station master assumed that they were really meant to be going to Moore River Settlement and so bundled them off with the other children. When their uncle arrived, he found no nieces and thought that their step-father had changed his mind at the last moment.

It was one month before the error was finally sorted out, and the girls reached their intended destination, New Norcia Mission.

# TREE 9B



#### THE COLLARD FAMILY

James Joseph Collard was born around 1870 in East Perth. It is not known if his mother was of Aboriginal descent, but it is thought that she was. His father was an English convict who was transported to the state and subsequently married and settled here. The name Collard is said originally to have been a Dutch name, Van Stan, which was later changed to Collard for some unexplained reason.

James Joseph Collard went to school at Jarrahdale, known for its timber yards and the large brick-making works then owned by the firm of Brisbane and Wunderlich. As a lad James went to work in the East Perth brick yards also owned by Brisbane and Wunderlich. Later, he worked at the York brickworks, and then at Brookton where he owned the Brookton brick-making plant. Bricks that he made are still to be found in many of the old buildings around Perth, York and Brookton.

James Joseph Collard married Jane Smith, variously known as Jane Ayre, Jane Hare and Jane Winmar. Little is known of her except that she was born around 1875. They owned their own block of land and house, half a mile south of Brookton, where they raised their family of six sons and five daughters. Two of their sons served as soldiers in France in World War I. There were Harold 'Boomer' Collard and Lewis 'Beaky' Collard. Lewis 'Beaky' was a runner in the front lines, carrying messages between sergeant and officer. Harold 'Boomer' received a respiratory injury which qualified him for a disability pension after the war. He married and lived on the Pingelly reserve with his wife, who played the push button accordion very well, until his early death in 1920.

Another son, Jim 'Bulong' Collard, built his own house in Pingelly out of batt brick, no doubt drawing on his father's technical knowledge of brick-making. Here he lived with his wife and their eighteen children. A fourth son, Fred 'Gint' Collard, achieved notoriety at the race track where he had several large wins and also a number of losses. Fred owned his own home in Brookton until he sold it and moved to Narem-

been. He worked all his life as a clearing contractor, and also did root picking, wool picking, mallet bark stripping and rabbiting. As a young man he was a champion footballer, and played in the Brookton team.

Bill Chitty Mario 'Pluggie' Collard worked in the Brookton area for thirty years. He moved to Woodanilling where he handled wheat at the Co-operative Bulk Handling, and kept this job for a further fifteen years until his death at the age of sixty-five.

One of the Collard girls, Mabel, died a young woman at the age of thirty-five. Her widower, Tommy 'Buttrung' Reidy, died in his camp at Wandering some years later, alone and lonely. His body was not found until a week after his death, when the continuous barking of his ten kangaroo dogs caused the local people in the area to investigate. The dogs were found tied up, and as they had not been fed since he had died, they were starving when the tragedy was discovered.



(right) James Joseph Collard (BB) in front of his house at Brookton, c. 1900.



Fred 'Gint' Collard (9B) and Tom Davis (2C), c. 1945



Maud Collard  
nee Lockett (9B)  
with her pet joey.

The wagon used by the Collard family to cart mallee roots, rabbit skins,  
and provisions.





(left) Lewis 'Beaky' Collard, who became a runner in the front lines in France in the First World War, 1914.

(above) Harold 'Boomer' Collard, 1914.

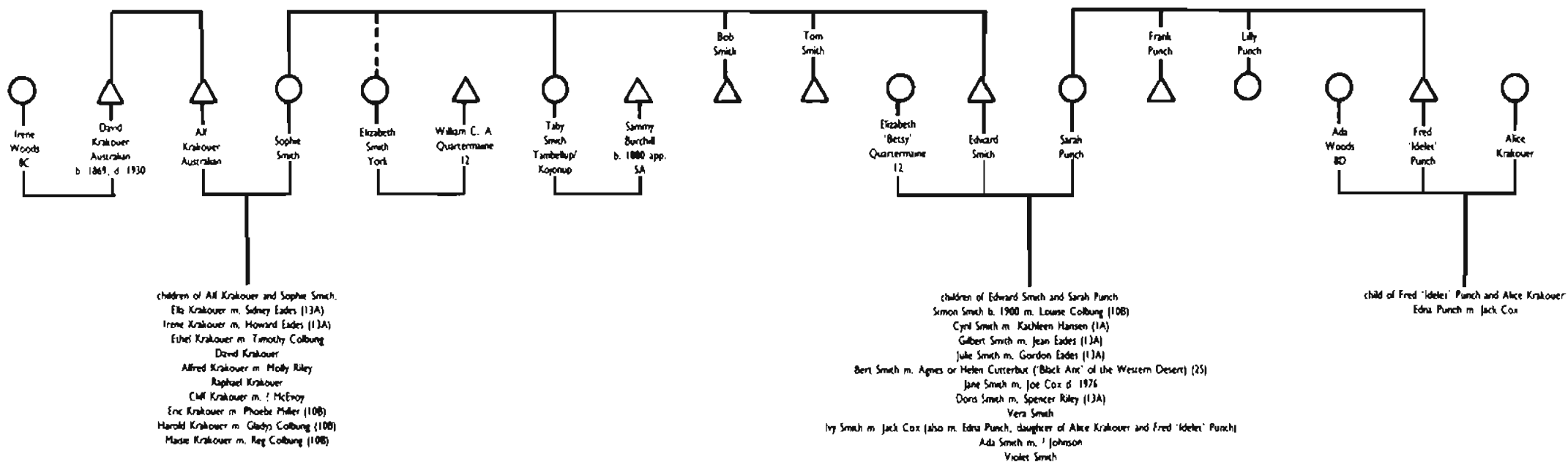
(top right) On the right, Lewis 'Beaky' Collard (9B), c. 1940.

(right) Discharge papers of Lewis 'Beaky' Collard (9B), 1919.





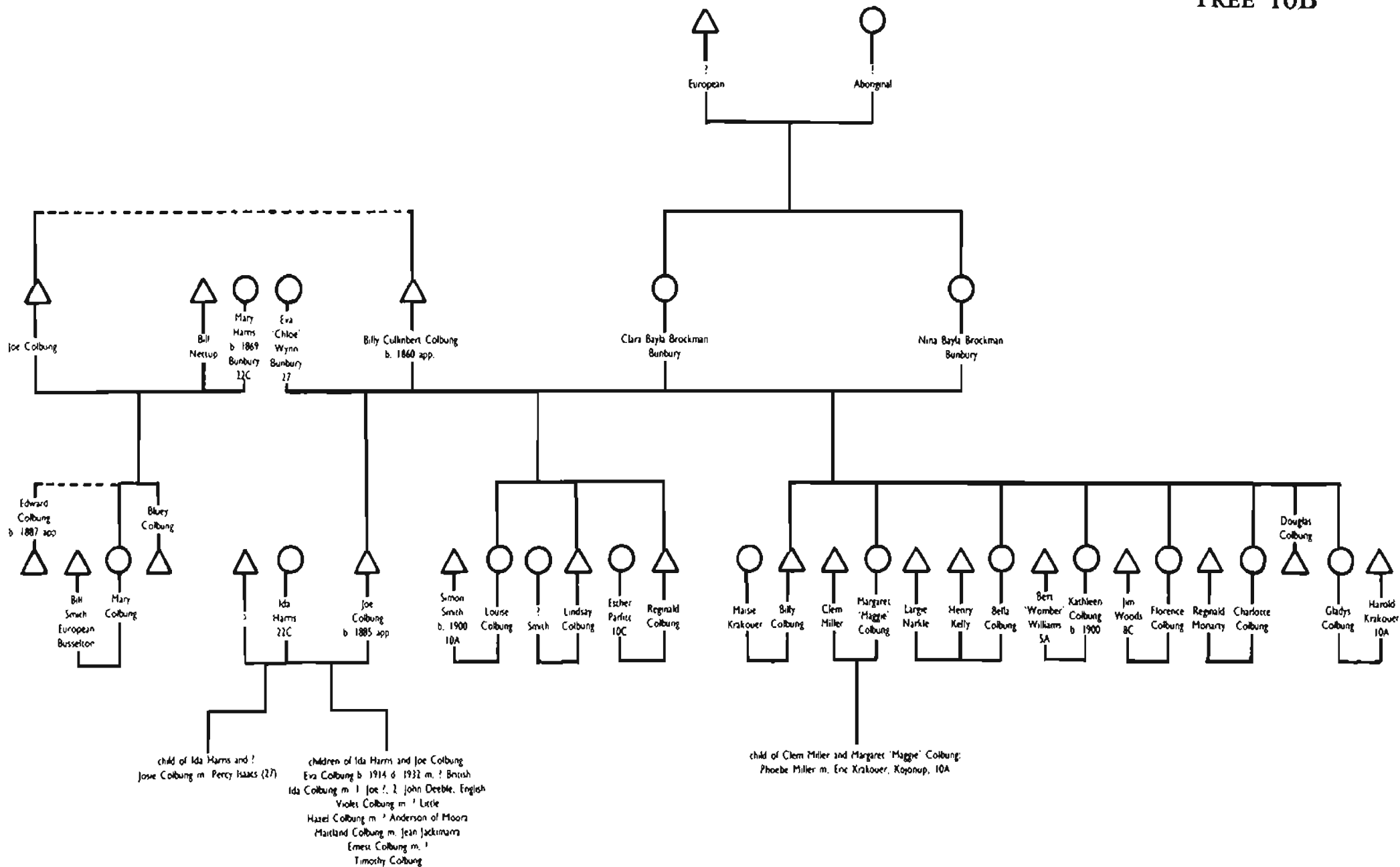
# TREE 10A





*(left)* The two men at the back are unidentified. *In front:* Fred 'Idelet' Punch, Tambellup, c. 1900.

# TREE 10B



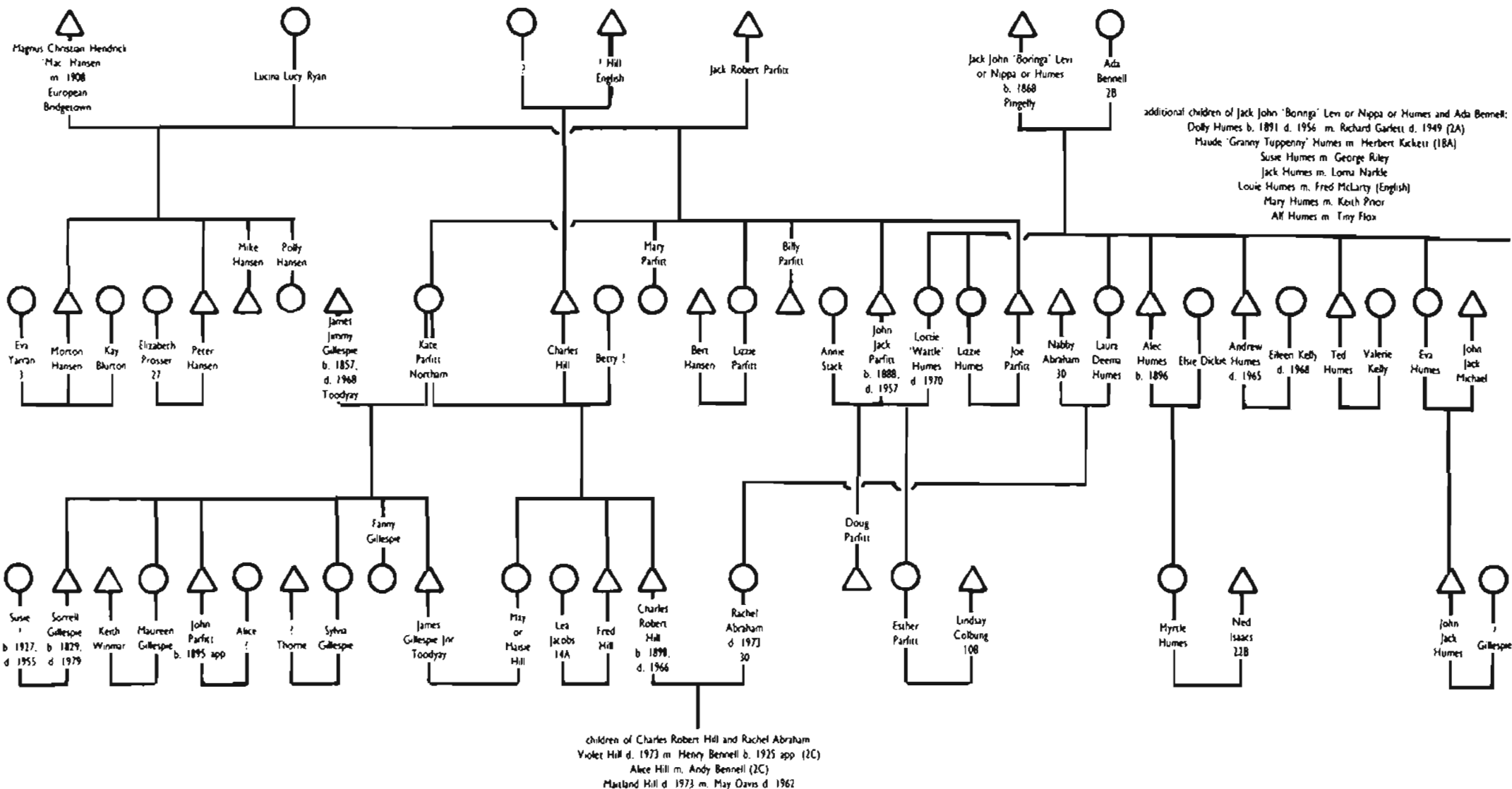
(right) Ken Colbung, 1956.

Coolbun, a man with a wife and two children, is recorded in the King George Sound (Albany) district in 1830-31.<sup>6</sup> It is possible that the Colbung name derives from this with the spelling changing over time, as the Colbung family centres on the Mount Barker district not far inland from Albany. Oral accounts tell of a tradition of seasonal movement in this area from the inland centre during the winter months to the coast during the summer.

Ken Colbung, son of Eva Colbung, was born in 1930 and grew up in the Moore River Native Settlement at Mogumber. In 1950 he joined the army and for the following nineteen years served in Australia and overseas including Korea, attaining the rank of sergeant. Since his honourable discharge in 1969 he has fought for Aboriginal rights both at the state and Commonwealth levels and today he is one of Australia's best known Aboriginal leaders. He has been responsible for developing the Nyoongah Community Incorporated, a cultural complex on sixty hectares of land held by the Aboriginal Lands Trust at Wanneroo, a suburb north of Perth, where an active programme is operated to preserve and teach traditional Aboriginal skills and knowledge as well as skills from the wider Australian society.



# TREE 10C



## CHARLES ROBERT HILL AND THE PINGELLY NYUNGAR CHURCH

Charles Robert Hill was the grandson of an English convict and a woman of Aboriginal descent. He was born, and grew up, in Bridgetown where he went to school. His family moved to Northam when he was a youth and Charles worked throughout the wheatbelt with a chaff-cutting team, particularly in the Northam/Toodyay/York/Quairading area. While working he met Rachel Abraham and the couple settled in Pingelly.

Once married, Charles Hill worked on a number of farms in the Pingelly district, as a general farmhand and as a truck driver carting the wheat from the farms to the bulk storage silos at Pingelly. The couple had seven boys and seven girls, all born at home. As the children grew up the boys were able to help their father doing farm work including seeding, fencing, clearing, shearing and wheat carting.

After many years of hard work, Charles Hill bought a large block of land at Pingelly, and also a small town block. Charles Hill was a very religious man, and when he heard that a missionary group was seeking land to build a church in Pingelly, he offered them the use of his town block. A small church was subsequently built there, and it became the religious centre for many Nyungars living in the area. Regular church services were held, and the congregation sang gospel hymns. Easter conventions were also held in the little church, and people travelled to attend them from all over the south-west. Three of Charles Hill's children were married in the church.

In the early 1960s Charles Hill and his family moved further south, to Burekup, where they worked picking and planting potatoes, fencing, post-cutting, sucker bashing and land clearing. When he died six years

later in 1966, Charles Hill left 14 children, 78 grandchildren and 79 great-grandchildren. His funeral was one of the largest ever to be held in Bunbury, with around four hundred mourners paying their last respects. These included family and friends, and a number of farmers for whom he had worked during his lifetime. During the funeral service, some of the mourners broke into song, singing the hymns that Charles Hill had sung over the years in the little Nyungar church on his land.

## JAMES 'JIMMY' GILLESPIE

James 'Jimmy' Gillespie lived in Toodyay for many years, where he and his wife were employed on the Clarkson property 'Wicklow Hills'. The couple had a large family, and all the children were educated at the Catholic convent school in Toodyay. James Gillespie himself was an educated man, and made a point of keeping abreast of current events by buying the newspaper every day. His eldest son, James junior, took an active part in the town sporting teams.

Mrs Gillespie died in approximately 1935. As a sign of mourning for her, James Gillespie wore a black armband from the time of her funeral until his own death in 1968, over thirty years later.

James Gillespie was a very polite man and in keeping with the custom of the times he made a point of tipping his hat to any lady he knew as he passed her on the street. After his retirement he received the old age pension. He was fond of a joke and on pension days he always said that he had to hide from the ladies for fear they would try to take his wealth from him.

#### ANNIE STACK

Annie Stack was known locally in Toodyay as 'Queen of the Aborigines'. She was a tall, statuesque woman and had a number of children and grandchildren. When her friends fell upon hard times and needed credit to buy food, Annie Stack would assist them by giving her word to the shopkeepers that they would be paid. The shopkeepers always gave credit, and her friends always honoured their agreement with Annie Stack and paid their accounts.

Annie Stack refused to pay for kangaroo meat from the local butcher. She felt that as the kangaroo was a native animal, here before the Europeans arrived, by rights it belonged to the Aborigines. If the butcher ever attempted to charge her for kangaroo meat, she would argue with him on this point until he gave in and agreed with her.

A non-drinker, Annie Stack did not approve of others drinking. On one occasion she found her husband John Jack Edward Parfitt in the hotel and when he did not come out immediately she called him, she was so angry that she entered the hotel and struck him. The blow may have been heavier than she intended, for it broke his arm. This discouraged him from going into the hotel again.

Schoolchildren in Toodyagai used to sing the following song, set to the tune of *The Road to Gundagai*, and Annie Stack always loved to hear it:

There's a track winding back,  
And there goes Annie Stack,  
Along the road to Dewars Pool.  
Where the wattle trees are growing,  
And Culham Brook is flowing,  
Beneath the clear blue skies.  
Where old Jackie and Dougie  
Are waiting for me,  
And the haunts of my childhood  
For ever will be.  
There I go, on my toes,  
I'm heading straight for home,  
Along the road to Dewars Pool.'



Second row from back, circled in white: John 'Jack' Edward Parfitt (10C), a member of the Bridgetown football team, at the side of the Bridgetown hotel, 1912.



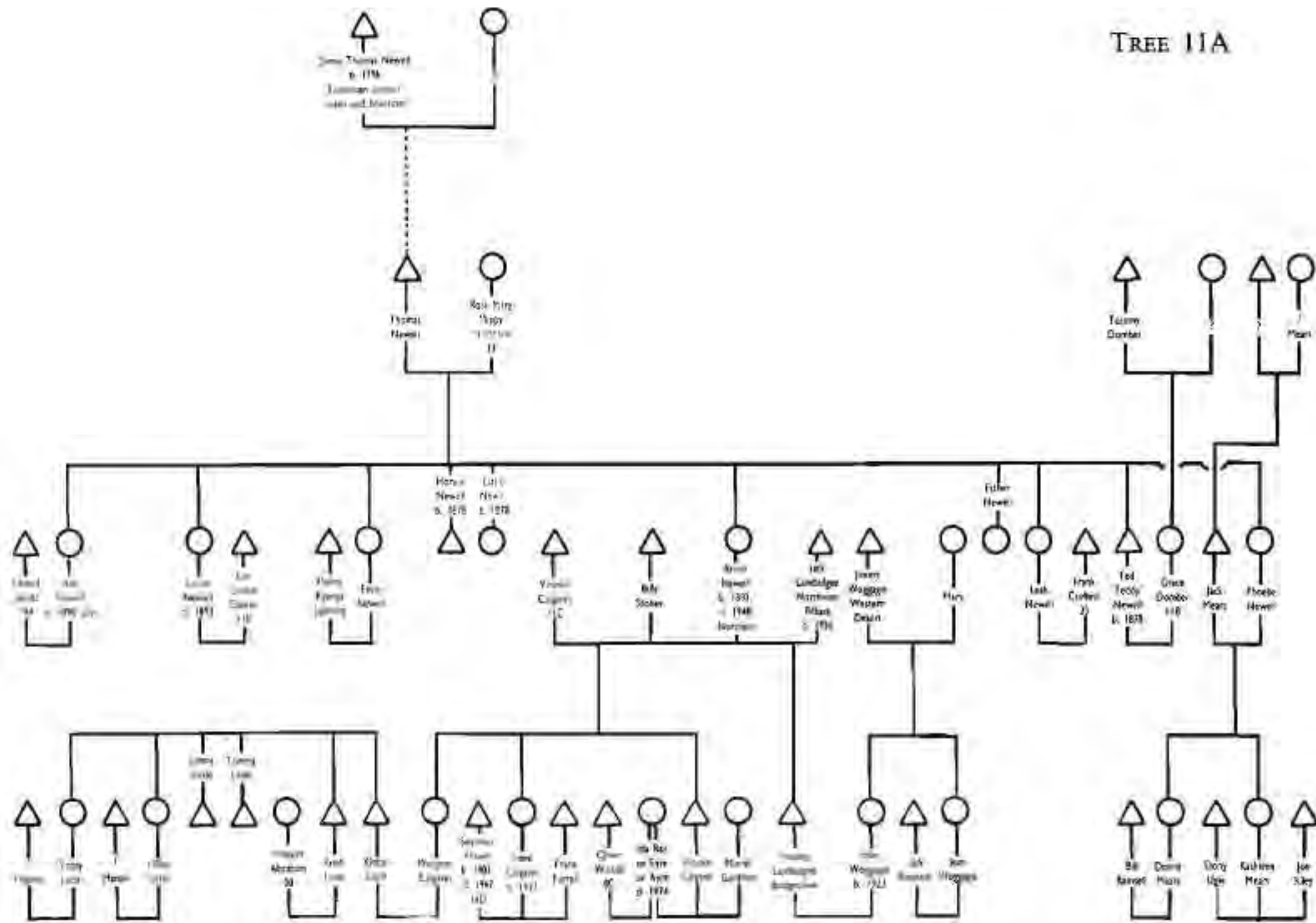
*(left)* John Jack 'Boringa' Levi or Nippa or Humes (10C) with his grandson John Jack Humes (10C), c. 1920.



*(right)* Maude 'Tuppenny' Kickett nee Humes (10C), n.d.



TREE 11A





NEWELL/CALGARET/LOMBADGIE/WOGGAGIE/MEARS/DOMBER



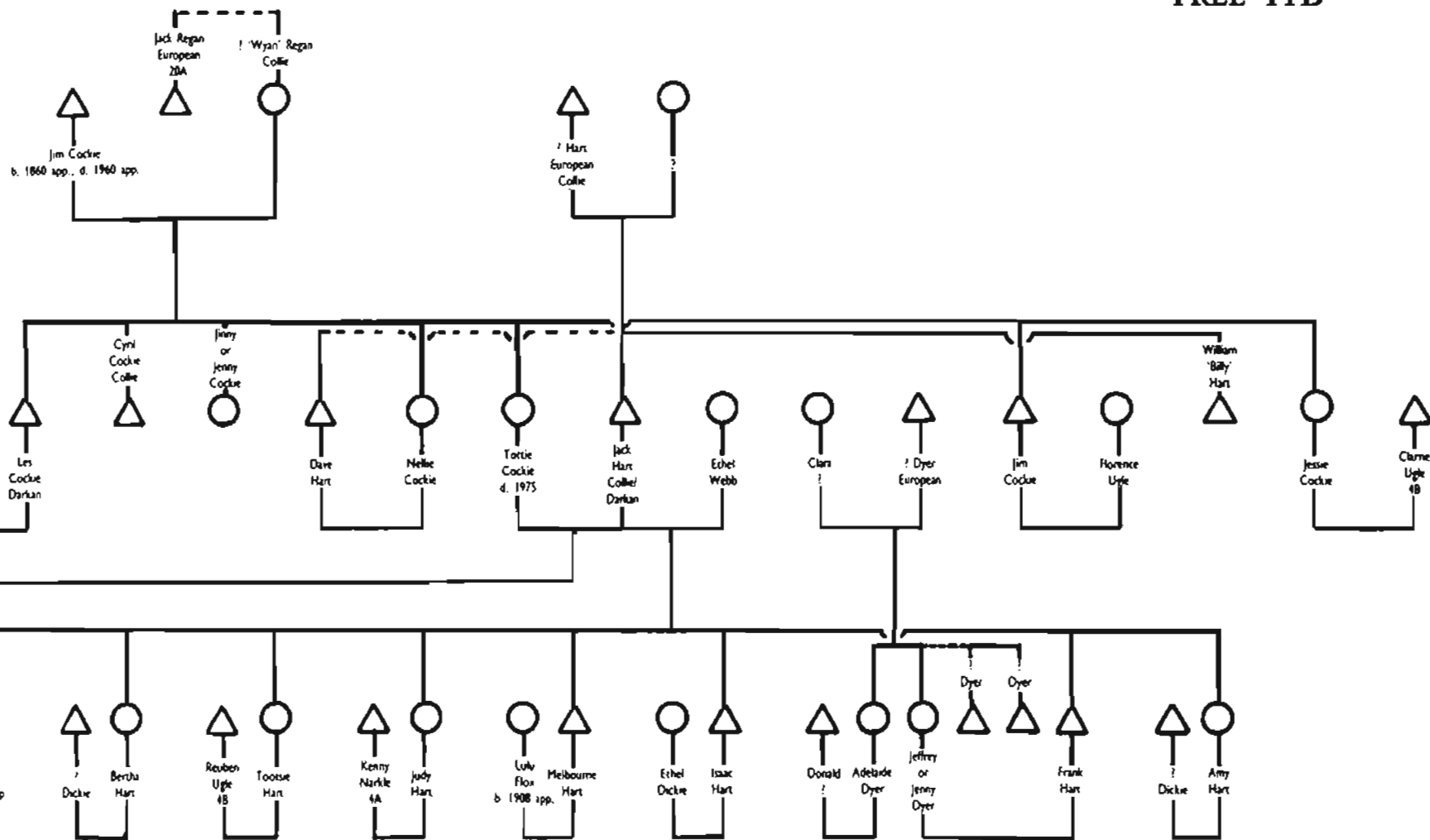
*(top left)* Daughters Phoebe Newell (11A) and Annie Newell (11A) on the left, and Leah Newell (11A) on the right, with Thomas Newell (11A) and his wife Rose Mary Newell nee Mippy (?) (11A), c. 1905.

*(left)* Back row: Mrs Mears (11A), daughter-in-law Phoebe Mears nee Newell (11A), Dolly Nettup nee Isaacs (22B).  
Front row: Ethel Webb (11B), unidentified.

*(centre)* Billy Stokes (11A) with his wife Annie Stokes nee Newell (11A), n.d.

*(above right)* Bill Ramsell (11A) with his wife Dorrie Ramsell nee Mears (11A), n.d.

# TREE 11B



children of Tottie Cockie and Jack Hart  
 Ceta Hart m. Bob Dalgersty  
 Manna Hart m. Johnny Bender  
 Les Hart m. Mabel Wallam  
 Florence Hart m. Fred May  
 Dottie Hart m. Joe Nannup  
 Renee Hart m. Peter Nannup  
 Harvey Hart m. 1. Mary Woods (BD) 2. Mabel Khan (20B)  
 Wesley Hart m. Kitty Morton  
 Julie Hart m. Sammy Woods (BC)  
 Alma Hart m. Henry Dmsh (20B)  
 Lily Hart m. Sonny Khan (20B)  
 Sid Hart d. 1977 m. Topsy Frank  
 Jack Lionel Hart m. Ethel Webb b. 1928



*Left to right: two Dyer brothers, with Jack Hart (11B).*

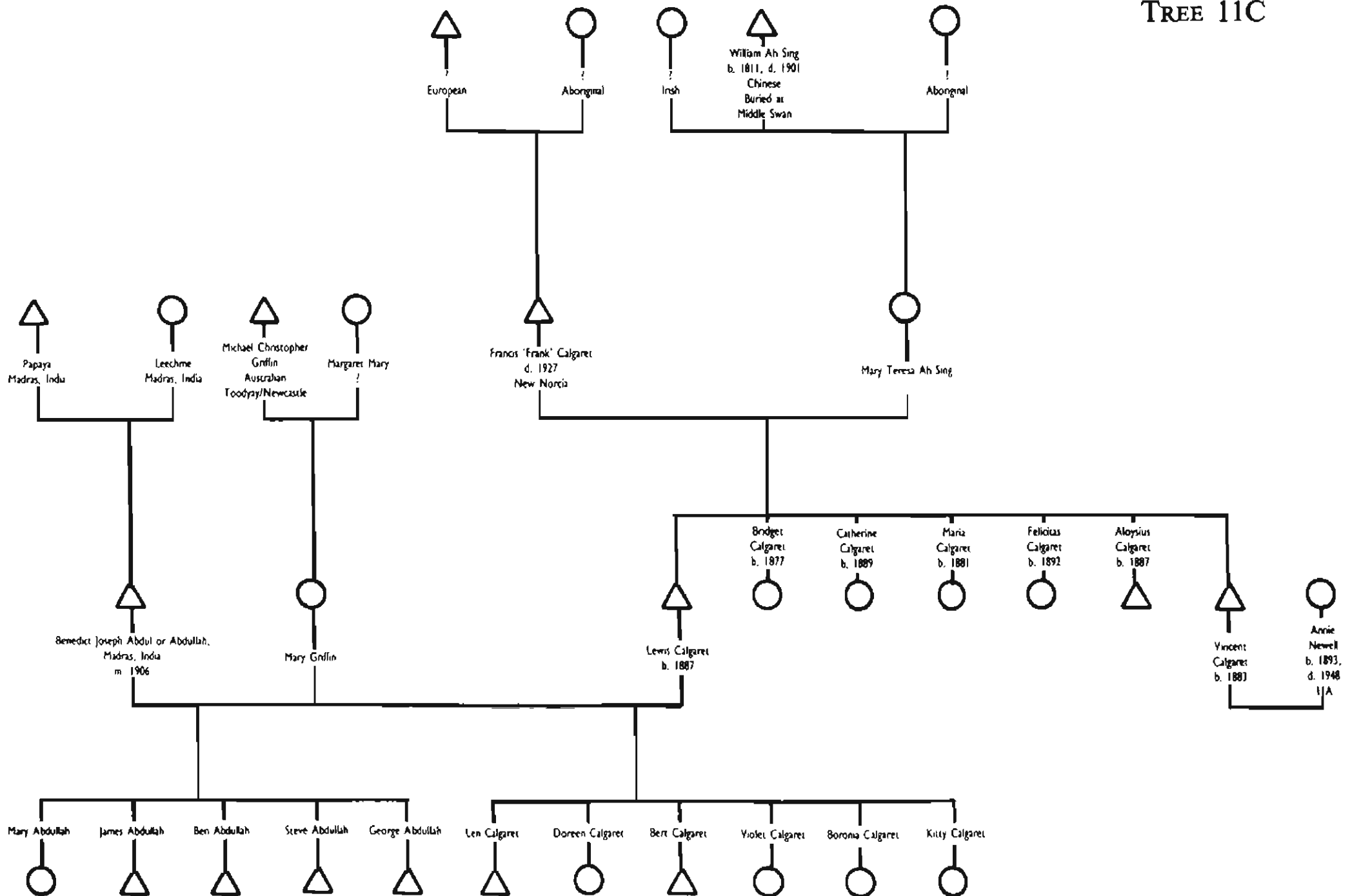


Jack Hart (11B), standing under the Williams bridge with his horse.



Adelaide Dyer (11B) with her husband Donald (surname unknown) (11B) and their two children, c. 1918.

# TREE 11C



AND WHEREAS by these presents that I *Benedict Abdul*  
of *New Norcia - Hindoo*  
hereby bind myself to HENRY PRINCE Chief Protector of  
Aborigines his executors and administrators and to the  
person who hereafter for the time being may fill the office  
of Chief Protector of Aborigines for the payment to him  
or them of the sum of Fifty pounds sterling.

SEALED with my seal

this *9th* day  
of *June* 1906.

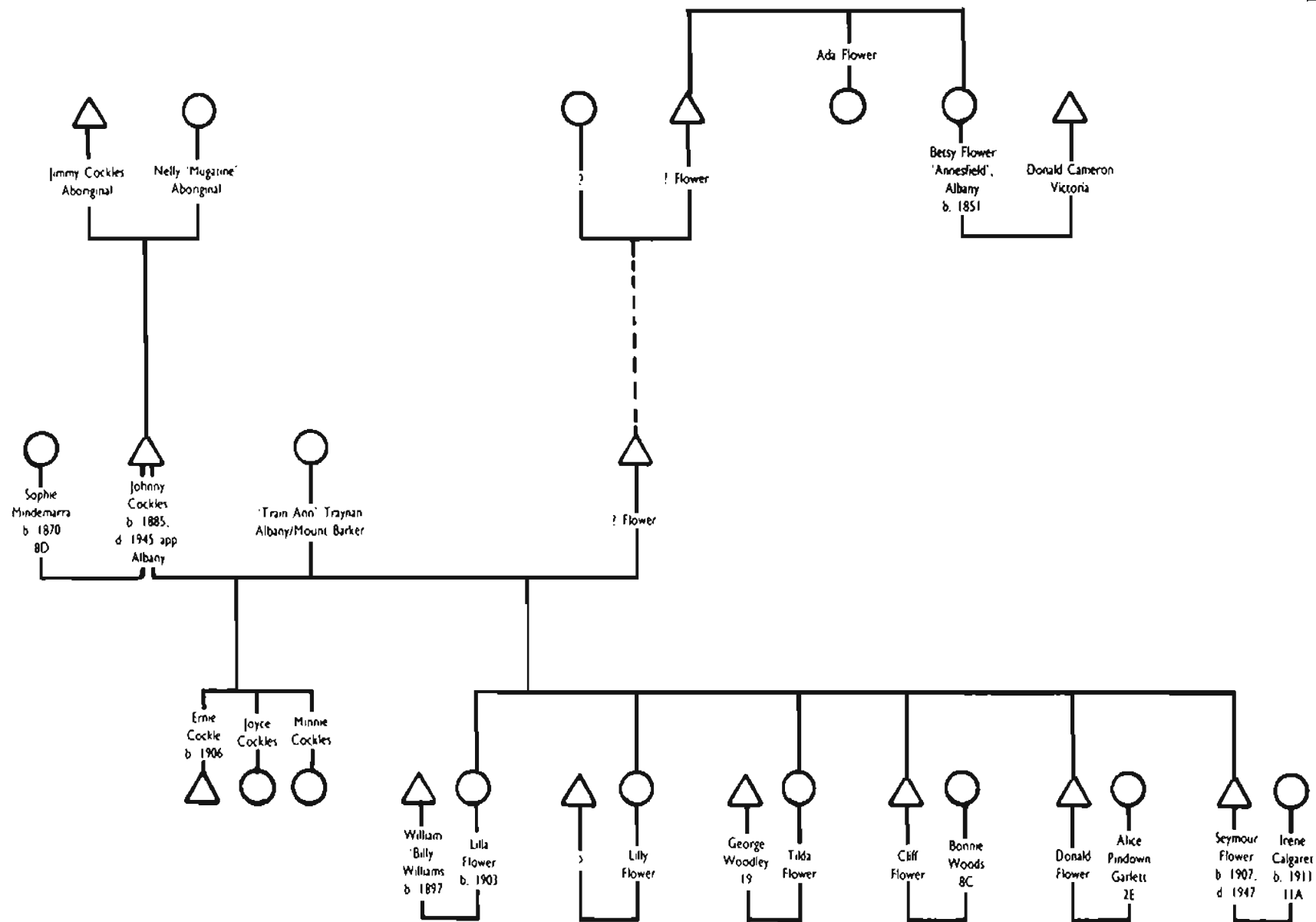
*Benedict Abdul*  
*indist*

*Witness Benigno Gimenez*

WHEREAS the said *Benedict Abdul*  
has under the provisions of Section 42 of the Aborigines  
Act, 1905, applied to the Chief Protector of Aborigines for  
permission to marry *Mary Griffin*  
a female aboriginal, and the Chief Protector of Aborigines  
has agreed to grant such permission subject to the above  
written obligation being executed conditioned as hereinafter  
expressed.

NOW the above written obligation shall not be put  
into force unless a protector of aborigines shall certify  
in writing that the said *Benedict Abdul*  
has deserted the said *Mary Griffin*  
or that such protector has reason to believe that the said  
*Benedict Abdul* is about to  
desert the said *Mary Griffin*  
or is about to leave Western Australia without making  
sufficient provision for the maintenance of the said

TREE 11D



JOHNNY COCKLES

When Johnny Cockles died in 1945, many people said it was the passing of the last person of all-Aboriginal descent in the Albany area. However, this has been claimed for a number of people, including Tommy King of Albany, and the question is a matter of continuing debate.

During his lifetime, Johnny Cockles had a number of jobs including that of limeburner on the Frenchman Bay Road. He was married at least twice, to Sophie Mindemarra and to a girl by the name of Traynan. As a play upon her name, Miss Traynan became known locally as 'Train Ann' because she was a regular traveller on the Mount Barker/Albany railway, visiting her relatives and friends.



'Train Ann' Traynan (11D), portrait by Brenda Holland.



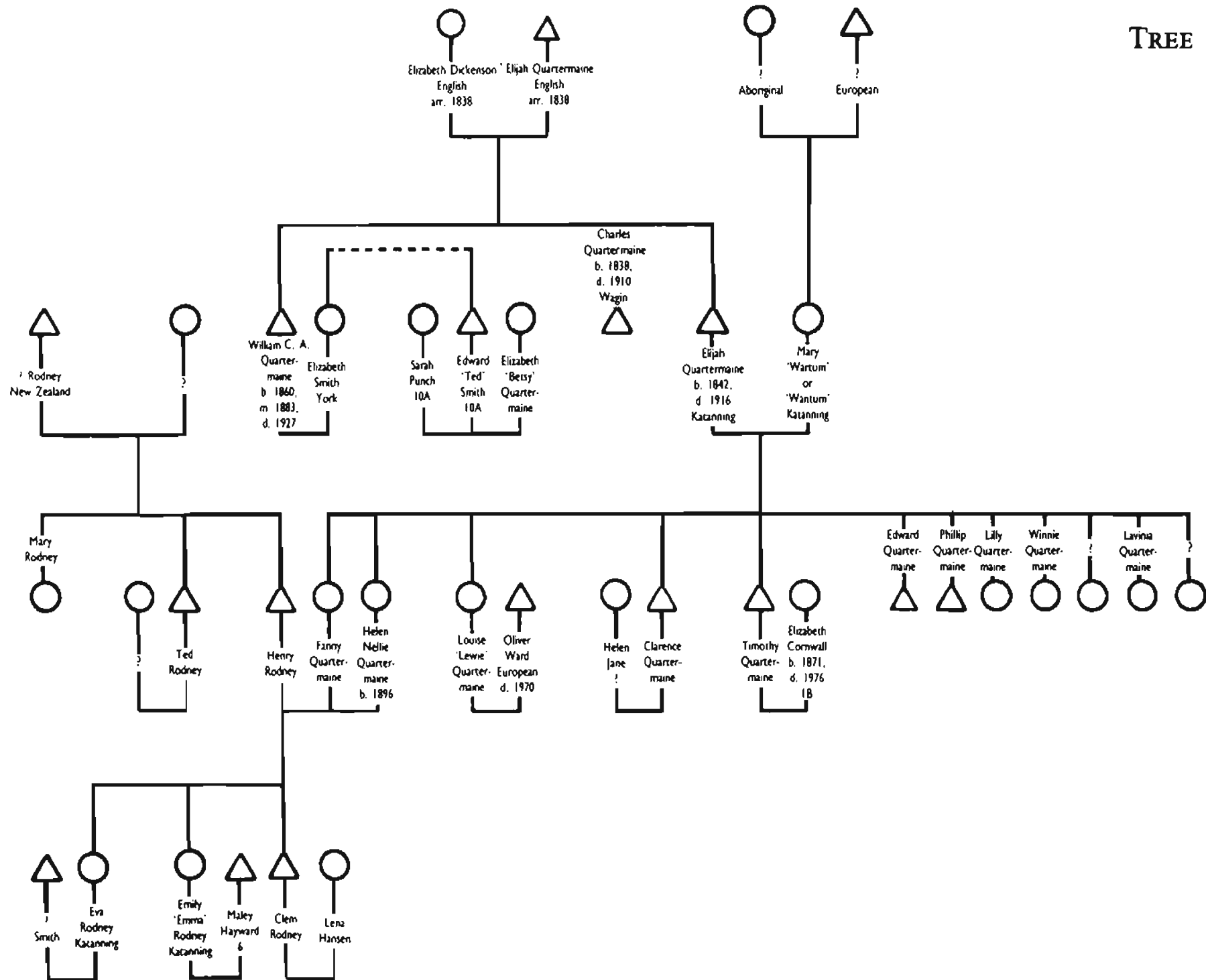
Johnny Cockles (11D), portrait by Brenda Holland.



Ernie Cockle (11D), n.d.



# TREE 12



ELIJAH QUARTERMAINE 1815-1888

Elijah Quartermaine arrived in the Swan River Colony with his wife in 1838. The story is told of how, in 1842, he employed an Aboriginal to travel to the Katanning district and bring back samples of grasses, so that he could see whether the country would be suitable for sheep grazing. The Aboriginal carried back a turf of grass and on seeing it, Elijah immediately journeyed to the area in a two-horse cart to see the country for himself. On his return to Perth he took up a large grant of land at Yowangup Springs.

Elijah Quartermaine used his property at Yowangup Springs to complement another at Beverley, and for twenty years he travelled between the two districts grazing his sheep, which were always in very good condition. In 1854 he decided that Yowangup Springs would be the family's permanent home, and in 1862 built the homestead there.

The Quartermaine homestead was the first to be built in the Katan-

ning district, and was situated in front of a large encampment of Aborigines whose tribal lands encompassed the farm. Elijah fenced off five hectares of land for their use, and as a native wildlife reserve, and encouraged emus and kangaroos, which were a valuable source of food for the Aborigines there.

One of Elijah's sons, Charles (1838-1910), acted as intermediary between the police and the Aborigines on the family property. He is said to have helped both the police and the Aborigines. However, the different ideas of justice held by both groups made the role of go-between a very difficult one, while his contact with both cultures inevitably led to deeper involvement in both. Charles finally left Yowangup Springs and went to live in Wagin because he was worried and unsettled about the Aborigines, and apparently fearful of them.

The Quartermaine name can be traced back to the twelfth century, and is a French word meaning four hands. There is a Quartermaine Blazon of Arms and the family motto is 'Forbid Envy'.



*(left)* Elijah Quartermaine senior (12) with his son, William C. A. Quartermaine (12), c. 1888.

*(right)* Louise 'Lewie' Quartermaine (12) (married Oliver Ward) with her sister Nellie Quartermaine (12) (married Henry Rodney), c. 1905.



WILLIAM C. A. QUARTERMAINE 1860-1927 AND ELIZABETH SMITH

William C. A. Quartermaine, another son of Elijah Quartermaine senior, married Elizabeth Smith, a girl of part-Aboriginal descent, in 1883. Elizabeth may have been from York, where the couple lived after they were married, as she had relatives in the district. Elizabeth became ill when a thorn stuck in her finger and it turned septic. It seemed that the only course open was to amputate the finger. However, Elizabeth's Aboriginal family and friends could not bring themselves to agree to this, as they feared it would kill her. Word of her illness was sent to Elijah and Mary Quartermaine, her brother- and sister-in-law, and Elijah rode immediately to York to persuade Elizabeth's people to consent to the operation. Unhappily, by the time he arrived it was too late, the infection had spread and it was impossible to operate.

Elizabeth died, and was buried in the native burial ground, York, instead of the family property. A story is told that on her death bed, troubled by her conscience, she confessed to having had a young lover and her husband could not bring himself to accept this and forgive her. William C. A. Quartermaine had a sizeable family, but it is not clear whether these children were by Elizabeth, or whether he later remarried. One of his children is said to have been killed by Aborigines, although the circumstances surrounding the death are unclear.

When Elijah was returning home after Elizabeth's burial, he was shot at by a ticket-of-leave man, William Graham No. 5244. The reason for Graham's hatred of Elijah is not known. Luck was with Elijah, and the bullet smashed into his gold fob watch, which he wore in his left breast pocket, and in this way his life was saved.



(above) The Quartermaine family.

These women and girls are unidentified, although it is known that they are all Quartermaines. Louise 'Lewie' Ward nee Quartermaine (12) is possibly the woman on the left in the back row; and Nellie Rodney nee Quartermaine (12) could be the woman fourth from the left in the middle row.

(left) Girls at Woodanilling School, 1927.

Back row, third from left: Emily 'Emma' Rodney (12); sixth from left: her sister Eva Rodney (12).

Front row, extreme right: Ethel Ward (daughter of Oliver Ward).





ELIJAH 'NIGEL' QUARTERMAINE 1842-1914

Elijah 'Nigel' Quartermaine, son of Elijah Quartermaine, built a two-room cottage on the family property, intending to marry a school-teacher from England whose passage to the colony he had arranged. His plans did not work out, because the woman jilted him and returned to England, allegedly taking with her £200 belonging to Elijah.

When he was over his disappointment Elijah fell in love with Mary 'Wartum', or 'Wantum', a woman of Aboriginal and European descent living in the Aboriginal encampment. A story is told of how Mary was to have been married to a tribal husband, but she fled from her camp to avoid this. Elijah offered her protection and an alternative to tribal life, and later marriage. Another story tells of how Mary came to work for Elijah as a housekeeper, bringing with her two children by a former marriage. The couple's common unhappy experiences in love provided a bond between them, their feelings for each other grew, and they were married or lived together. It is likely that both of these stories contain elements of what actually happened. In any event, Elijah and Mary remained together for the rest of their lives and had a large family of twelve children, many of whom were named after their uncles and aunts on their father's side.

On the death of Elijah Quartermaine senior, Elijah inherited part of the estate. This passed to Mary on his death, and then finally to two grandchildren, Eva and Emily Rodney. Emily Rodney married Maley Hayward, a well known footballer in the lower great southern national football league district.

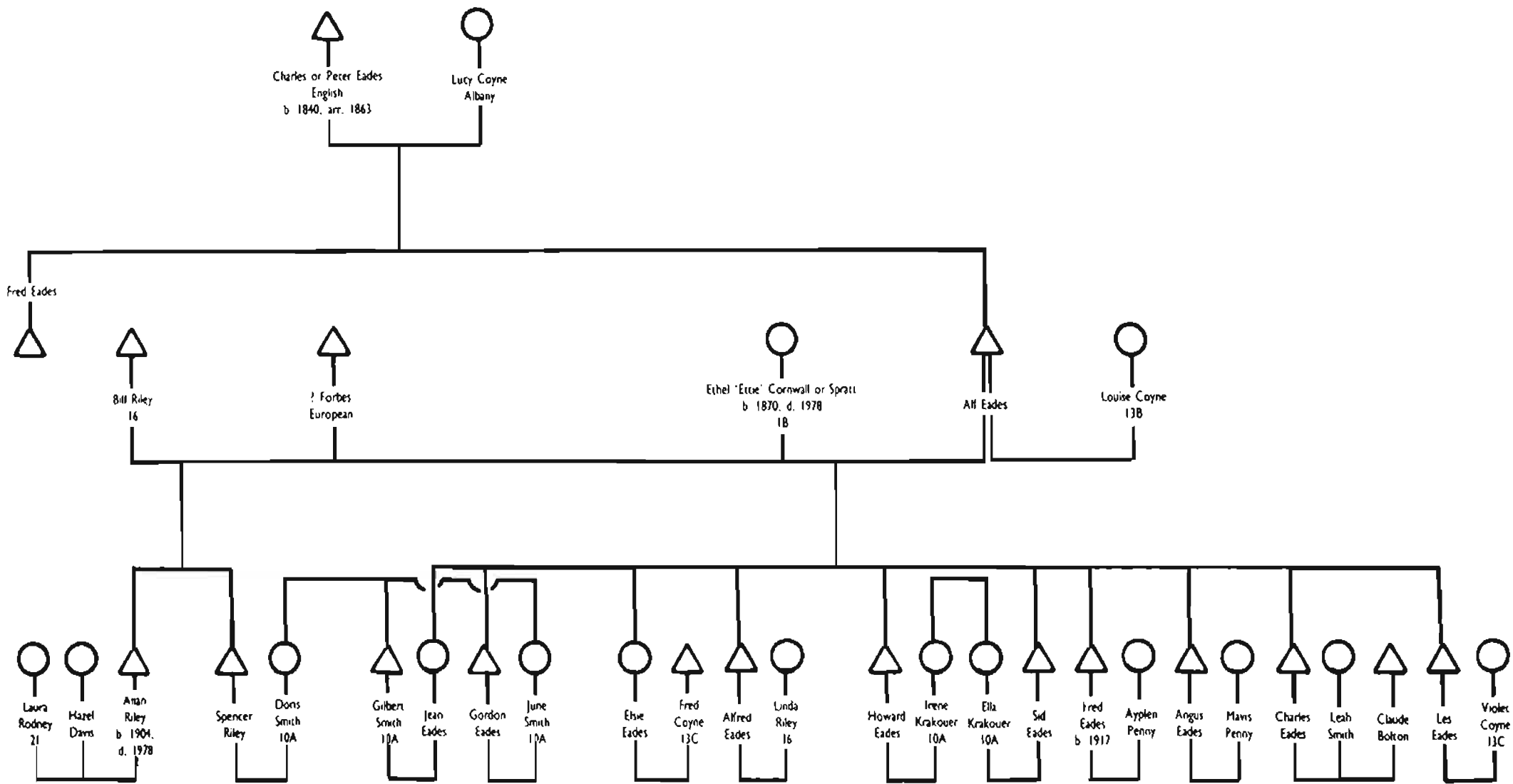
Mary 'Wartum' or 'Wantam' Quartermaine is still remembered by many as an old lady in Katanning, who was very fond of a chat and a pipe of tobacco.

*(top left)* Vera Diamond and Eva Rodney (12), 1920s.

*(left)* Henry Rodney (12) with his daughter Emily 'Emma' Rodney (12). The little girl Henry Rodney is holding is unidentified. Woodanilling, 1920s.



# TREE 13A



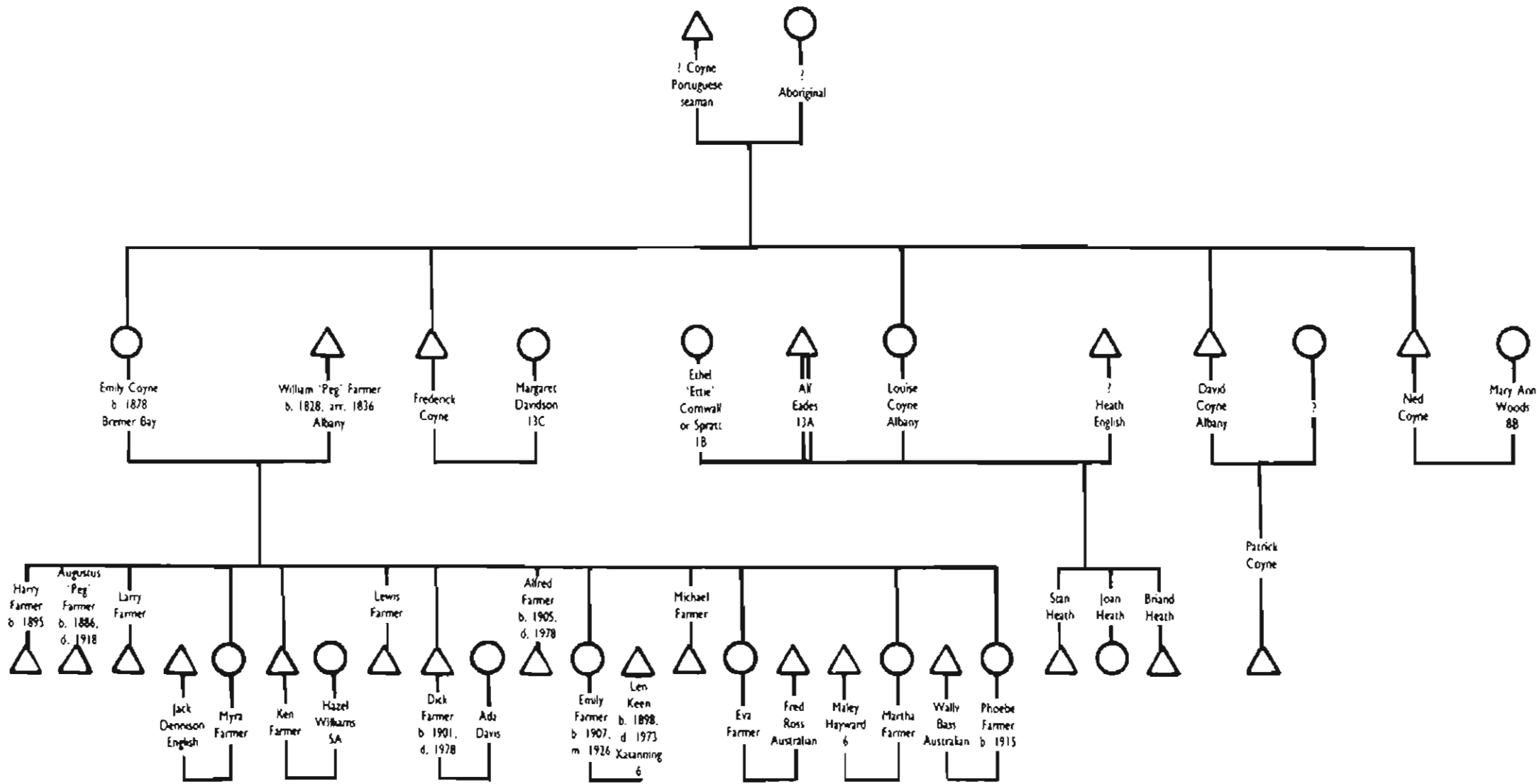


*(left)* Spencer Riley (13A) and Len Keen (6), c. 1920.

*(above)* Fred Coyne (13C) with his wife Elsie Coyne nee Eades (13A) and brother-in-law Les Eades (13A), c. 1954.

*(right)* Joyce Rodd nee Eades with her father Les Eades (13A), Albany, n.d.

# TREE 13B



EMILY FARMER NÉE COYNE,  
THE KATANNING MIDWIFE

Emily Farmer née Coyne was born in Bremer Bay around 1878. She grew up with her sister and two brothers in Albany, where she met a young English surveyor, William Peg Farmer. William and Emily fell in love and married, and had a large family of thirteen children. William Peg Farmer worked in the Katanning and Albany districts with a surveying team, and surveyed much of the land there.

Emily Farmer became a competent and well-known midwife in Katanning, and over the years assisted with the birth of many of the local residents. She worked with the local doctor, Dr Pope, who regularly called upon her when he had a maternity case to go to. At times Emily would harness her horse and drive in a buggy or sulky to women needing her help. Her own thirteen deliveries provided her with a great deal of personal experience as she attended other women in labour. If her husband was not at home, Emily would leave her children in the care of neighbours or relatives, and as they grew up the older children

took on the responsibility of caring for the younger ones while their mother was out.

Deaths during childbirth were not uncommon in those days, and Emily Farmer became skilled at laying out the deceased as a sad side to the work she did. Over time she came to be called on regularly to assist in this area when there had been a death, again working closely with Dr Pope.

Four of Emily and William Peg Farmer's sons fought in World War I. Ken and Lewis Farmer returned home, but Augustus Peg and Larry were killed in action. Larry was killed while fighting in France, and was buried with full military honours. His name appears in Canberra on the list of Australian soldiers awarded medals for outstanding service during the First World War. Augustus Peg Farmer was also killed in action in France and buried at Hamel. He was awarded a hero's medal.

Emily Farmer's son-in-law, Len Keen, worked in the Katanning district. He and his wife Emily and children moved to Midland when he obtained a job with the railways. He worked in Midland for thirty years until his retirement.





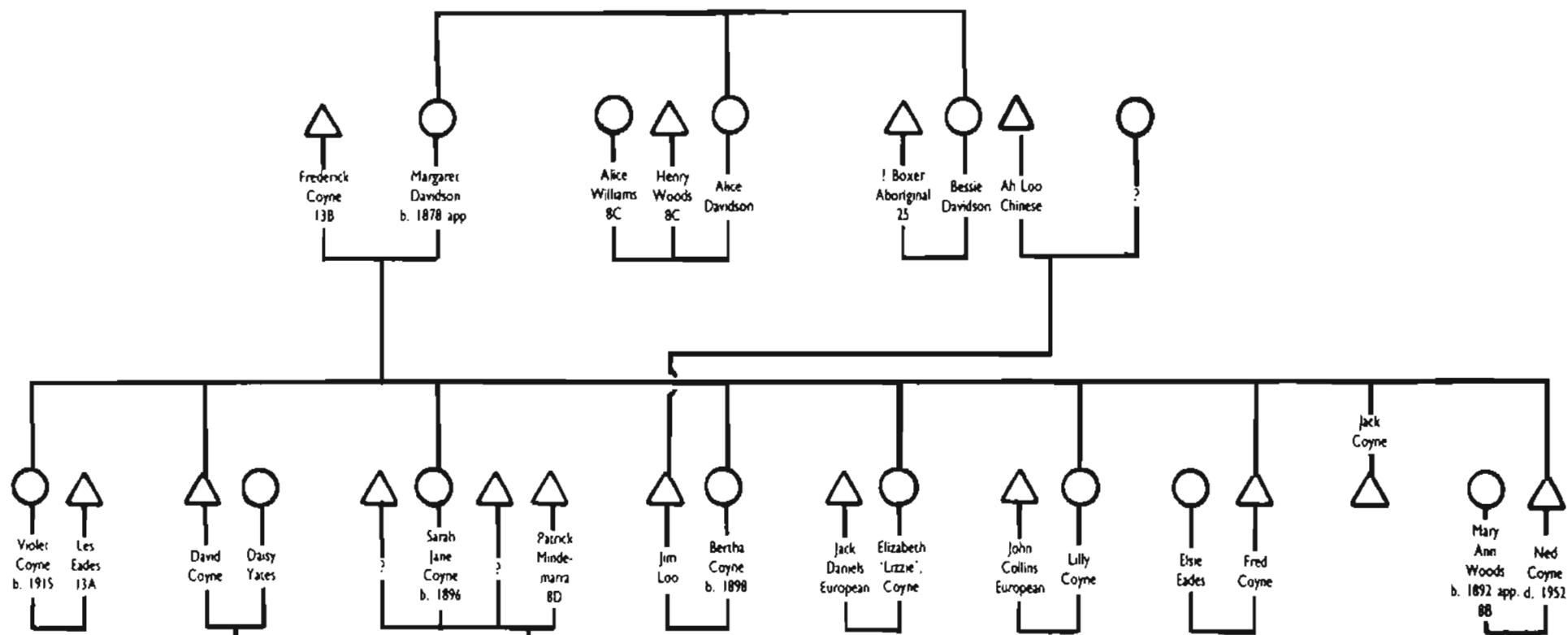
**In Loving Memory of  
CORPORAL A. P. FARMER, M.M.  
No. 4608. 16th Battalion.**

Enlisted in the A.I.F. in Bridgetown in the year 1915, and sailed for Egypt in January, 1916, and from there proceeded to England, where he completed his military training. He was then sent to France, where he took part in the historic battles of Bullecourt, Lagnicourt, Ypres and Merricourt, therefore seeing very heavy fighting. The above hero won his medal for conspicuous bravery on the field at Merricourt. It was on the eventful 8th of August, 1918, that he was killed at Merricourt. He was 32 years of age and is buried at Hamel, in France. His mother, Mrs. E. Farmer, resides at Drove-street, Kataning, West Australia.

*(facing page, left)* Emily Farmer nee Coyne (13B) with two of her small daughters, 1890s: *left*, Martha Farmer (13B), married Maley Hayward (6); *right*, Phoebe Farmer (13B), married Wally Bass.

*(facing page, right)* Eva Ross nee Farmer (13B), Dolly Wheeler, Emily Keen nee Farmer (13B), 1920s.





children of David Coyne and Daisy Yates:  
 Andrew Coyne m. Agnes Nundill  
 Patrick Coyne b. 1918 m. 1. ?; 2. Linda Wallam  
 Margaret 'Magge' Coyne m. Wesley Williams (SA)  
 Frank Coyne m. Hilda Williams  
 Gladys Coyne

child of Sarah Jane Coyne and Patrick Mindemarra:  
 Mary Mindemarra m. James Hill



Family portrait: sisters Bertha Loo nee Coyne (13C), Elizabeth 'Lizzie' Daniels nee Coyne (13C), with their mother Margaret Coyne nee Davidson (13C), c. 1915.



Bertha Loo nee Coyne (13C), c. 1945.



*(left)* Violet Eades nee Coyne (13C),  
1920s.

*(right)* Violet Eades nee Coyne (13C)  
and Lilly Collins nee Coyne (13C), her  
sister, arriving at a country show,  
1940s.

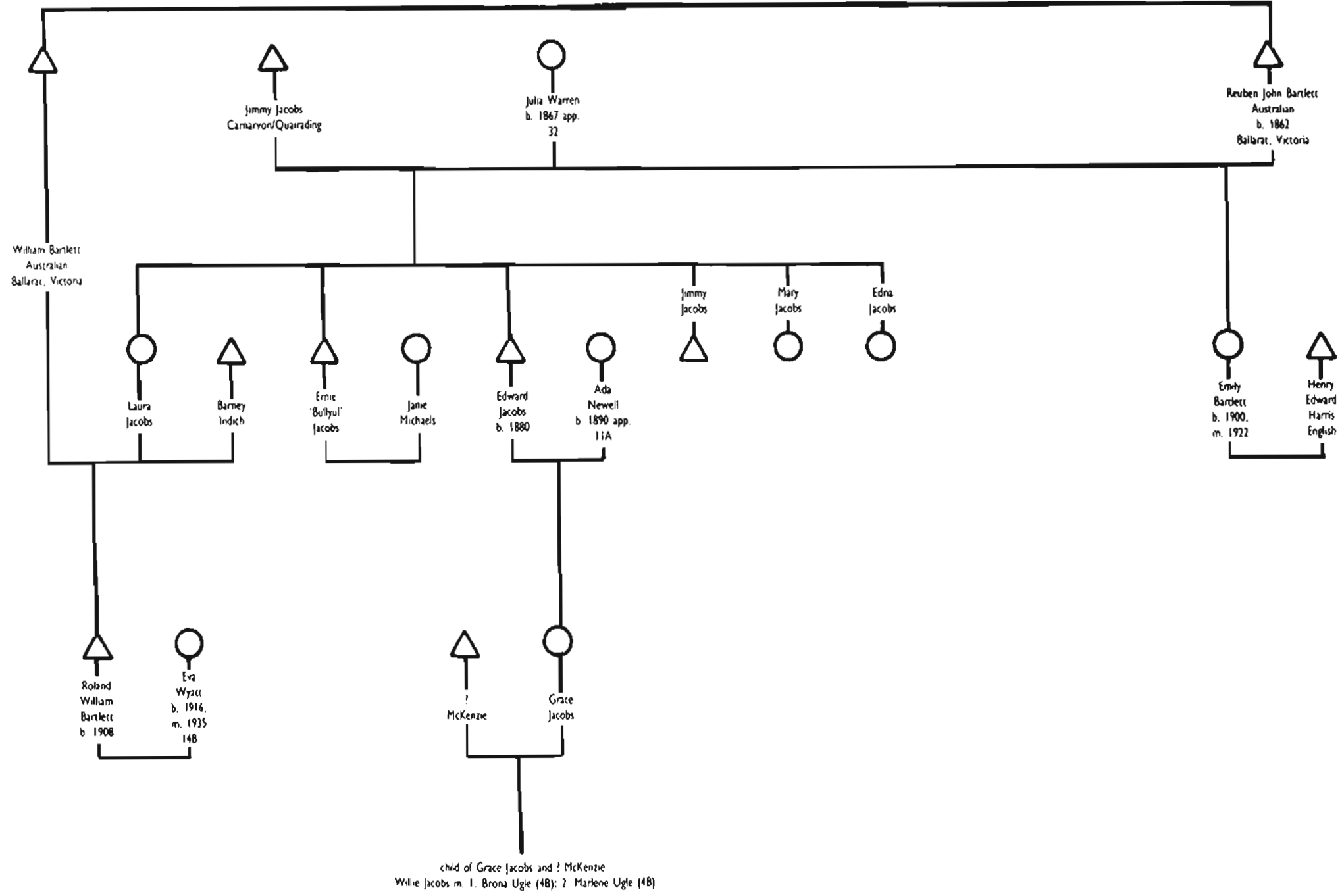




*(above)* Jack Coyne (13C) with his nephew Garry Coyne, late 1940s.

*(left)* Left to right: toddler unidentified, Kath Michael nee Moore and Mary Hill nee Mindemarra (13C), 1940s.

# TREE 14A



## RELATIVES BY MARRIAGE

WARREN/BARTLETT/JACOBS

Reuben John Bartlett, born in 1862 in Ballarat, Victoria, and his brother William, were the sons of an English ship deserter. Bartlett senior owned a fruit orchard in Victoria, but was forced to abandon it and move to Ballarat during an economic depression. Reuben John and William decided to try their fortune in Western Australia in the gold rushes of the 1890s. Both brothers liked the west, and settled down and had families.

Reuben John Bartlett's wife, Julia Warren, was a widow when they met. She had been married at a very early age to Jimmy Jacobs, a man much older than her. She is said to have been thirteen years old when she had her first child. Such early marriages were usual in Aboriginal society, and the custom persisted for some time after European settlement of the south-west.

Julia and Reuben John Bartlett had a daughter Emily, born in 1900. She grew up and married an Englishman, Edward Harris, who came to Western Australia after the First World War. He had risen to the rank of sergeant major in the British Army during the war.

Laura Jacobs, the eldest daughter of Julia Bartlett (née Warren) and Jimmy Jacobs, married William Bartlett, the brother of Reuben John Bartlett. The couple had one son, Roland William Bartlett, born 1908.



*(left)* Grace McKenzie nee Jacobs (14A) with her son Willie Jacobs (14A) and his wife Marlene Jacobs nee Ugle (4B), n.d.

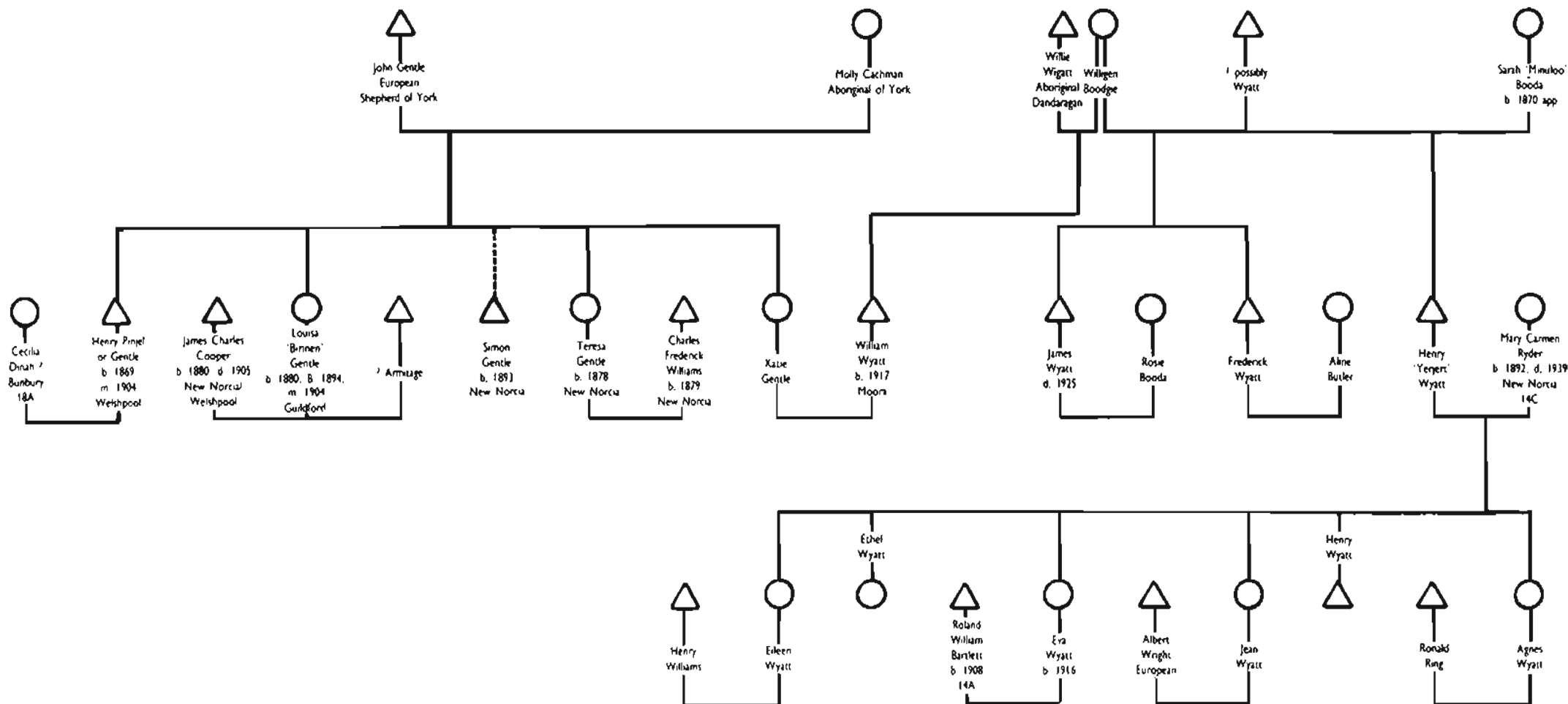
*(above right)* Keith Harris with Henry Edward Harris—possibly his grandfather—and brother Edward Harris, 1930s.

*(right)* Henry Edward Harris (14A) with his wife Emily Harris nee Bartlett (14A), and two of their children, 1924.





# TREE 14B

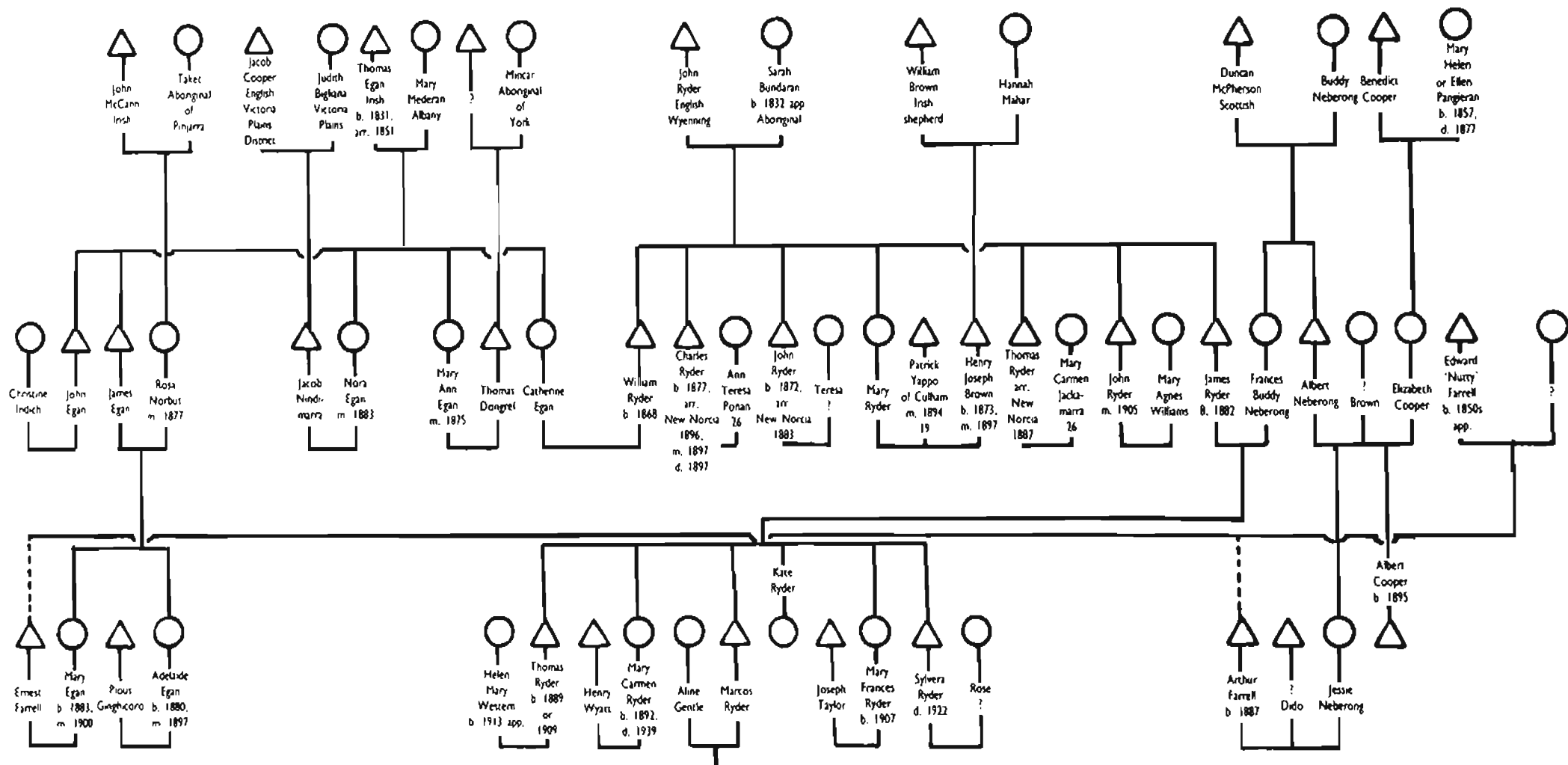




*(left)* Rosie Gentle with her husband, Bob Allen, at Moore River Settlement, c. 1921.

Rosie Gentle was one of the descendants of John Gentle and Molly Cachiman of York. She married Bob Allen who was originally from the north-west or Pilbara region and who worked as a 'black tracker' (Aboriginal police aide) at the Moore River Native Settlement along with two other black trackers from the same region.

# TREE 14C



children of Marc (Marcos) Ryder and Aline Gentle:  
 Cecilia Ryder m. Bonnie Leyland (22C)  
 Joseph Ryder  
 Richard Ryder  
 John Ryder  
 Kathleen Ryder m. Lyndon Harris (7A)  
 Matthew Ryder  
 Malcolm Ryder  
 Alice Ryder m. Oliver Kickers b. 1900 (18A)  
 Florence Ryder m. Harold Willaway (31)  
 Grace Ryder m. ? Kickers

## EDWARD 'NUTTY' FARRELL AND THE HORSE DEAL

Edward 'Nutty' Farrell was the child of an English man and an Aboriginal woman, and was baptized and raised in the Leschenault/Wellington district. He was well known and liked in the area, and worked as a general farmhand on various settlers' farms.

In 1883 he was employed on the property of Forbes Fee. As a special deal, Fee offered to give him a young horse, which he could paddock and break-in during the following months and which would count as part of his wages. However, an opportunity to sell the horse arose, and Fee decided to break his word to Edward Farrell and sell the horse for a profit, claiming he had never given it away.

Feeling that he was in the right, Edward Farrell claimed his horse, and Fee had him arrested and charged with stealing a horse and attempting to obliterate the brand mark.

The case was heard in Perth. Edward Farrell proclaimed his innocence and denied the claim that the horse he had, had any brand on it. However, the sentencing judge believed Fee's story, and Edward Farrell was sentenced to twelve months' hard labour.

On hearing of the sentence, the Bunbury magistrate and local settlers felt that an injustice had been done. The magistrate made a special representation to the Perth court, and as a result Edward Farrell was permitted to serve his sentence in the Bunbury jail instead of being sent to Rottneest. He was also permitted to work in the police stables, because of his care and skill with horses, rather than be confined to gaol.

Local settlers were still not satisfied that justice had been done, and they organized a petition with twenty-five signatures from the Wellington district, to obtain Edward Farrell's full pardon. However on this point the court refused to budge, although it agreed to a six months' remission of his sentence. As the affair had taken six months from the time of his sentence already, this meant that Edward Farrell had no more time to serve and was once again a free man, although saddened by his experience.

## MARY HELEN OR ELLEN PANGIERAN 1857-1877

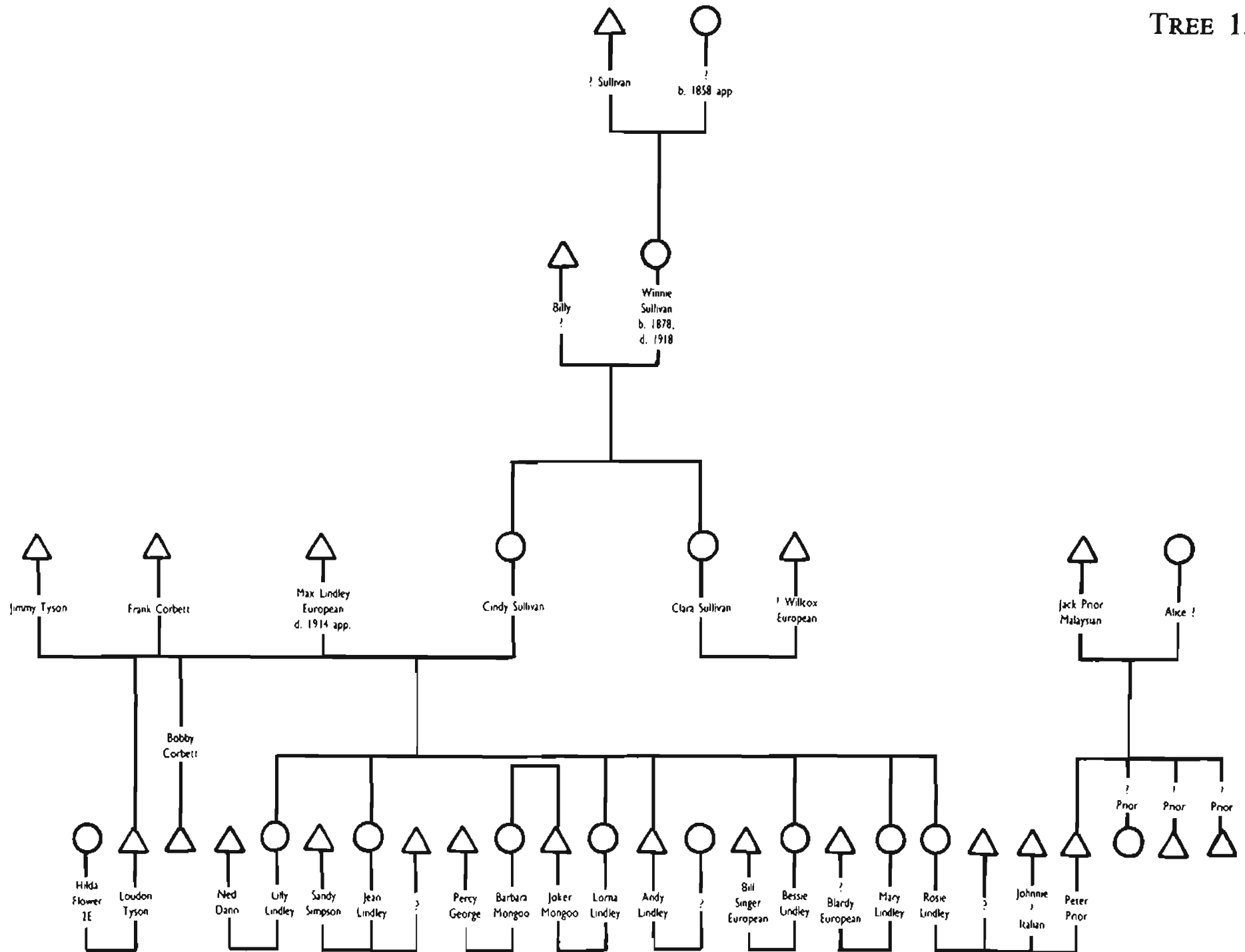
Mary Helen or Ellen Pangieran was born in Bunbury in 1847. Because her mother had been deserted by Mary's European father, the government authorities considered that she was unable to bring up her daughter on her own. As a consequence, Mary was sent to New Norcia Mission to receive an education.

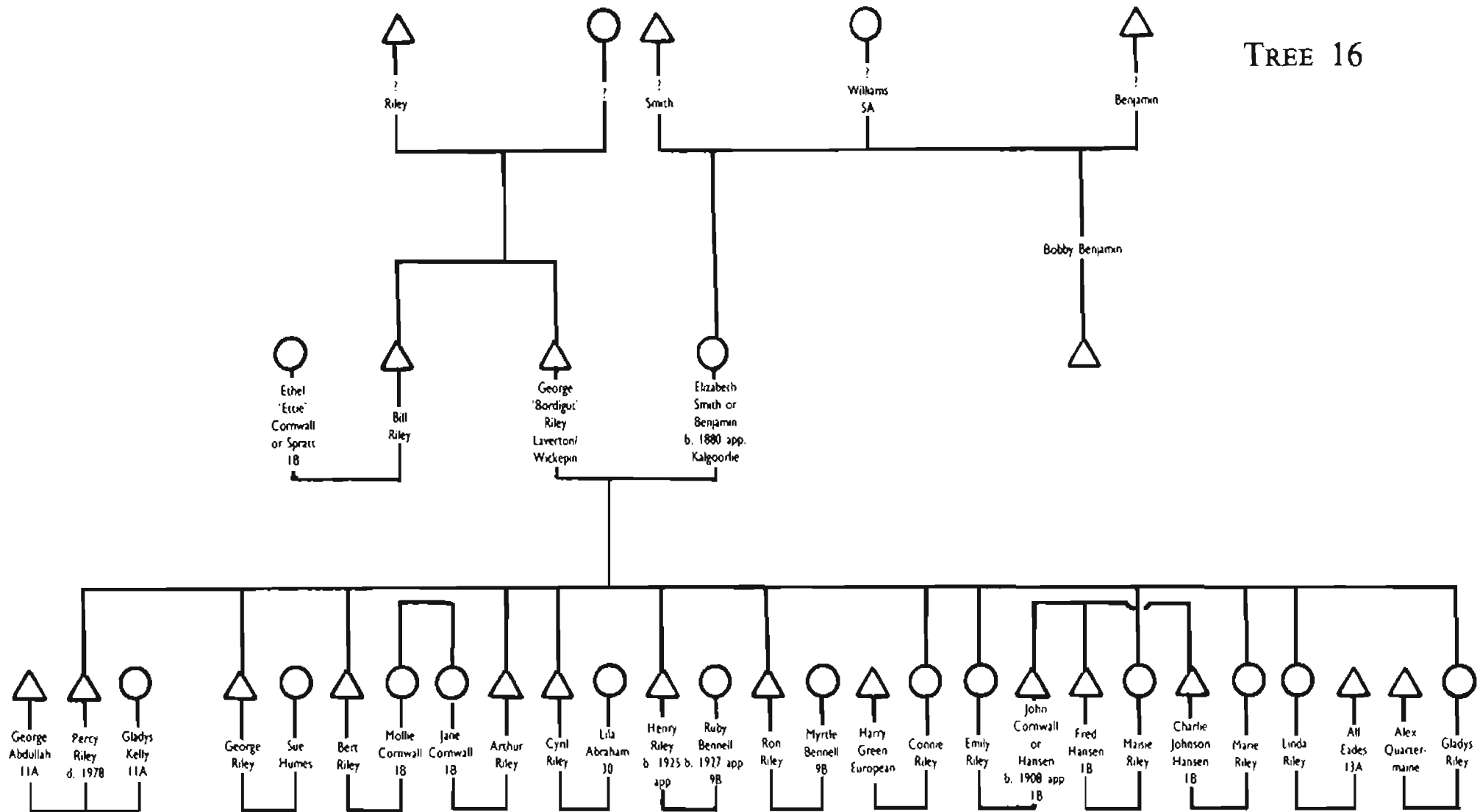
Mary grew up at New Norcia, where she met Benedict Cooper or Cuper. The couple were married and had a small family.

In 1873 the telegraph line from Perth to Geraldton was completed as far as New Norcia, and Mary Cooper was appointed as the first telegraphist and post-mistress. She ran the small post office, and tended to her house which was built adjoining the office, until her early death from tuberculosis in 1877. Her husband erected a tombstone over her grave, inscribed:

Mary Helen Cuper formerly Miss Pangieran of Bunbury who having been educated and afterwards Post Mistress and the first telegraph operator in New Norcia departed this life comforted by the Sacraments of the Holy Catholic Church at age 30, 12th January 1877. May her soul rest in peace at her sorrowful husband's expenses. Benedict Cuper.\*

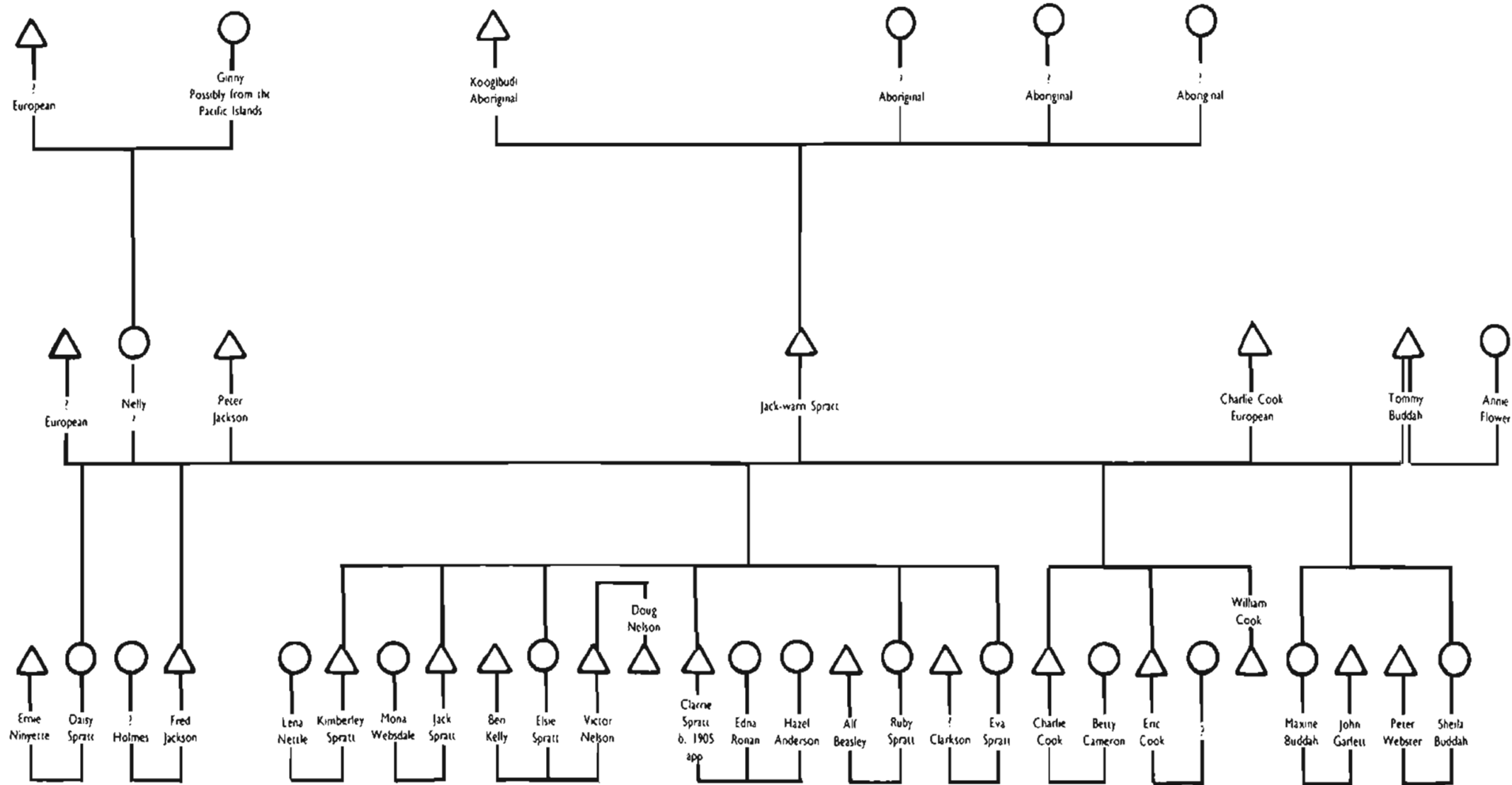
TREE 15





THE LONELY GOLDFIELDS GIRL

George 'Bordigut' Riley was making a living on the goldfields around Kalgoorlie in the mid-1890s, when he came across a young girl. She was about fourteen years old, and had no reliable person to care for her. Life on the goldfields was very rough in those days, and George 'Bordigut' Riley felt his protective instincts aroused for someone in such a vulnerable position. He looked after the girl, Elizabeth Smith or Benjamin, and later married her. The couple had a long life together, and a large family of thirteen children.





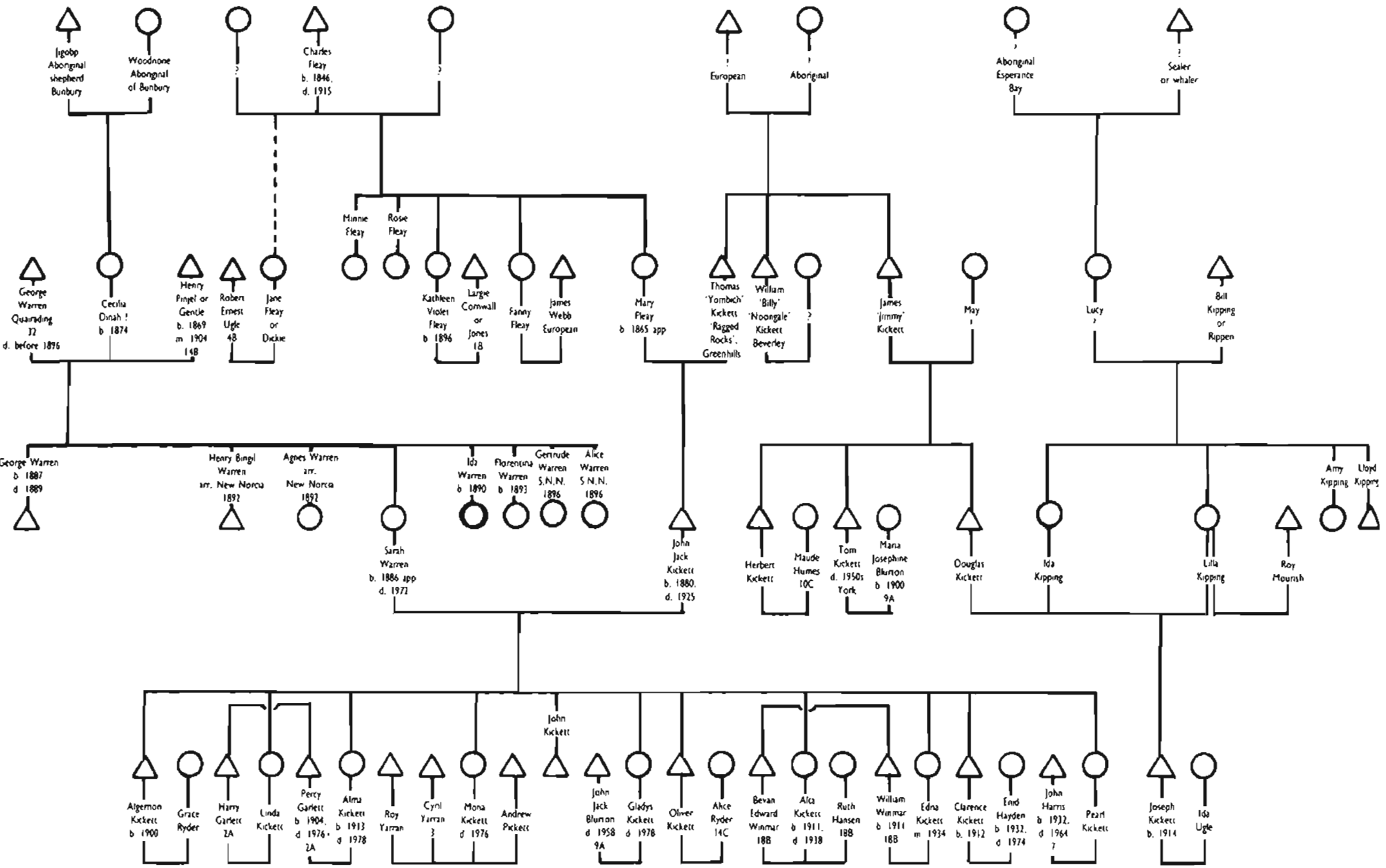
*(above)* Betty Cook nee Cameron (17) with some farm pets, including a new season's lamb, n.d.

*(left)* Annie Stokes nee Newell (11A) and Tommy Buddah (17).



# TREE 18A

S.N.N. = Surrendered to New Norcia



## THE MEN FROM THE SEA

Aborigines in the Esperance Bay area and along the south-west coast of the state were aware of the potential danger that sealers, whalers and explorers posed to their womenfolk, and took precautions against their capture by avoiding contact between the women and these intruders. While whaling and sealing vessels were in the area for a number of years before the military outpost was established at King George Sound (Albany) in 1827, from the 1830s onwards whaling was very intensive along the southern coast and as far northwards as Shark Bay. The crews of these whaling boats were recruited from many different countries including Europe, America, New Zealand, South East Asia, the Pacific Islands and Africa.

One day several Aboriginal girls and women were fishing on sandbanks in the Esperance Bay area. Their return to shore was hindered by a party of strange men, probably whalers or sealers, until the tide came in, cutting them off from the shore and making them virtual prisoners. The girls and women were then ambushed by these men, who kept them as workers and sexual partners while they were in the area.

One of these women subsequently gave birth to a baby girl, whom she named Lucy. Lucy grew up to marry Bill Kipping (or Rippen) and had a family of three girls and one boy.

Other seafarers who had local families were Mallane (22C) and Malloy or Melloy (27).

## IDA KICKETT NÉE KIPPING

Aboriginal people from all over the state were involuntarily placed in Moore River Settlement from the time it opened in 1918 to its closure in 1951. This brought together people from different cultural areas and contrasting situations, from the north and south of the state. It was possible to place people in the Moore River Settlement and its 'sister' settlement Carrolup through the powers of the 1905 Aborigines Act.

Section 12 of this Act empowered the minister responsible to move any Aboriginal onto a reserve and made it an offence for that person to leave without a permit. In order to avoid this, people who came under the powers of the Act had to be able to prove that they were lawfully employed or had a husband to support them.

The Moore River Settlement was overcrowded and poorly kept, with grossly inadequate sanitary and health facilities. A great many deaths resulted during the time it operated as a settlement jail, orphanage, hospital and asylum, and several investigations by government and medical authorities found it unsanitary and lacking in amenities.

Ida Kipping (or Rippen), daughter of Lucy and Bill Kipping, married Douglas Kickett, son of James and Mary Kickett. While her husband was away working, she and her children were placed in Moore River Settlement as she was deemed to be without support. Within one week, several of her children died. A story is told of how Ida Kickett had a disagreement with another person in the settlement. This person is said to have arranged with a 'Mabarn Man' (native doctor) to cause the death of her children in revenge. Mabarn Men are held in awe by a number of people because they are believed to have knowledge of the powers of life and death, and to be able to heal sick people.

Ida Kickett herself is said to have then solicited the aid of another Mabarn Man in the settlement, to counter this tragic influence and to save the lives of the remainder of her children, and herself.

Some years later one of her surviving sons is said to have finally fallen victim to the influence of another Mabarn Man as a result of an argument concerning his wife. It is said that his wife preferred another man and this led to a quarrel. Resentful of her husband's treatment of her, the wife asked a Mabarn Man to bring his powers against him. When her husband died some time later, this was believed by some to have been the cause. The deceased husband had had three wives during his lifetime, and at least four children.



(above) Thomas 'Tom' 'Yombich' Kickett (18A) with his wife Mary Kickett nee Fleay (18A), Badjaling Mission, 1930s.

(below) Douglas Kickett (18A) with a friend Molly (surname unidentified), and his kangaroo dog used for running down kangaroos and rabbits, n.d.



Three sisters: Edna Winmar nee Kickett (18A), Alta Winmar nee Kickett (18A) and Linda Garlett nee Kickett (18A), Badjaling Mission, 1930s.



*Back row:* Lilla Mourish nee Kipping (18A).  
*Front row:* Jack Mourish, Anthony Edgill, Susan Edgill, n.d.

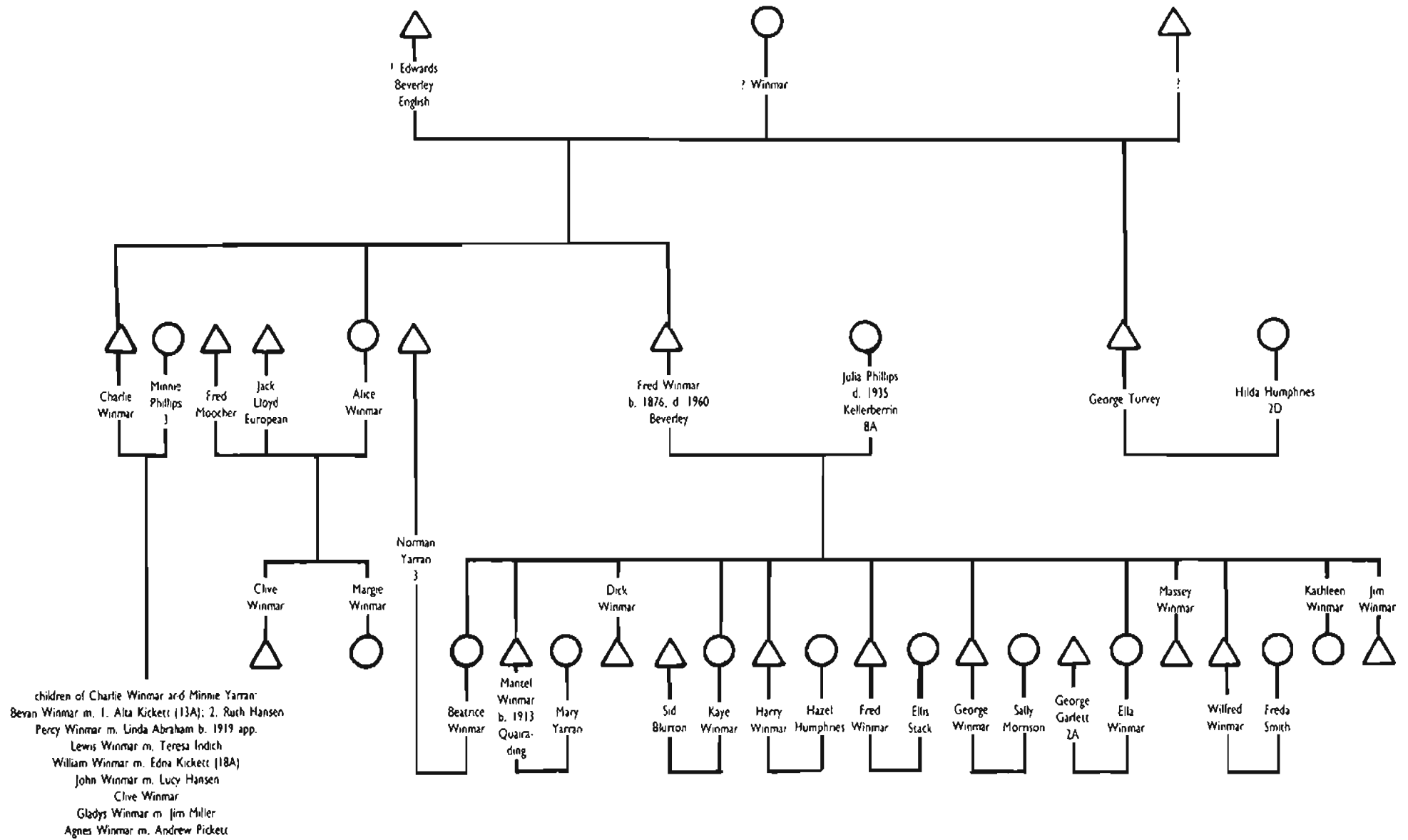


Three sisters-in-law with their babies: Alice Kickett nee Ryder (14C), Gladys Blurton nee Kickett (18A) and Grace Kickett nee Ryder (14C), Badjalling Mission, 1930s.



Sons of Douglas Kickett.  
*Left to right:* Morris Kickett with his brothers Richard Kickett and Andrew Kickett, and their half brother Joseph 'Joe' Kickett (18A), 1960s.

# TREE 18B





WINMAR

(far left) Mary Yarran (18B) and Mantel Winmar (18B) on their wedding day, Badjaling Mission, 1930s.

(centre) Fred Winmar (18B), missionary Miss Welr (married Will Douglas), Julia Winmar nee Phillips (18B), Badjaling Mission, 1930s.

(left) Minnie Winmar nee Phillips (3), and her husband Charlie Winmar (18B), n.d.

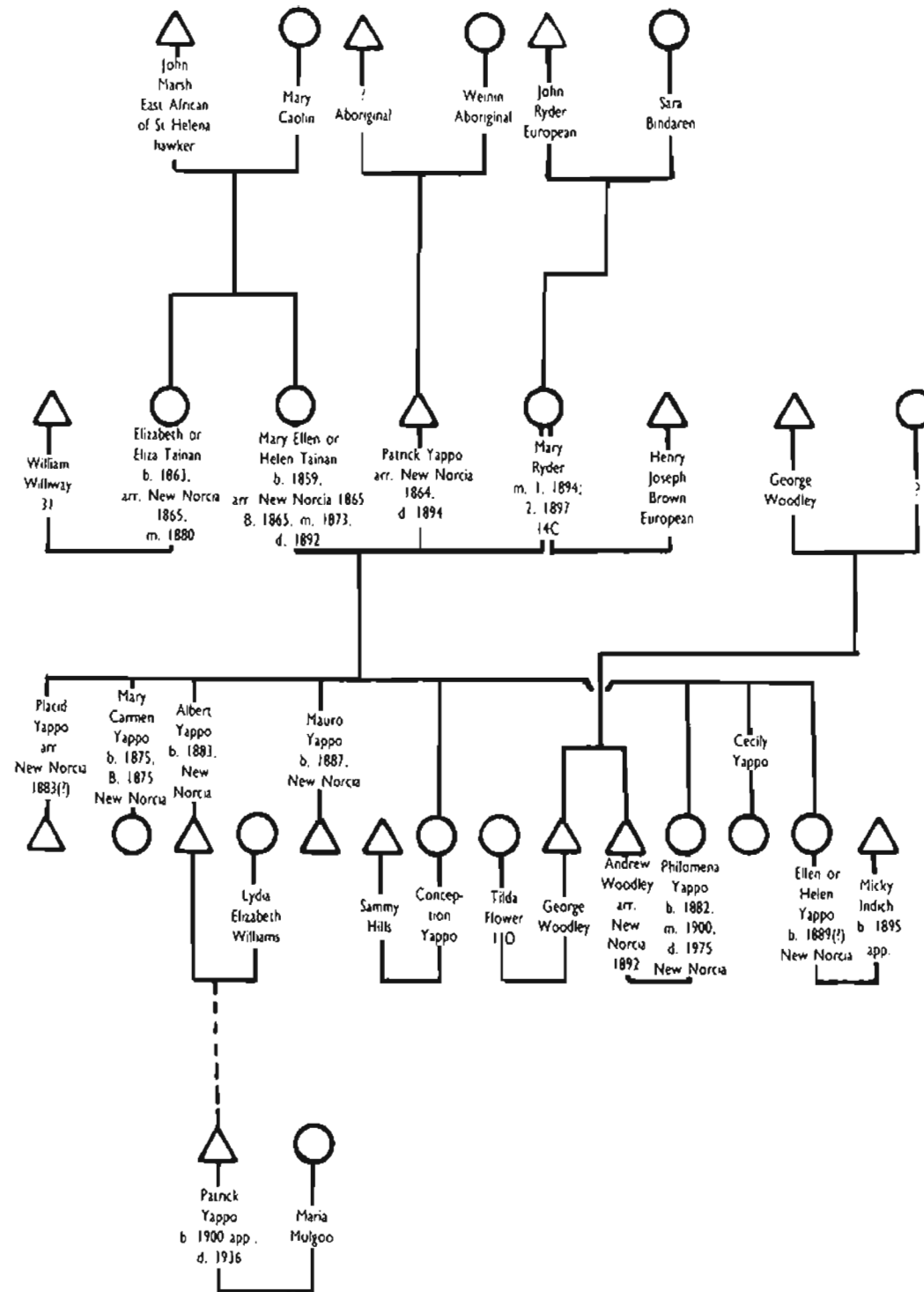
(below) Left to Right: Bevan Winmar (18B) and his wife Ruth Winmar nee Hansen (18B), John Winmar (18B), and his wife Lucy Winmar nee Hansen (18B), sister of Ruth, Badjaling Mission, 1930s.



Percy Winmar (18B), son of Minnie Winmar nee Phillips (18B) and Charlie Winmar (18B), with his message, 1945.

The Winmar name appears on the 1841 census of Aborigines in the Avon district.

TREE 19



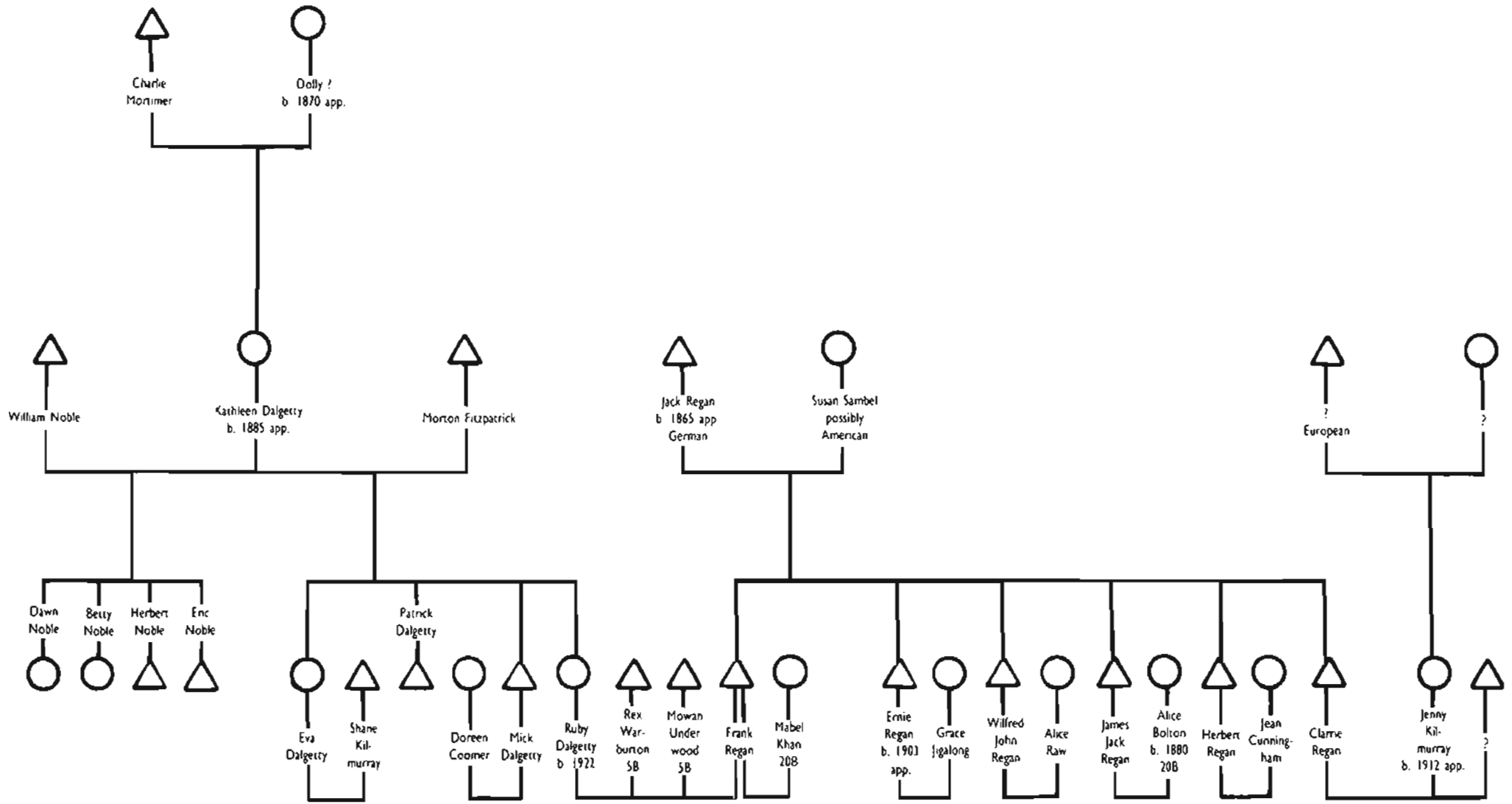


*(left) Left to right: Frances Mingal, Mary Elizabeth Tainan aged four years (19), Judith Butler, Mary Ellen or Helen Tainan aged eight years (19), Cecilia Yaky, New Norcia, 1867.*

Sisters Elizabeth and Helen (or Ellen) Tainan arrived at St Joseph's Orphanage for Girls in 1865, four years after it opened. They were looked after by the first schoolmistress at the orphanage, Mrs Judith Butler.



TREE 20A





NOBLE/DALGETTY/RYAN

*(far left)* Jack Regan (20A), on left, with a friend, 1930s.

*(centre)* Sarah (surname unidentified) with Clarrie Regan (20A), n.d.

*(left)* Wilfred John Regan (20A), n.d.

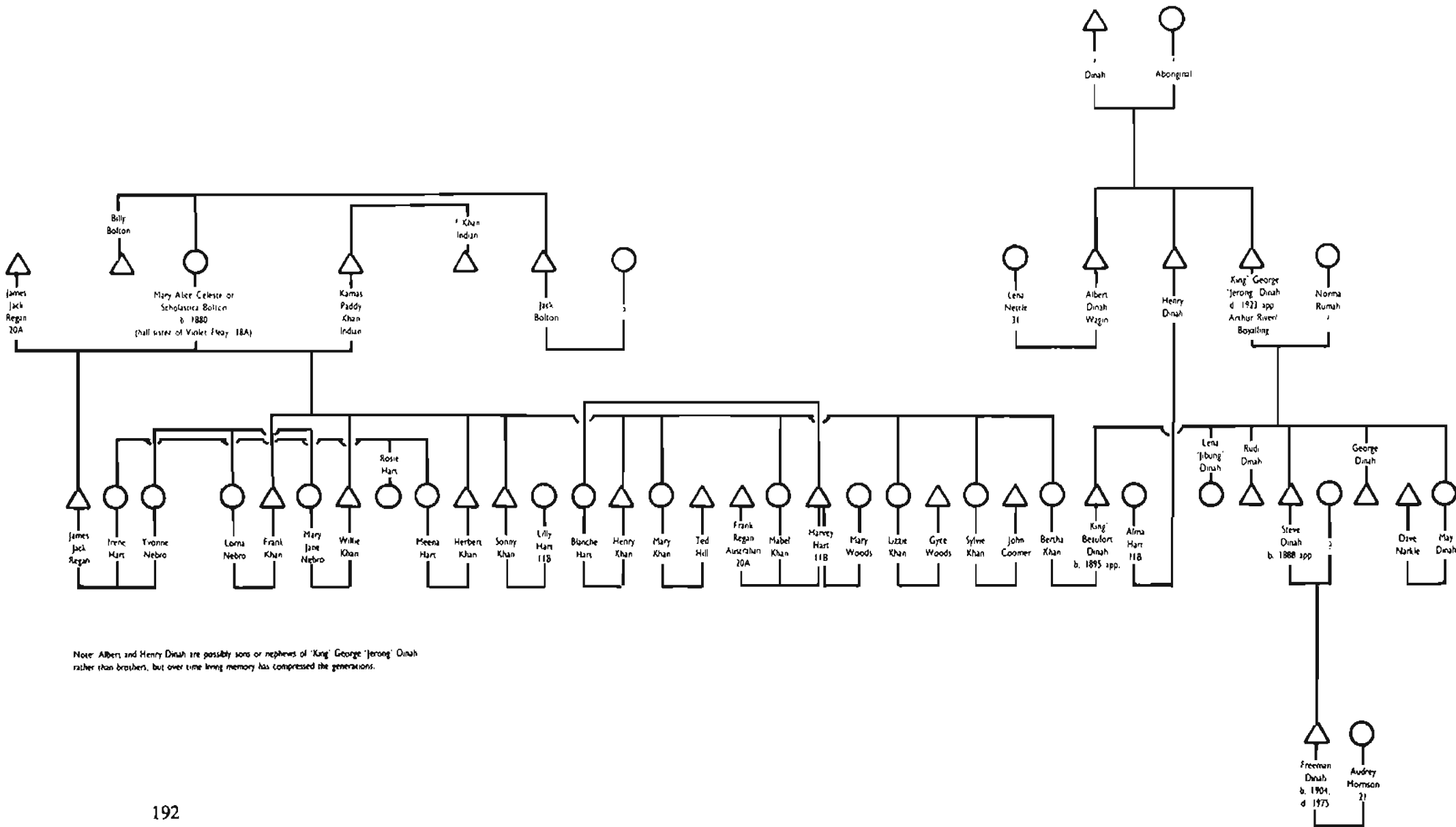
*(below)* Ernie Regan (20A), stump pulling in the heavily timbered southwest, n.d.



*(below)* Jack Regan (20A) with his two kangaroo dogs, c. 1920.



# TREE 20B



Note: Albert and Henry Dinah are possibly sons or nephews of 'King' George 'Jerong' Dinah rather than brothers, but over time living memory has compressed the generations.



*(left)* George Dinah (20B), son of 'King' George 'Jerong' Dinah, Wagin, 1950s.



*(right)* Beaufort Dinah (20B), wearing the chain that was presented to his father 'King' George 'Jerong' Dinah, or his grandfather Dinah, at the time of his investiture. Wagin, 1950s.

#### 'KING' GEORGE 'JERONG' DINAH

George 'Jerong' Dinah is said to have been appointed an Aboriginal 'King' by the colonial government in the 1850s, along with several other Aborigines from various districts throughout the south-west. However, the original Dinah 'King' may have been George 'Jerong' Dinah's own father whose duties were carried on by his son after he died. George 'Jerong' Dinah did his best to mediate between his family and Aboriginal friends, and the Europeans in the Wagin district, and earned the respect of all.

In 1922 George 'Jerong' Dinah was forced to board a train for Moore River Settlement. In that period, many Aborigines from all over the state were being sent to settlements, under powers contained in the 1905 Aborigines Act. George 'Jerong' Dinah was reluctant to go, as he wished to spend his last years in the district he was familiar with and where he had many friends. When the train carrying him and others to Moore River arrived at the Wagin railway station, George 'Jerong' Dinah's friends banded together and helped him escape. In this way he avoided the indignity of being placed in the settlement. He died the following year.

When he died in 1923 his son Beaufort Dinah took over his father's role, although this was not an official appointment as the system of conferring the title of 'King' on certain Aborigines had long since passed. Beaufort Dinah is remembered with affection by many people. Aboriginal 'Kings' were given brass plates which they wore around their necks on chains like large pendants, and Beaufort Dinah inherited his father's brass plate.

Another of George 'Jerong' Dinah's sons, George, was a good boxer and became known for his skill in the ring. He worked hard, and when the old-age pension became available to Aborigines he refused to apply for it, preferring to continue shearing and earning his living by working up to the last.



Beaufort Dinah's Certificate of Citizenship, issued 1960, and listing two of his children by Bertha Dinah nee Khan.

Beaufort Dinah, and other Citizenship Certificate holders like him, were required to carry their certificates at all times, and to produce them on the request of a police officer or publican as proof that they were Australian citizens.



A Sikh pedlar with his covered wagon, Kellerberrin/York/Tammin/Quairading area. This photograph is taken in front of York Hill. To the left is the 50-acre property with a stone house (not pictured) purchased by Bill Minnal for his mother Minnie Winmar nee Phillips (3). The family sold the property in 1973 when Minnie Winmar died.



The Dinah family of Wagin (undated)  
 Back row: Lena 'Jibung' Dinah (20B) and brother Steve Dinah (20B).  
 Front row: 'King' Beaufort Dinah (20B) brother of Lena and Steve, and mother Norma Rumah Dinah nee ? (20B).

This family portrait was taken in a studio, and the poses adopted reflect the fashions of the early 1900s.

## KAMAS 'PADDY' KHAN OR KAHN

Among the people from many lands to come to Western Australia in the earliest days of the Swan River Colony were a number of Indians. George Fletcher Moore, advocate-general of the Swan River Colony, had three Indian servants in his household between 1830 and 1840, and F. C. Irwin, captain of the 63rd Regiment, as early as 1834 proposed to import five to six hundred Indian labourers to work on public projects. Irwin's idea was never put into practice, although in Albany, Carmalt Clifton, a P. & O. shipping agent, brought out several Indians as indentured servants between 1850 and 1870. These people were employed to establish Indian gardens on the Mount, Albany, where it was planned to develop a rest centre for British colonials living in India.

Many of these Indians remained in Western Australia and worked as pedlars; or on camel teams used for transport in areas where travel by horseback was not practicable; or obtained other employment and merged into the general population.

Kamas 'Paddy' Khan, a Sikh from the Punjab, India, came to Western Australia with his brother some time in the latter part of the nineteenth century. He married Mary Alice Celeste Bolton around 1895 and the couple had a large family in the Collie/Wagin area. His brother frequently stayed with them, and enjoyed the family life with his nephews and nieces.

Four other Sikh brothers, Kevor Singh, Ram Singh, Goodit Singh and Spoon Singh, travelled in a horse-drawn wagon in the Kellerberrin/York/Quairading/Tammin area where they owned land in 1908. In accordance with their religious beliefs, three of the brothers were cremated when they died, and their ashes sent back to India. The remaining brother wished to return to his home village to die, and the residents of Tammin raised the money to send him back to the Punjab.<sup>16</sup>

Bear Singh married an Aboriginal woman at the turn of the twentieth century, and had a daughter, Sarah Kelly (4A). It is not known whether he was one of the four Singh brothers, as Singh is a common name in the Punjab.

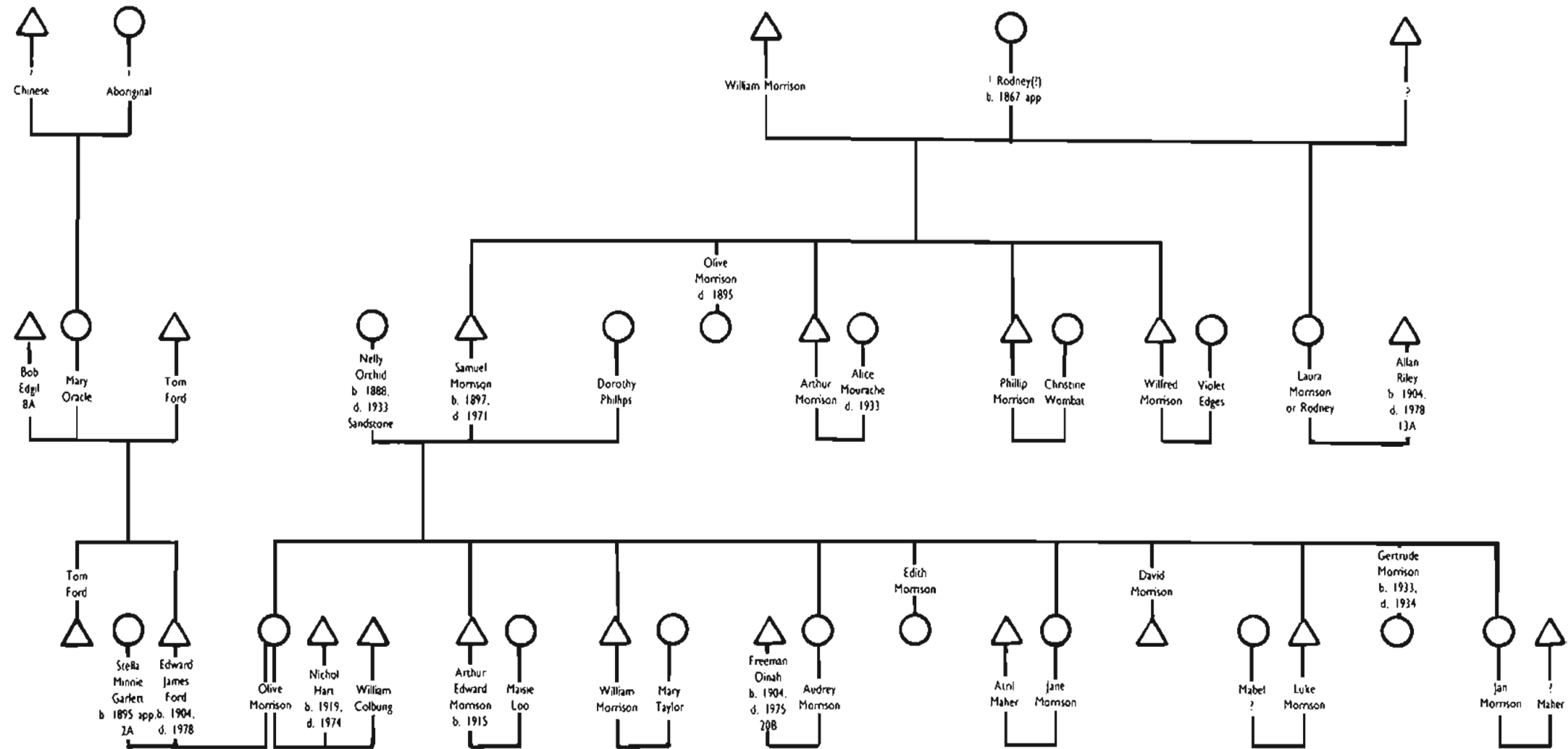


Bella Kelly nee Colbung (10B), Alice Regan or Khan nee Bolton and Jeffrey Hart nee Dyer, c. 1950.



'Sonny' Khan (20B) with his uncle on his father's side, Khan, Collie, n.d.

TREE 21





*(above left)* Wilfred Morrison (21) and Hopy Brittain, n.d.

*(above right)* Samuel Morrison (21), c. 1914.

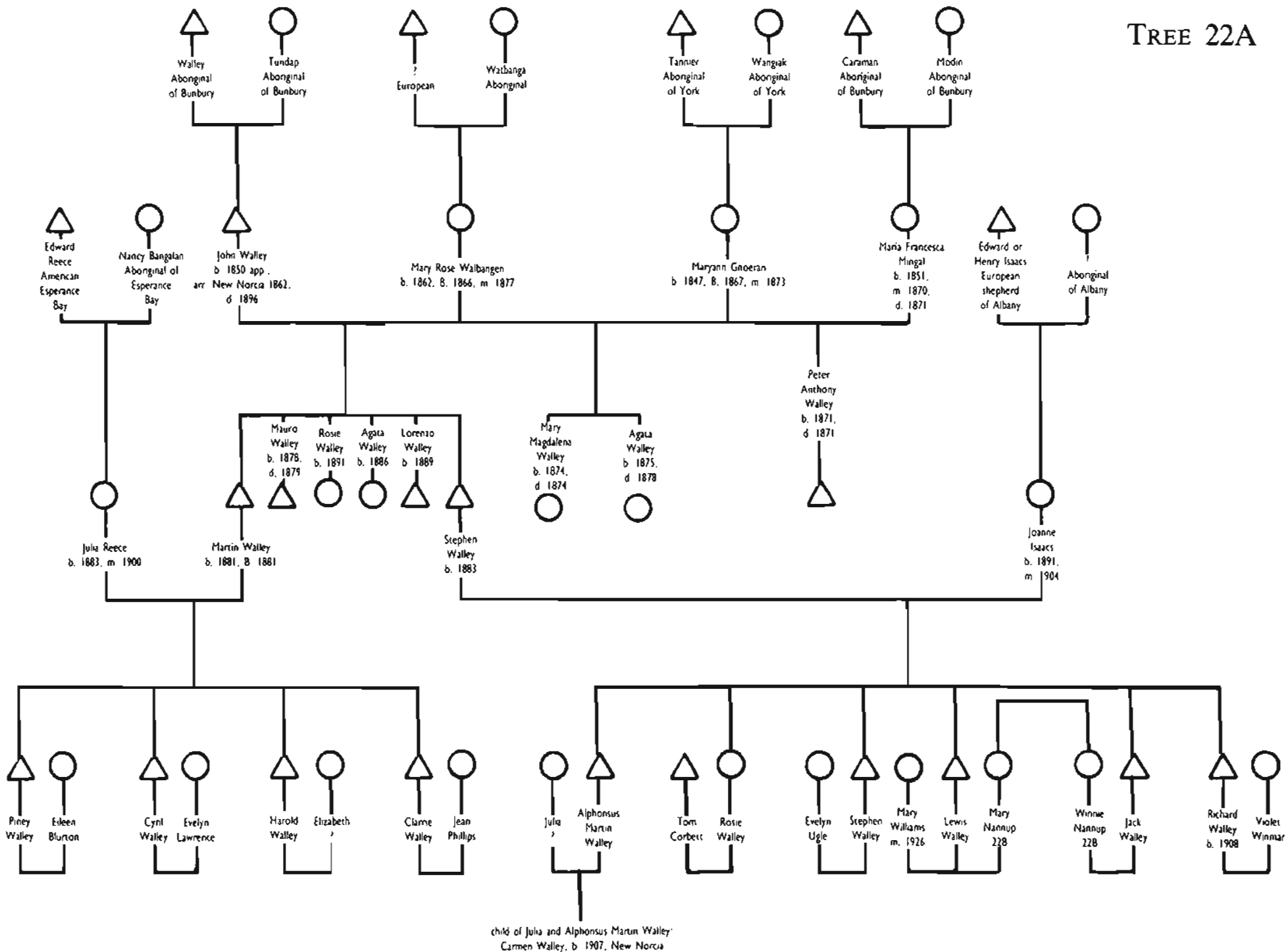
*(left)* Arthur Edward Morrison (21) on honourable discharge from the Army, 1945.



*Left to right:* Samuel Morrison (21), toddler William Morrison (21), Olive Morrison (21), mother Nelly Morrison nee Orchid (21), baby Jane Morrison (21) and Arthur Edward Morrison (21). Charlie 'Bullfrog' Innal (8D) in the background, c. 1920.



# TREE 22A





Alphonse Martin Walley (22A) and his wife Julia, Goomalling, n.d.

#### THE INVINCIBLES

The Invincibles were the New Norcia cricket team, formed in 1879 on the instigation of Bishop Salvado. Salvado thought that the ritual and competition of the game, together with the high degree of skill required, might appeal to the Aborigines as a replacement for their traditional corroborees, which were no longer being performed. Also, he thought that this game would provide an opportunity for the people of New Norcia to mix with settlers on an equal footing, and perhaps even beat them at their own game. A cricket pitch was made at New Norcia and members of the Invincibles team practised there in the evenings. Local settler H. B. Lefroy was co-opted to coach them, and soon the team had a formidable reputation. It is said that they won every game of competitive cricket they played for five years, in the early 1880s, and they were dreaded by other teams because of their fast bowling.

Members of the Invincibles team were versatile, as well as excellent cricketers they were also good musicians. Paul Jater (Jetta), in particular, was noted for his music talent. The team played strings and brass.

At around the same time, all-Aboriginal cricket teams were formed in Victoria and South Australia. They were also known for their fast bowling, and the Victorian team made international history when they went on tour to England as early as 1867. The Invincibles of New Norcia continued playing until 1906, although the players changed over the years.<sup>11</sup>

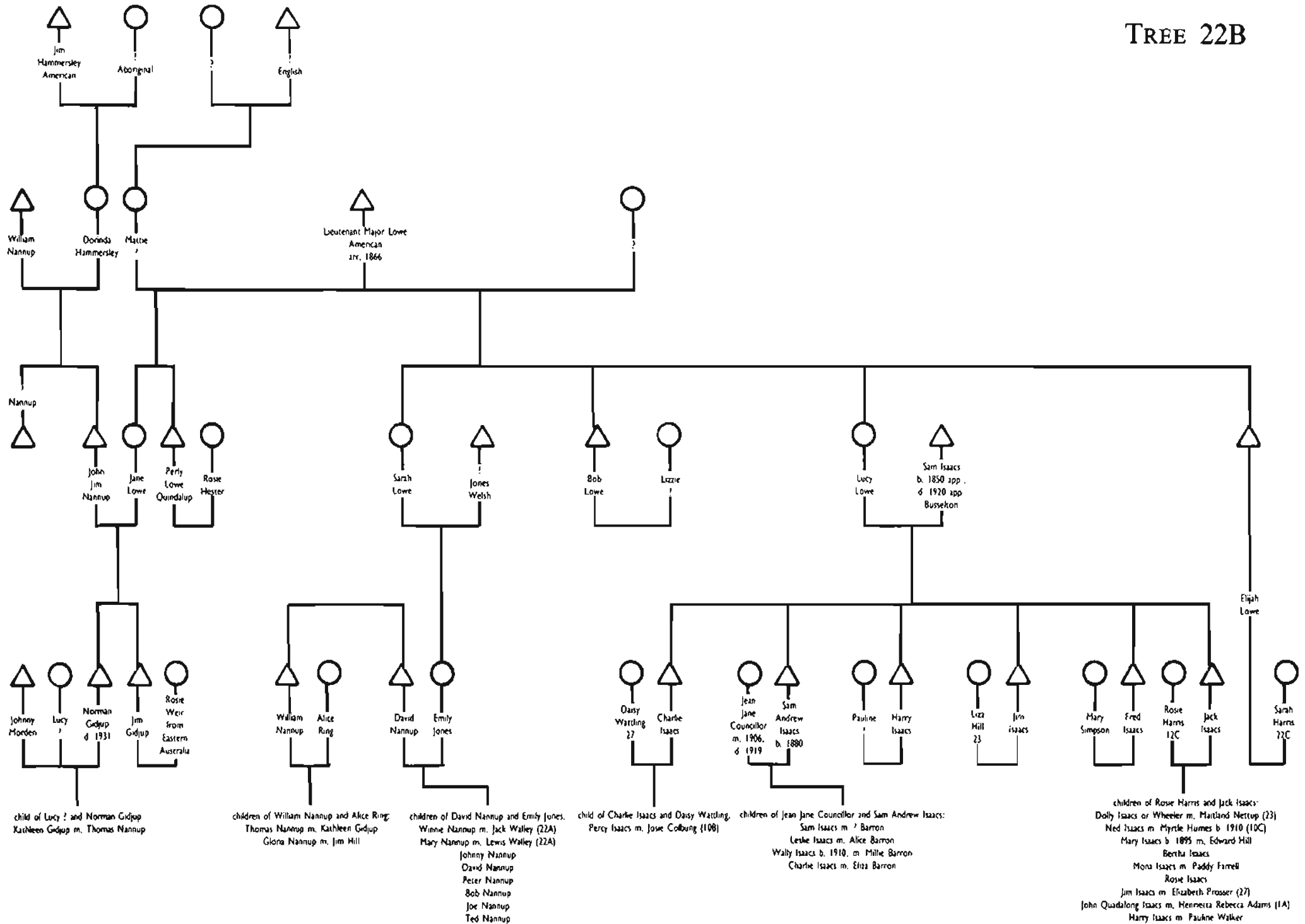


The Invincibles of New Norcia.

*Back row, left to right:* Paul Jater, Patrick Yapo (19A), John Walley (22A), Benedict Cuper (14C), Anthony Nelabut, Aleck Wanola, Felix Jackamarra (26).

*Front row:* James Egan, John Blurton (9A), H. B. Lefroy (the coach), Frederick Yrbel, Joseph Nogolgot. Early 1880s.

# TREE 22B



## SAM ISAACS 1850-1920

Sam Isaacs may have been an Aboriginal or an American who came to the south-west with a farming family who had decided to take up land there. He was a big, strongly built man and an excellent worker. Some time after his arrival in the district he obtained employment with the Bussell family at Walcliffe, where he married and had six children. His wife, Lucy Lowe, was a daughter of Lieutenant Major Lowe, an American soldier who had obtained his rank during the American Civil War. Lowe had also married a local girl and settled in the area, and when his first wife died he re-married, having in all six children.

On 1 December 1876 the *Georgette* ran onto rocks and sprung a leak off Cape Naturaliste, a perilous stretch of coast with strong currents and freakish weather. On board were several workers on holiday from the Geraldton-Northampton railway line, and their families. Some of the passengers were sent to shore in lifeboats, but a storm began to blow up, running the ship onto a sandbank and making it impossible to land the remainder of the passengers and crew.

Sam Isaacs sighted the ship in distress, and immediately began to organize rescue operations. He reported the wreck to the Bussell family, and saddled horses and gathered together ropes. Then, he and Grace Bussell, a young woman, rode onto the beach and through the surf out towards the wreck. Survivors jumped overboard to grab at saddlery, ropes, and any part of the horses they could get a grip on, and were towed back to shore. In this way fifty lives were saved, until the horses were too exhausted to enter the surf again. The rest of the Bussell household arranged medical care for the survivors, and dry clothing and bedding.

Both Sam Isaacs and Grace Bussell were awarded medals by the Royal Humane Society in recognition of their bravery and selfless courage. Grace Bussell received a silver medal for the part she and her family played, while Sam Isaacs was presented with a bronze medal for the special contribution he made to the rescue.<sup>12</sup>



Sam Isaacs (22B), c. 1900.



(above) Two sisters: Dolly Nettup nee Isaacs (22B) and Mona Farrell nee Isaacs (22B).

(top left) Mona Farrell nee Isaacs (22B), c. 1930.

(centre) Bertha Isaacs (22B), taken in Kings Park, Perth, 1920s.

(left) Bertha Isaacs (22B), early 1920s.



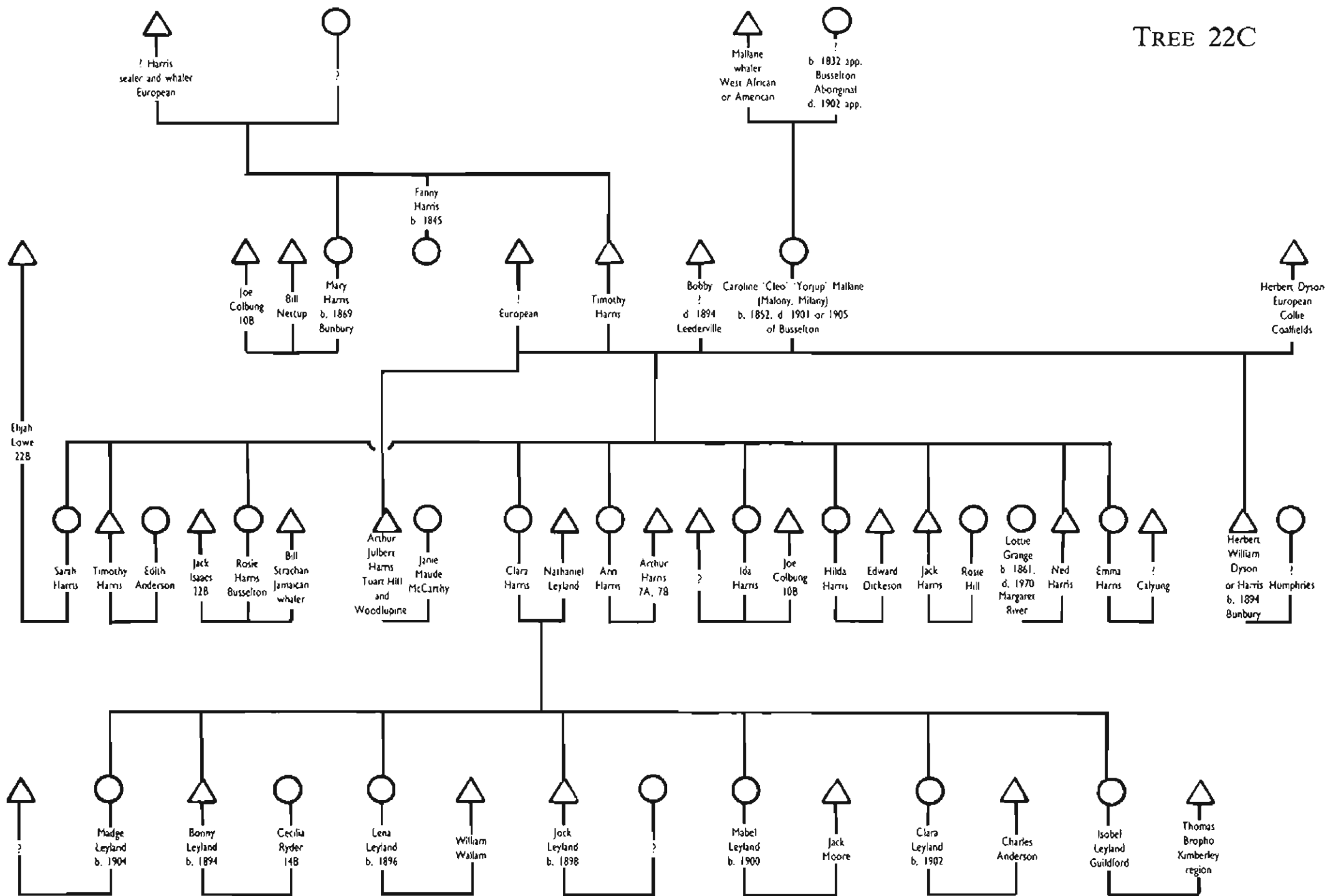
*(left)* 'To Mona from Mother with love X X X'  
John 'Quadalong' Isaacs (22B) and his  
mother Rosie Isaacs nee Harris (22C) with  
the ornamental duck belonging to the  
Strachan family of Quindalup, c. 1935.

*(above)* Jim Isaacs (22B), early 1920s.

*(right)* John Isaacs (22B), early 1920s.



# TREE 22C



## THE WHALERS

As they beached to obtain fresh water and to treat their catch, some whalers had the opportunity to form relationships with the Aborigines in the area, which they could renew the next season they were in the area. Some of these men had Aboriginal wives, and returned to them regularly each whaling season. One of these men was known as Mallane, and is thought to have been a West African or American. His Aboriginal wife was from Busselton, and was probably born around 1830. The couple had at least one daughter, Caroline Mallane, who was very attractive and was known locally as 'Caroline of the Vasse'. Caroline had a number of children, and then in 1894 she had a boy by a European worker on the Collie coalfields, Herbert Dyson. The boy, Herbert William Dyson, was a strong-willed lad, and after his mother died in 1901 he was determined to look after himself. Plans were made for him to go to the Swan Native and Half Caste Mission in Perth, apparently initiated by his half-brother Arthur Julbert Harris. However, the mission was unable to accept him at first because his mother was part-American, making the boy of less than one-quarter Aboriginal descent. The mission received a government subsidy for the children in their care from the Aborigines Department, but this amount was only paid for children reckoned to be more than one-quarter Aboriginal descent.

After some negotiating, the Swan Native and Half Caste Mission agreed to accept the boy. However, he did not want to go to the mission, despite the trouble his relatives had gone to to ensure his placement, and so ran away. The farmer with whom he had been working offered to re-employ him and provide him with a place to live, and so finally this was agreed to by all concerned.

Another whaler in the Busselton waters was Jamaican Bill Strachan (Straun, Strauch). It is not clear whether his ship was wrecked, or he fell overboard or jumped ship, but he managed to swim ashore and survive the ordeal. He married Rosie Harris, the granddaughter of whaler Mallane, and never returned to his homeland. He owned a small property in the Busselton district, where his family was raised.



Rosie Strachan nee Harris (22C) and her husband Billy Strachan (22C), a Jamaican whaler. In front, Mary Strachan and Agnes Strachan. Quindalup, n.d.



ISOBEL BROPHO NÉE LEYLAND

Isobel Bropho née Leyland was born in the Busselton district but grew up in East Perth, at the Dulhi Gunyah Mission, where she had been sent to receive an education. She met and married a boy from the Swan Native and Half Caste Mission, Victoria Park. This was Thomas Bropho, who had been brought to Perth from the Kimberleys and placed in this institution by the Durack family.

The couple had seven children, and lived in the Guildford/Bassendean/Lockridge/Swanbourne areas with their family, camping in tents. Thomas Bropho helped support his family by selling wooden clothes props to suburban households, and became a well known figure to many residents. Isobel Bropho looked after her family, and when they did not receive much schooling she taught them to read and write.

Robert Bropho and his sister, Ruth Kickett née Bropho, and their followers made an historic stand for adequate metropolitan housing for Aborigines, when they erected tents on the grounds of the Anglican church in the centre of Guildford in 1976. This was in protest against the lack of housing and suitable camping sites for Aborigines in the metropolitan area. In 1977 they journeyed overland by bus to Canberra, 4000 kilometres, to place their case personally before federal parliamentarians there. In 1978 they again took up their stand on church grounds at Guildford, and at St George's Cathedral in Perth, after promises of a permanent area of land, made by federal, state and local government bodies, amounted to nothing.

Today, the Bropho family maintain their stand for a secure camping area from which they would not be able to be moved or evicted to make way for property developments. Isobel Bropho takes an active part in this movement, and offers advice to her children Robert and Ruth. She has never drunk alcohol, and neither Robert nor Ruth drink.



Isobel Bropho nee Leyland (22C), Caversham, 1976.

## ARTHUR 'JULBERT' HARRIS OF DOG SWAMP

Arthur 'Julbert' Harris was born in Busselton, and was the son of Caroline 'Cleo' Mallane and a European labourer. Arthur 'Julbert's' mother died in 1901, and was buried in the old Busselton cemetery. From that time on, Arthur 'Julbert' took a deep interest in the welfare of his half-sisters and brothers. Due mainly to his efforts, the children of his half-sister Clara Leyland (née Harris) were placed in the Swan Native and Half Caste Mission and the Dulhi Gunyah Mission where they could receive an education. He also attempted to place another half-brother, Herbert William Dyson or Harris, at Ellensbrook. However, the lad rebelled and insisted that he stay with his employer, a farmer of Bunbury.

Arthur 'Julbert' Harris lived on the Welshpool reserve when it was first established in 1901. He then moved to Yokine, a suburb of Perth, near the former Mount Lawley pine plantation, where he owned a block of land and a house. He supplied leaches to Perth Public Hospital and also established kennels and bred dogs which were crosses between introduced European breeds and the native dingo. Eventually he bred a great number of dogs, whose barking could be heard for several kilometres on a still night.

When he died, Arthur 'Julbert' Harris's dogs escaped from their confines and ran wild in packs in the nearby swamp. It is said that this is how the area became known as Native Dog Swamp. This is now the site of a modern shopping centre and sporting oval, the Dog Swamp Shopping Centre.

(right) Rosie Harris nee Hill, who married Jack Harris (22C). The child is unidentified.





*(left)* 'To My Dearest Mate Kitty, Wishing You a Happy New Year with Lots of Love from Edith.'  
Edith Anderson (22C), Kalgoorlie, c. 1915.



*(right)* Edith Anderson (22C) and her daughter Gladys Anderson, Perth, early 1920s.

#### MOTHER AND DAUGHTER

Following on from the establishment of a Boys' Home in Collie in 1905, the Salvation Army opened a Girls' Home in Kalgoorlie in 1907. This was to care for some of the children born to Aboriginal mothers, in the depressed conditions of the goldfields in this period. Here, women were easy prey to unscrupulous men, and a number of children of mixed descent were born whose fathers accepted no responsibility for them at all.

Edith Anderson was one of the girls to grow up in the Kalgoorlie Salvation Army Girls' Home. She had been born on Wittenoom Station, of an Aboriginal woman and Samuel Anderson, said to be a policeman of European origin.

The home provided a shelter for Edith while she was young, but when she had to leave she found she was ill-prepared for life outside. She became pregnant to an Australian soldier, and had a little girl whom she called Gladys Anderson.

Little Gladys was cared for by her mother, and then also by her step-father Timothy Harris when Edith Anderson married in 1924. For several years she grew up in the security of her family, including half-brothers and sisters, until her childhood world was shattered when she was around seven years old. At this time, the Aborigines Department had a policy of separating children whom they thought could pass into the general population from their Aboriginal families. Little Gladys was very fair, with golden red hair, and so she was taken from her mother and placed in Parkerville Orphanage, to grow up away from the rest of her family.

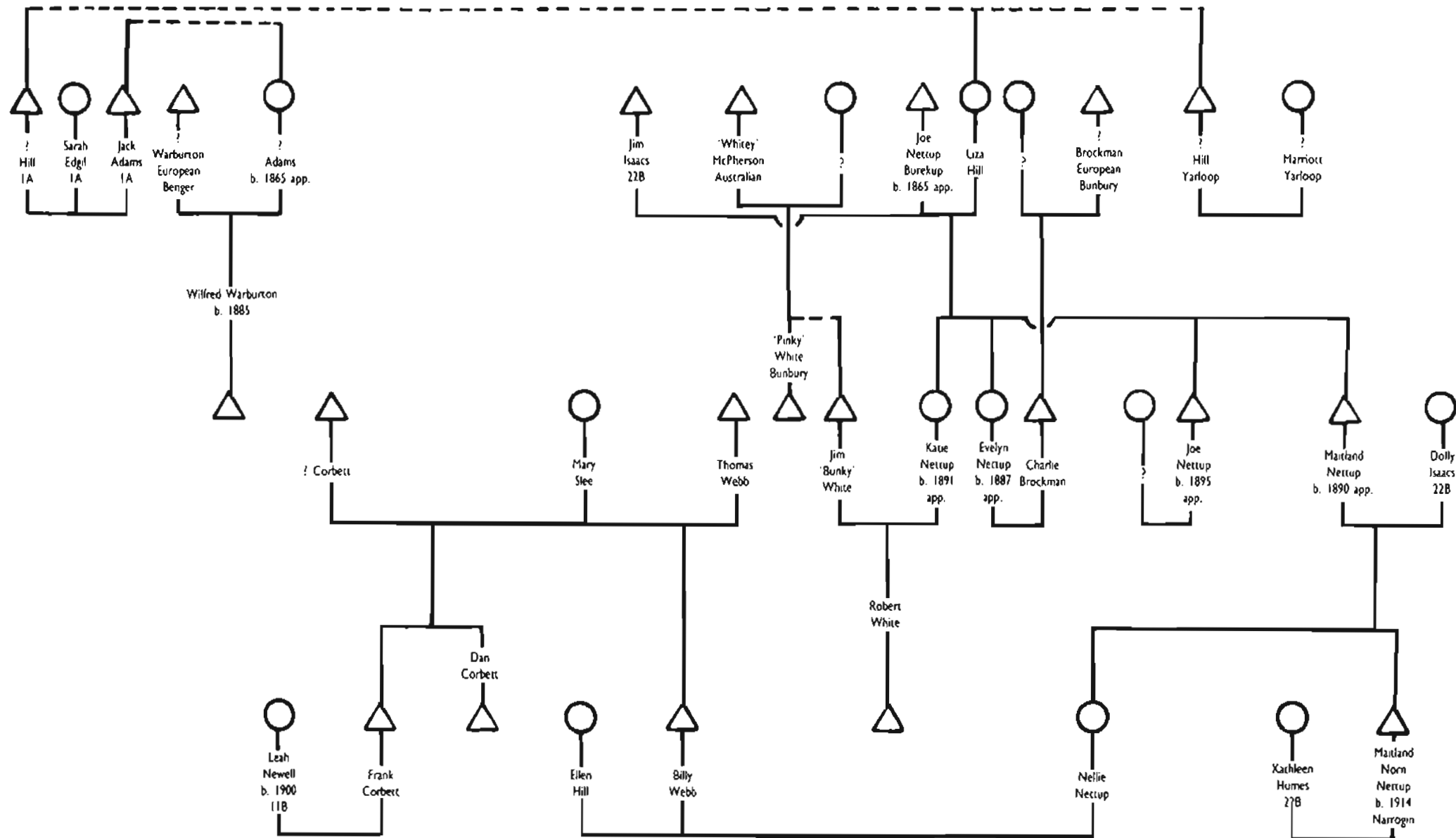


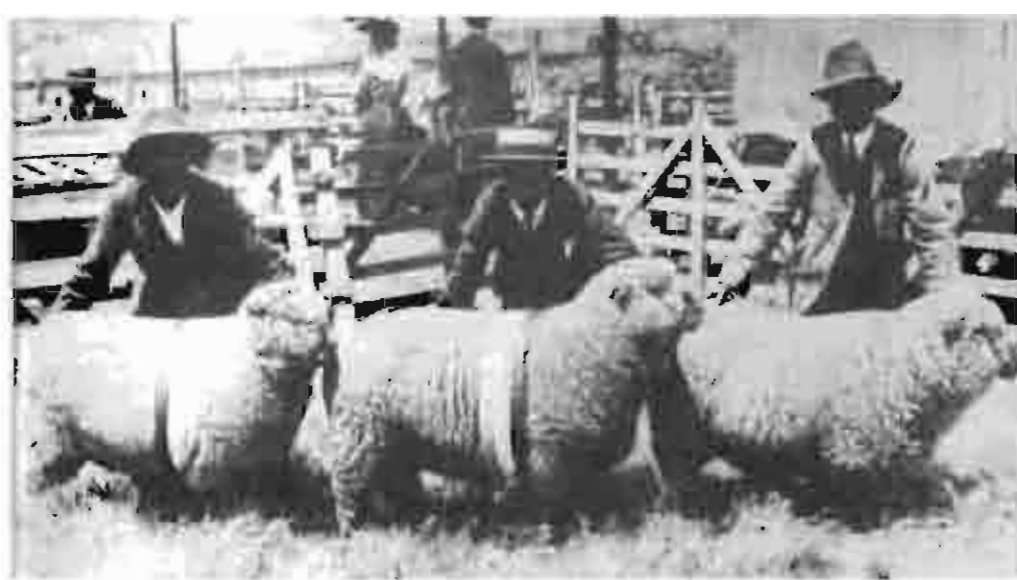
*Left to right:* Gladys Anderson, unidentified, Rosie Harris nee Hill, Edith Harris nee Anderson (22C), c. 1928.



*Left to right:* Timothy Harris (22C), unidentified (possibly Eva Frances Prosser nee Watling, 27), holding Norman Harris (son of Timothy Harris and Edith Harris nee Anderson), Gladys Anderson (daughter of Edith Harris nee Anderson) and Edith Harris nee Anderson (22C), c. 1928.

# TREE 23





(above) Centre: Joe Nettup senior (23) with Wellard's prize sheep, Perth Royal Show, early 1900s. Joe Nettup attended the Perth show as well as the local country shows every year, and won prizes for the sheep he entered on behalf of his employer, Wellard.



(left) Liza Hill (23), c. 1885.

(right) Western Australian Centennial celebrations, 1929.

Back row, left to right: Maitland Nettup (23), his son Maitland Norn Nettup (23), and his brother Joe Nettup (23), Jim Isaacs (22B) and John Isaacs (22B).

Front row, left to right: Sam Isaacs (22B) (cousin of John and Jim Isaacs), Arthur Prosser (27), Peter Magody, Leslie Hill.

These people never wore ceremonial dress. However, they were requested to 'put on a show' for the Centennial celebrations, and so recalled as best they could how Aborigines in the Busselton/Bunbury area once dressed.

#### JOE 'BLACK JOE' NETTUP

Joe 'Black Joe' Nettup and his wife Liza Hill were both the children of Aboriginal and European unions. They lived in the Benger/Burekup area where Joe Nettup worked for local settler Wellard, who at that time owned most of the Benger Swamp. The couple had four children, born in the late 1880s and early 1890s. They attended the Brunswick Junction school, driving into the town with the Wellard children in a horse and sulky.

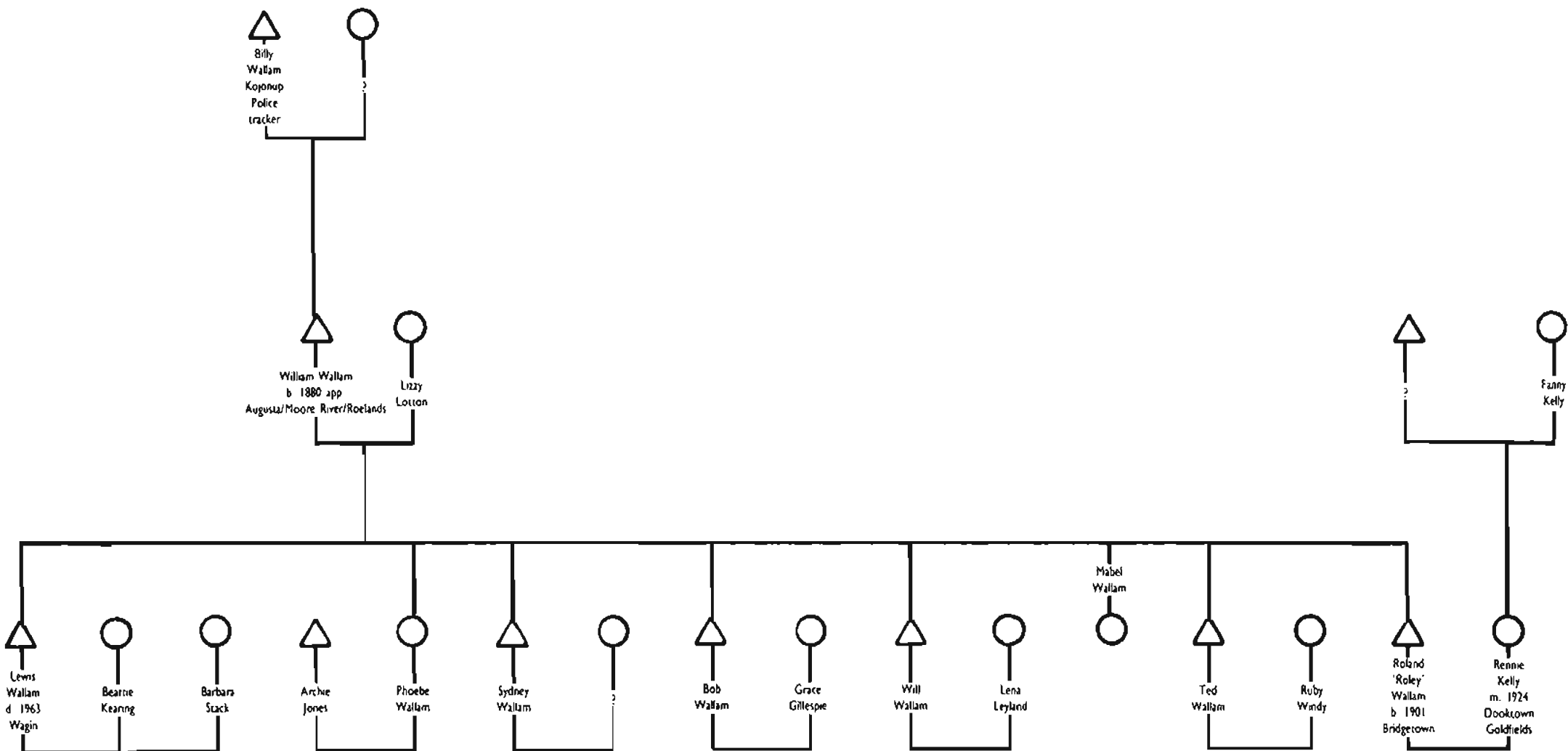
Joe Nettup was a champion blade shearer, and won many prizes at the country shows, which he attended regularly with Wellard. He was also an excellent cricketer, and played as a fast bowler in the local cricket team which always won when he bowled.

In his later years, Joe Nettup worked for the Rose family at Burekup, and also for Henry James Offer and his son Frank Offer of Burekup.

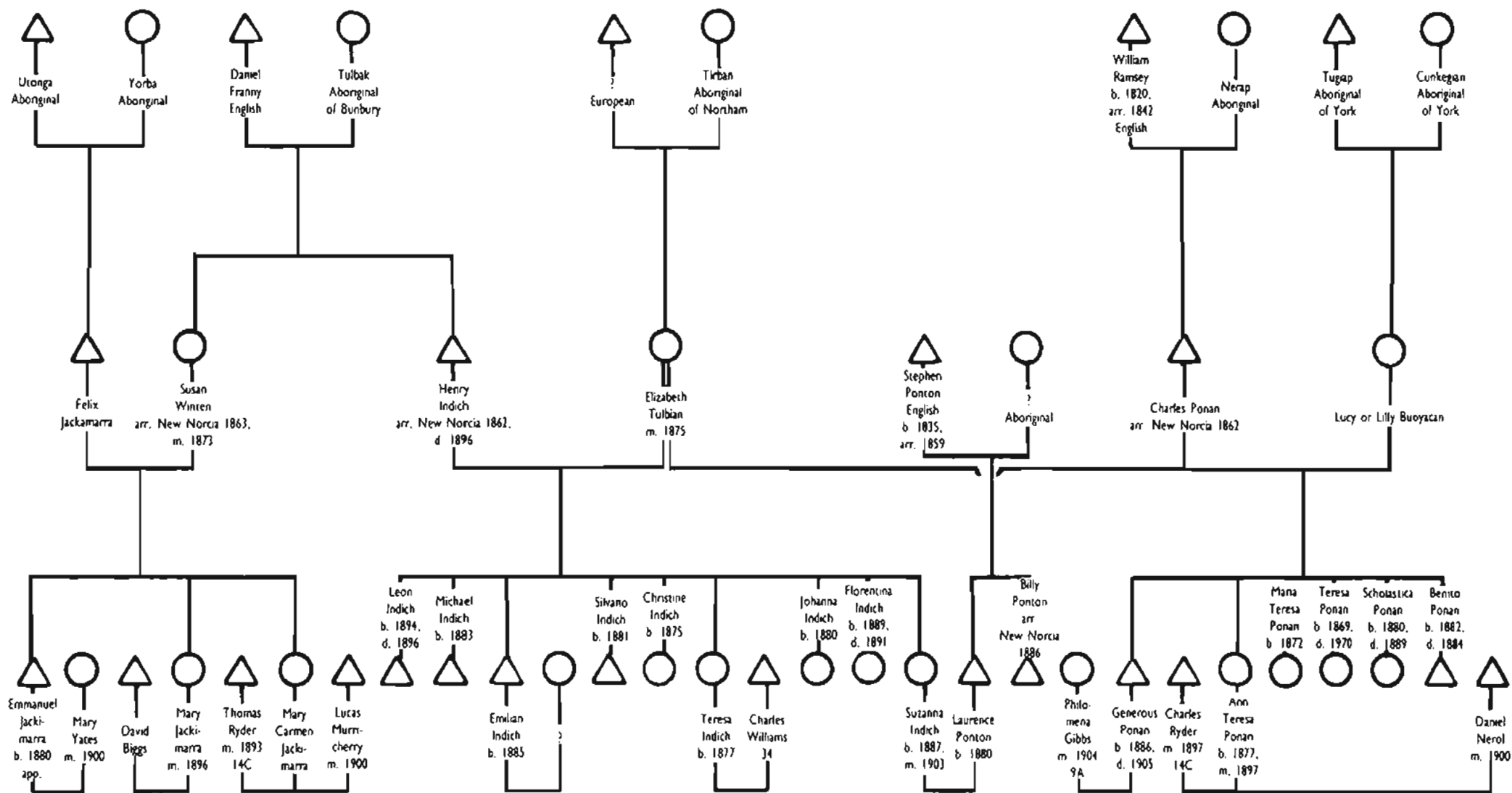
Joe Nettup's son, Joe junior, was athletic like his father. He trained to be a runner, and pursued his career in the eastern states.



# TREE 24

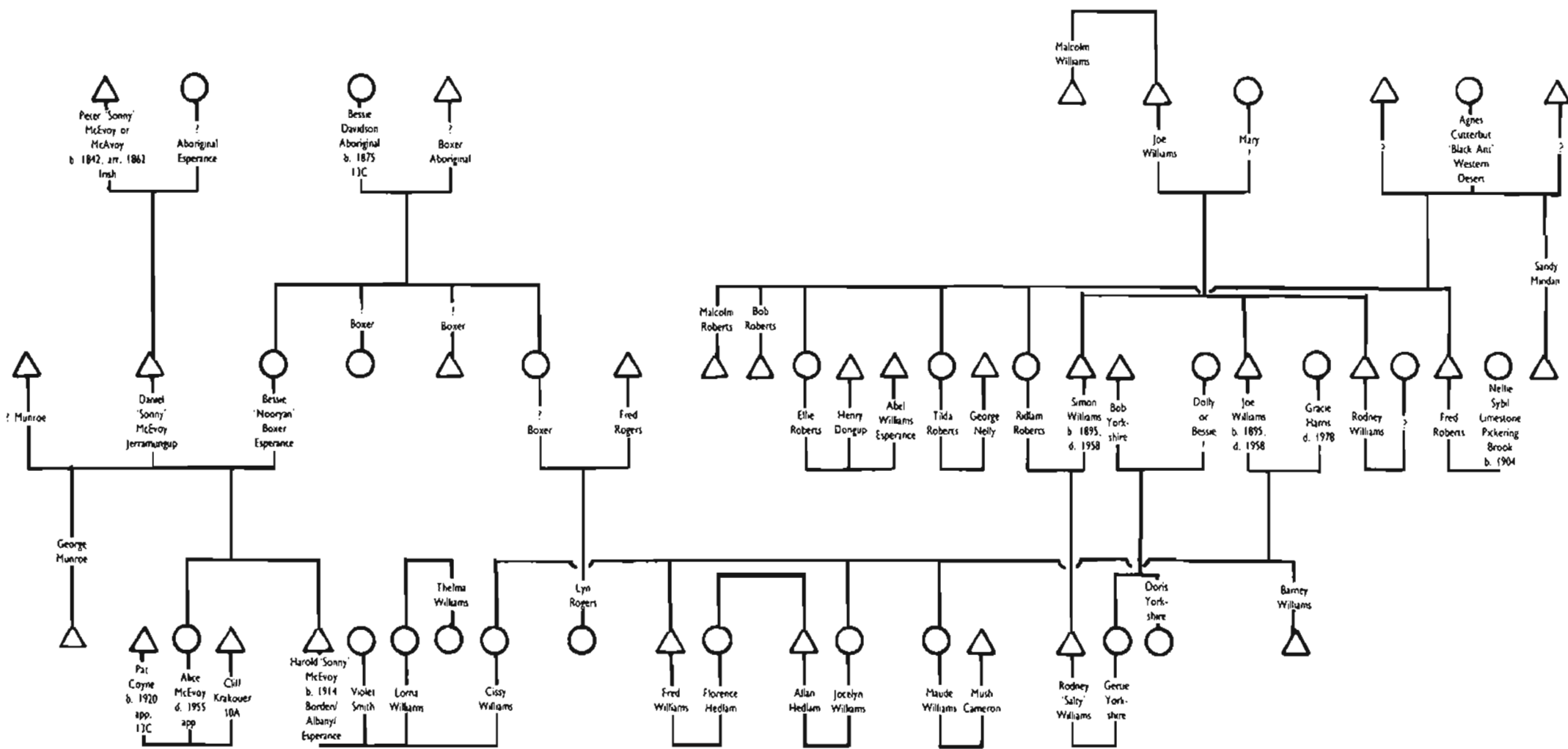


# TREE 26





# TREE 25



#### BESSIE 'NOORYAN' BOXER

Bessie 'Nooryan' Boxer was born at Esperance, on the site where the police station now stands. Both of her parents were Aborigines, but her mother was given the name of Bessie Davidson, and her father the surname of Boxer, so that their Aboriginal names fell into disuse and are not now remembered.

Bessie 'Nooryan' Boxer met Daniel Sonny McEvoy at Esperance, and married him. Their marriage 'ceremony' was according to the traditional Aboriginal practice of going away together, although they were not promised as man and wife as might have been the case in an earlier period. This was at the end of the nineteenth century, when many changes affecting Aborigines had taken place. The couple worked on the Hassells' property at Warreup, Jerramungup, Ongerup and Borden where Harold Sonny McEvoy was born.

Daniel Sonny McEvoy's father was an Irish convict, Peter Sonny McEvoy. He met Daniel's mother at Esperance, where the convict boats docked for the men to be taken northwards inland to Norseman and the goldfields. This union was not a lasting one, and Daniel's mother was left to fend for herself and her small baby.

Daniel Sonny McEvoy and Bessie 'Nooryan' Boxer had two children, Harold and Alice. The couple remained together all their lives except for a brief period when Bessie 'Nooryan' Boxer went away with a man by the name of Munroe. A son, George Munroe, was born from this union.



Harold 'Sonny' McEvoy (25)  
Albany, 1978.

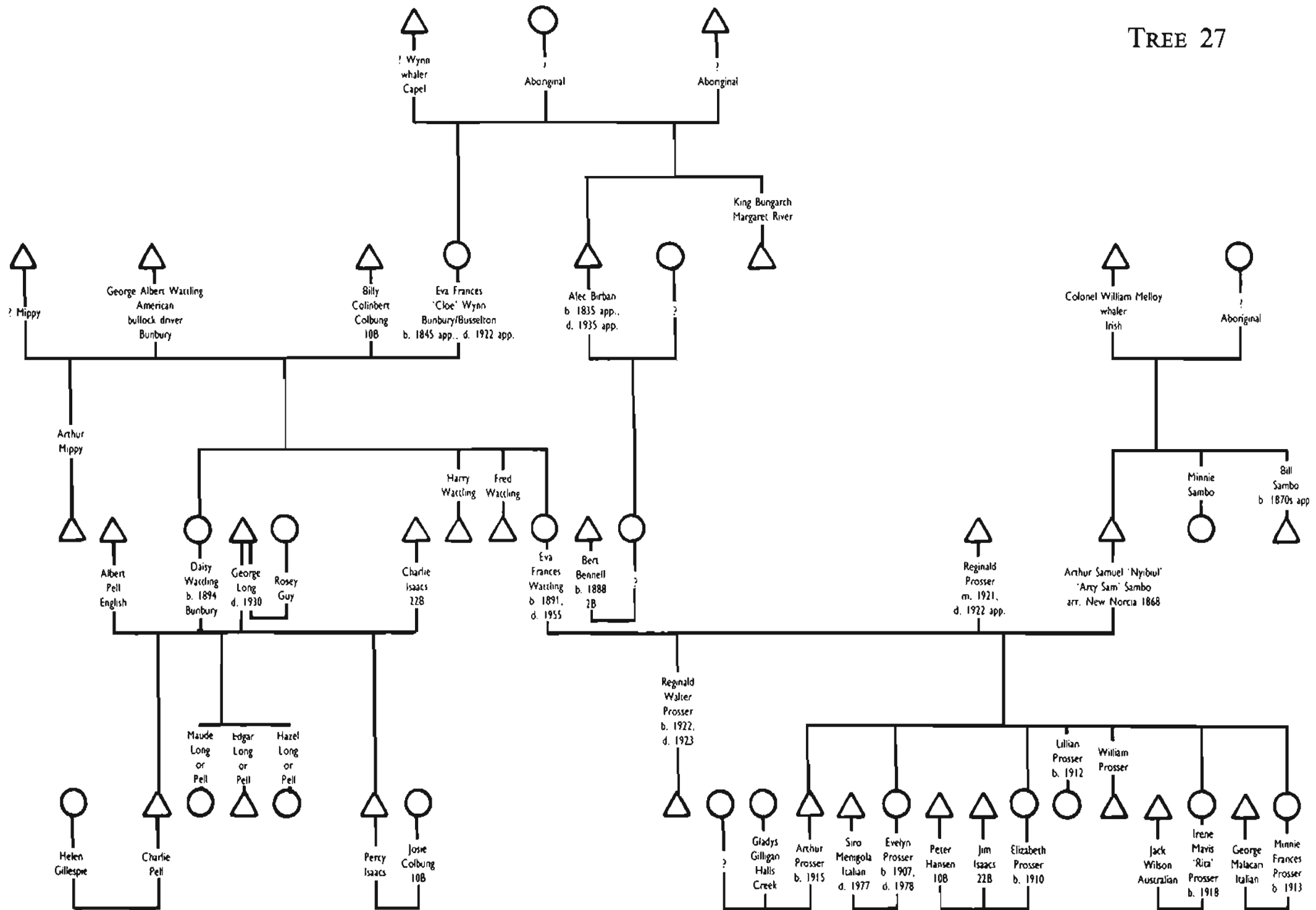
#### McEvoy/Williams/Boxer/Roberts



Brothers Rodney Williams (25), Simon Williams (25) and Joe Williams (25) with Patrick Coyne (13B), Albany, c. 1920.

These four men had the reputation among the people living at Gnowangerup Mission in the 1930s, of 'always getting their man'. More deeds were attributed to them than they were likely to have been responsible for, and it was rumoured at one stage that they were 'featherfoots'. As a result of this rumour, people at Gnowangerup tended to avoid them. In traditional Aboriginal society 'featherfoots' were men appointed by the group to punish individuals who had broken the law. To avoid detection, they wore sandals made of feathers and twine, which left no imprint on the soil as they walked.

# TREE 27



#### ALEX 'BIRBARN', 'STEEL BULLET' THE 'MABARN MAN'

There is a place in the dense bush near Williams where, it is said, anyone passing at twilight will hear the blows of an axe, falling regularly until nightfall. This is the sound of a native doctor, or Mabarn Man, cutting up the body of one of his wives. It is not known why he killed her, but he is credited with the deaths of ninety-nine people all told, over his long lifetime. Nor is it known why he used an axe on the body of his unfortunate victim, although this was one of the burial practices of Aborigines in the south-west. The Mabarn Man may have been giving his wife a ritual burial to ensure that her spirit reached the land of the dead, and did not wander amongst the living where it might haunt him.

This was the legendary 'Steel Bullet', Alex Birbarn, credited with all the powers of Mabarn Men, including the ability to transport himself by flight over many kilometres, and to change his body shape at will into a natural form such as a rock or an anthill. Alex Birbarn was born around 1835, and raised in Aboriginal society in an area of the south-west that was sheltered from the impact of early European settlement. He is said to have had a number of wives over the years, and to have lived mainly in the Quairading/Bunbury/Narrogin areas. He avoided capture by the police, allegedly through the use of his special powers, and increasingly lived a solitary life as time went on.

As an old man in the 1910s and 1920s, Alex Birbarn lived alone in the forest, occasionally making his presence known to Nyungars. One of his favourite tricks was to keep watch on a kangaroo hunting party, stalking the people from behind bushy undergrowth. When no one was watching he would steal up and seize the kangaroo skin, and sometimes the whole kangaroo, and make off with it. Whenever this happened people always knew that Steel Bullet was around, and they would hurry away for fear of becoming his victims.

It is claimed that Alex Birbarn would have killed a hundred people if he had not been killed first by another Mabarn Man, 'Kyjan'. However, the legend of Steel Bullet lives on in countless stories told about him today. Whether or not Steel Bullet's powers and the number of his victims are exaggerated, the reasons why he lived as he did are not clear. It may have been that he continued to live in a traditional Aboriginal world, a lonely figure fighting to maintain its laws in a way he understood, by killing those who broke them. If this is so, then Steel Bullet was a solitary man striving to maintain a way of life that was fast giving way to inevitable change, as Aborigines became caught up in the spreading European settlement and began blending it with Nyungar tradition.

#### THE MELLOY FAMILY

William Melloy was a whaler who beached regularly each season at Capel, where he had an Aboriginal woman to whom he returned each year. He was whaling in the Busselton waters when the Bussell family took up land at Margaret River, and he decided to give up his seafaring ways and work for them and settle down with his Aboriginal family.

The couple had three children who were known in the area by the surname of Sambo. William Melloy and his family worked for the Bussell family for many years, going on frequent camping trips with them to tend to matters on different parts of the property. On one of these trips, a Bussell lad made a deep stamp on a large log, near where they always camped. This log then gave the name to the paddock, which became known as 'Stampfield'. The log is still there, and the stamp is clearly visible.

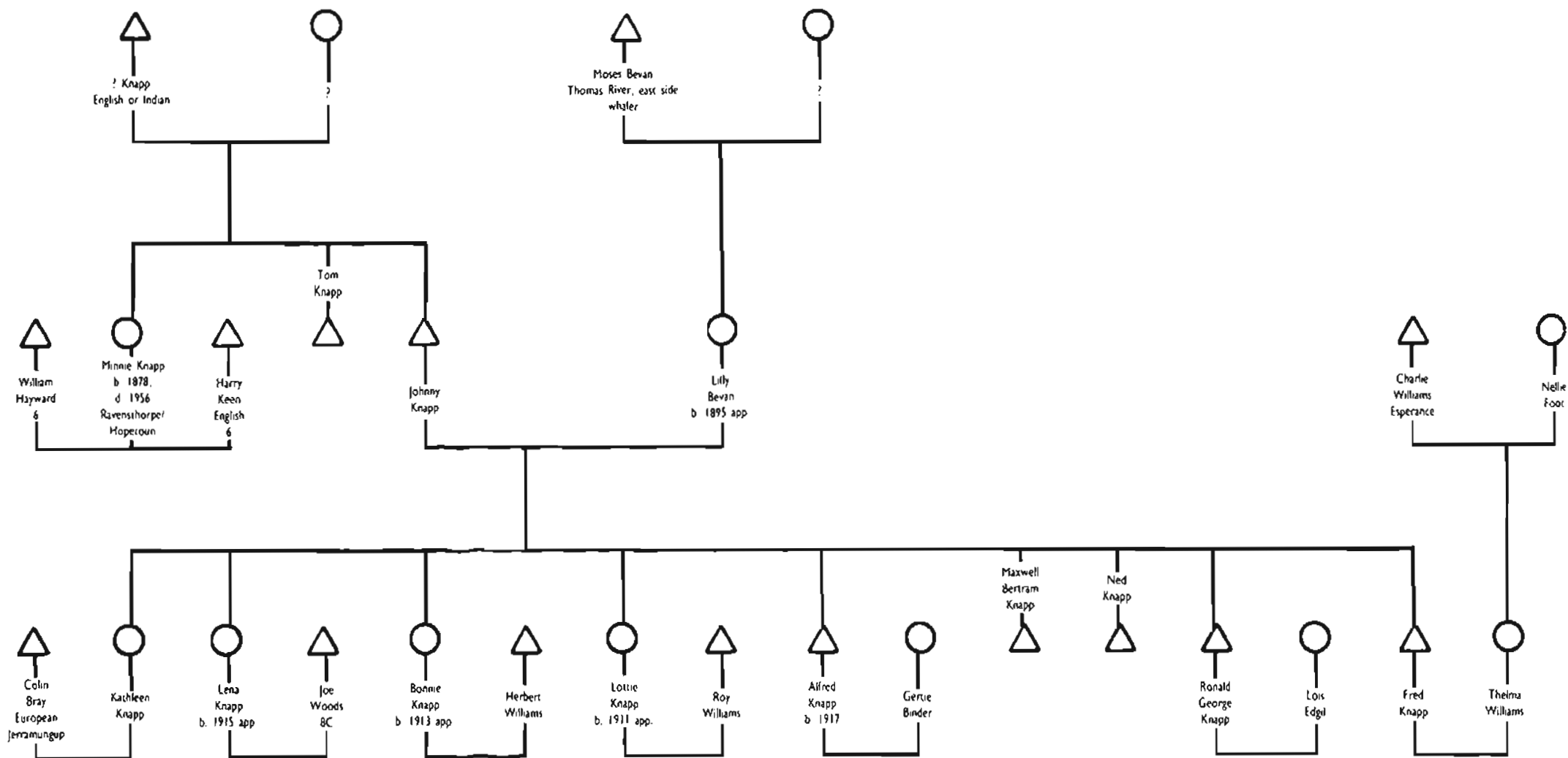
One of the Sambo children, Arthur Samuel 'Nyibiul' 'Arty Sam' Sambo, married Eva Frances Wattling. Eva's own mother was the child of an Aboriginal woman and a whaler who used to beach regularly at Capel. Her father was an American bullock driver who settled in Bunbury. Eva and Arthur Sambo had seven children before Arthur died around 1918. Eva Sambo née Wattling married for a second time, to Reg Prosser who was some years her junior. Their only child died in infancy.

In the mid-1920s the Aborigines Act 1905 was being enforced vigorously by government authorities. All of Eva Prosser's children were sent to Moore River Settlement under the name of Sambo. However, Eva and her husband claimed that the children were fathered by him, and so did not come under the Aborigines Act. The authorities released the children to their mother, and from then on they were known by the surname of Prosser.

Many instances of this kind occurred throughout the state during the 1920s and later, as parents fought to keep their families together by denying their Aboriginality in order to avoid being classified under the Aborigines Act.

Elizabeth Prosser, daughter of Eva Frances Prosser or Sambo née Wattling, grew up to become one of the most outstanding Aboriginal leaders in Western Australia. Known by her married name of Elizabeth Hansen, she has received widespread recognition for her community work.

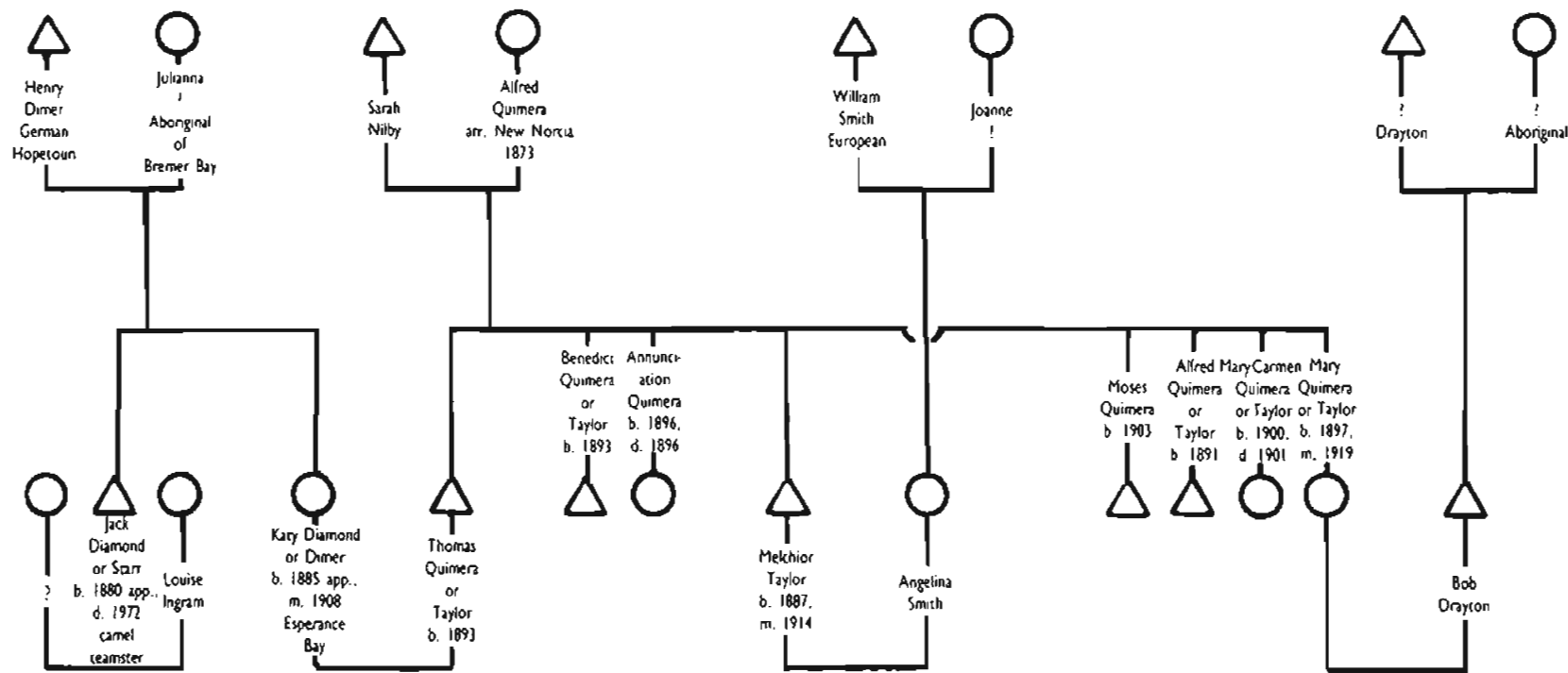
# TREE 28



## JOHNNY KNAPP THE BOXER

Johnny Knapp first started boxing when he was eighteen, and over the years became a well-known boxer in Albany. Early in his career he fought bare fisted, as boxing gloves were not in use then. His hero was the famous heavyweight boxer, John Arthur 'Jack' Johnson, who held the heavyweight title from 1908 to 1915. When Johnson visited Albany Johnny Knapp met him, but did not fight against him. At the height of his boxing prowess Johnny Knapp was working at Eucla, on the South Australian and Western Australian border. He sailed from Eucla to Albany to box at the Albany Town Hall every time there was a fight.

Johnny Knapp worked at Warriup on Hassell's property, and also shepherded at Middleton Beach. When he was minding sheep he would drive them down what are now Albany and York Streets, and Marine Drive, when they were no more than bush tracks. His parents originally met on the goldfields, where his father travelled with a camel team. Knapp senior is said to have journeyed the distance between Esperance in the south and Roebourne in the north with his camels.



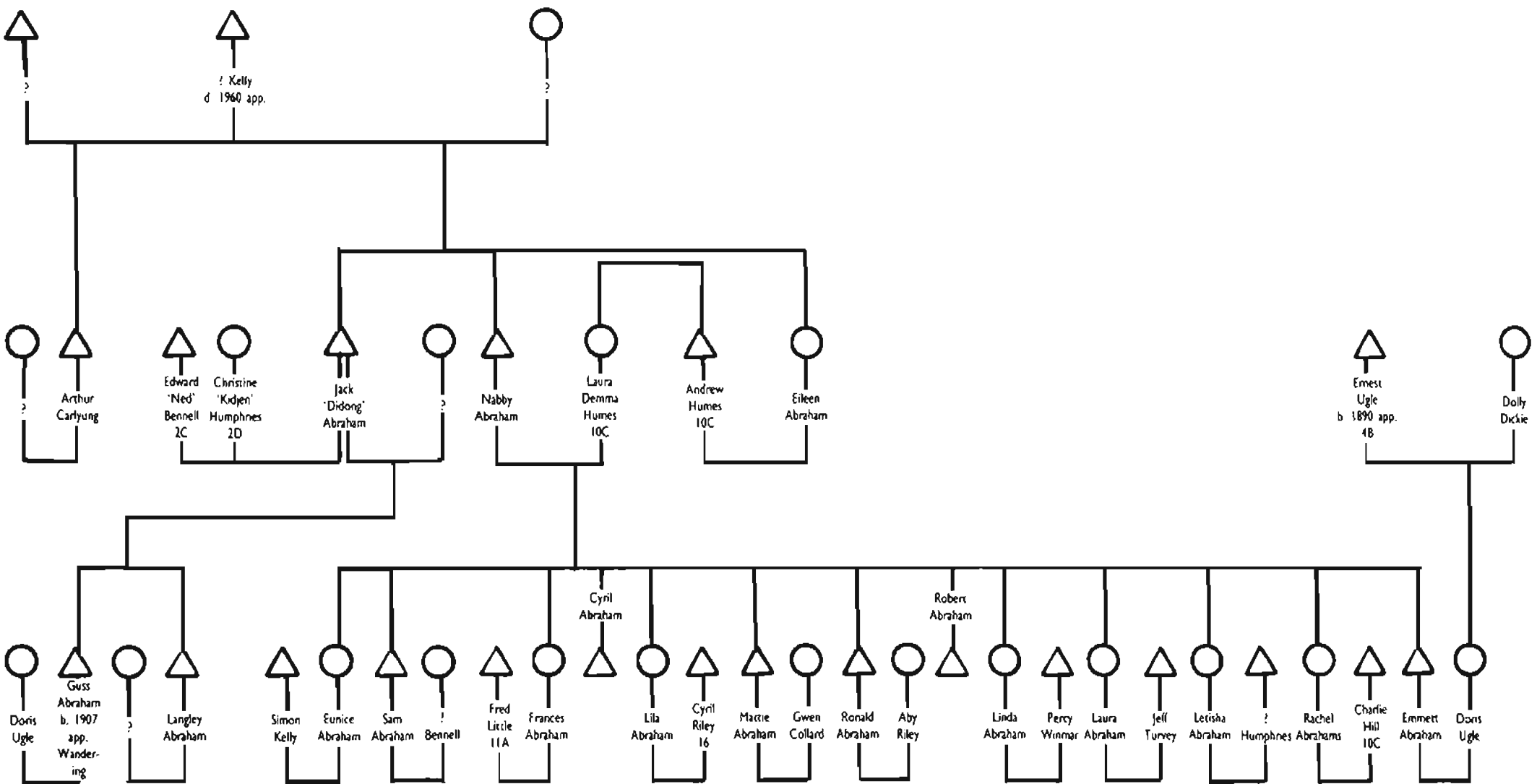
## DIMER—SHIPWRECKED

Henry Dimer of Germany was shipwrecked east of Bremer Bay in the early 1880s. It is not known what became of his seafaring companions, but he managed to swim to shore. A local group of Aborigines found him and carefully nursed him back to health. During this time Henry Dimer became attached to one of his rescuers, a girl called Julianna, and they had a son, Jack. They later had a daughter, Katy. Both of these children were sometimes known by the name Diamond, as a variation of Dimer.

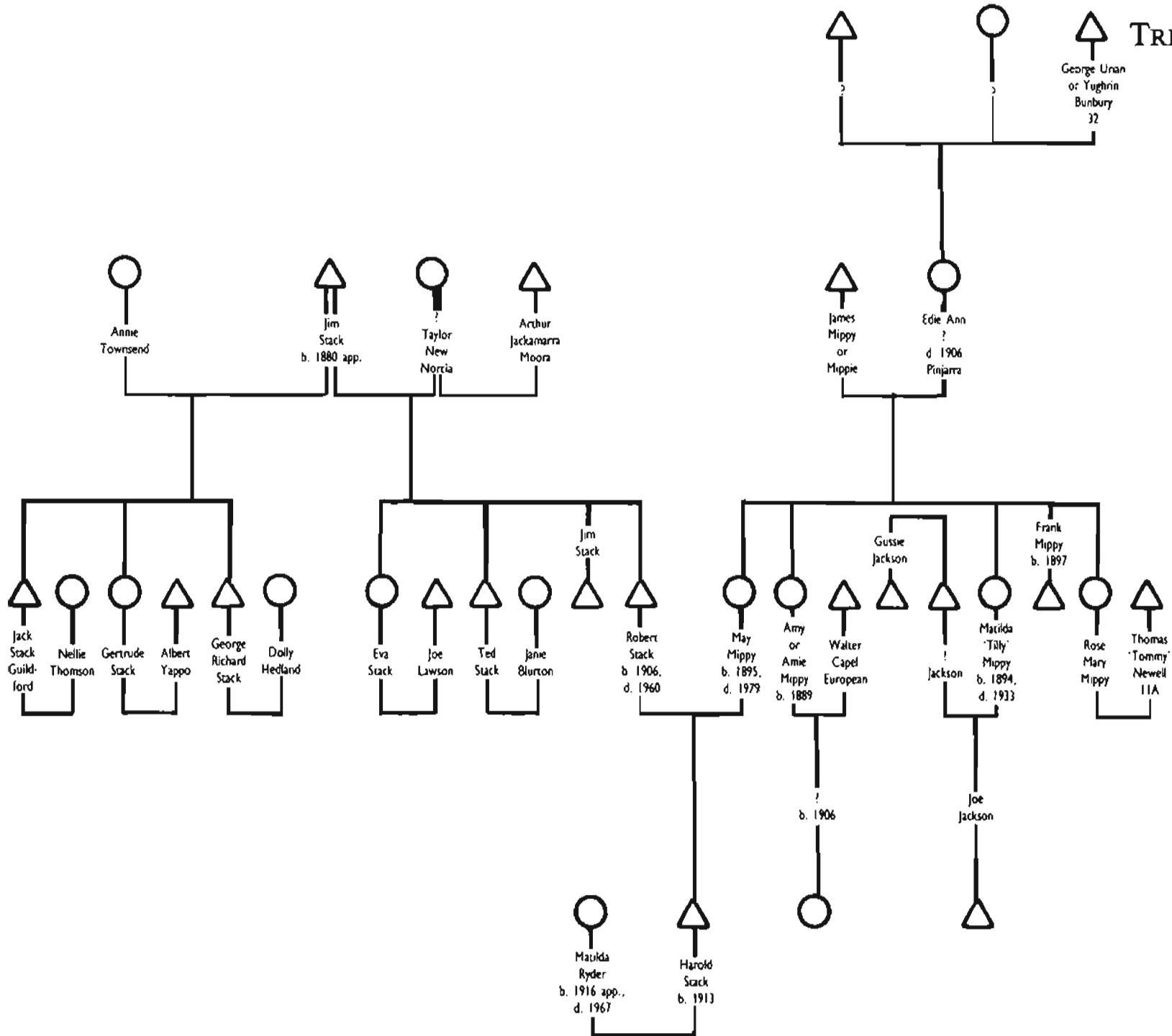
Jack Diamond, also known as Jack Starr, grew up to work on the camel teams which were used to carry supplies north to the goldfields from the southern ports.



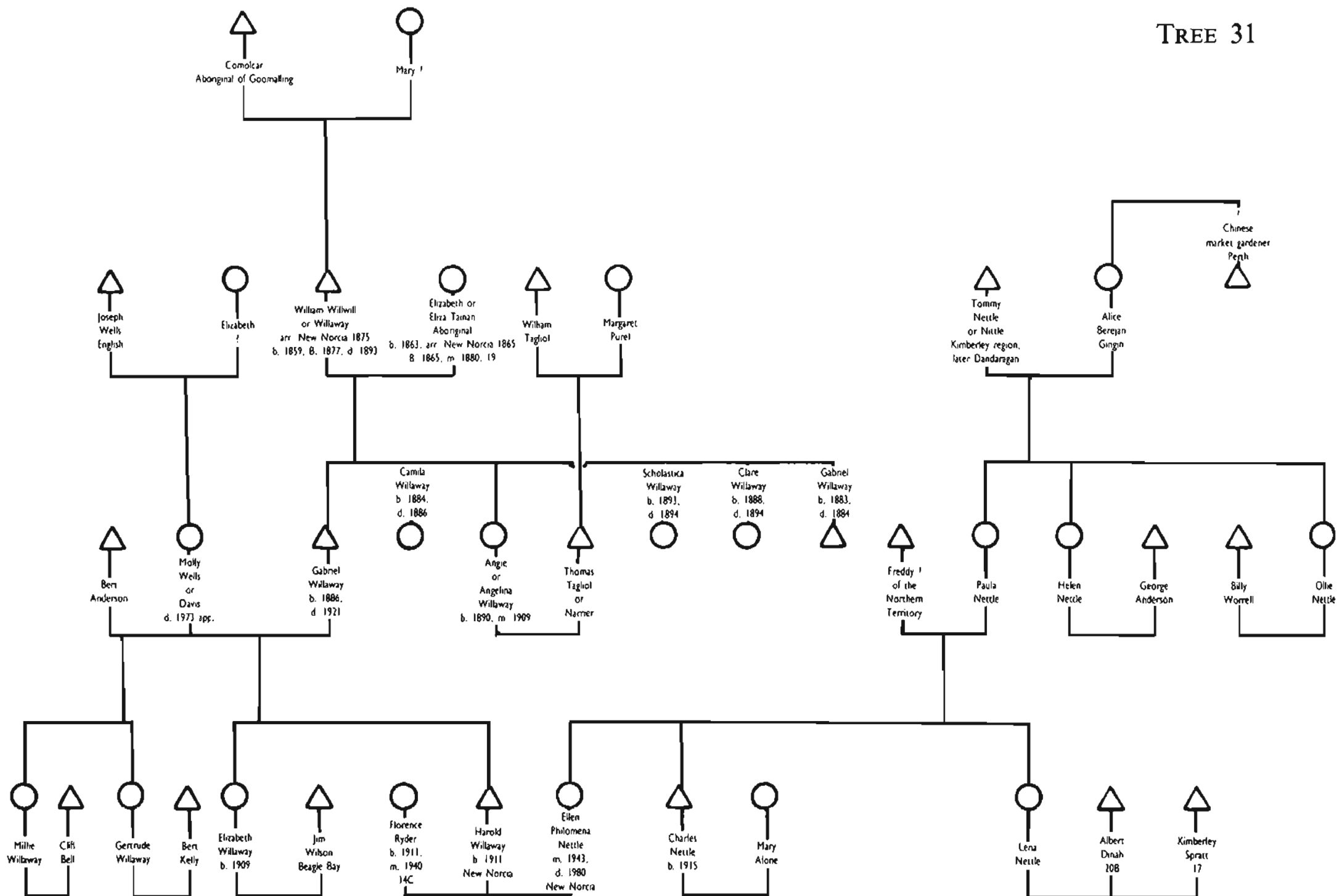
TREE 30



TREE 33



# TREE 31



## A NEW NORCIA FAMILY—THE WILLAWAYS

Comolcar (Comolan) and his wife, Mary, were living in the Victoria Plains district when the first European settlement extended there in the 1840s, and when Dom Rosendo Salvado established his Benedictine Aboriginal mission at New Norcia in 1848. Comolcar and Mary had at least one son, Willwill, who lived from 1859 to 1893. Willwill was later known as William Willwill, and when he was baptized at the mission in 1877 his name was recorded as William Willway. Later, the spelling of Willway was changed to Willaway, the form used today.

Willwill first arrived at New Norcia mission in 1875, when he was a youth of sixteen years. In the same year he survived an attack by a group of older, traditional Aborigines in the Victoria Plains district. It appears that these men were very anxious for Willwill, along with other boys his age, to be instructed in traditional Aboriginal belief and practice. With the coming of the Europeans and the different world view of the new religion practised by the Benedictines, these men feared that knowledge of the old ways would be lost forever and their religion die out. In traditional Aboriginal society it was customary for young boys in their early or mid-teens to be sent away to neighbouring groups to be instructed in religious matters, and to develop their sense of independence, before returning to their own group to take on adult responsibilities. Hence, at times boys were permitted to live with missionaries or settlers, but the older men and women always expected that they would return to their own group at the appropriate times.

Willwill was living at the mission at the time he was set upon by a group of men. It seems the men were angered by his rejection of their traditional ways in favour of those of the monastery, and so they turned against him. They inserted several fine jam-wood splinters into his body, with the intention of causing severe irritation and possibly even death. This type of operation was usually performed by a highly skilled person, and may have been a way of attempting to force the headstrong youth to return to his people, or of making an example of

him. However, a woman was passing in a cart, and Willwill called out to her for a lift back to the mission where the monks painstakingly removed all the splinters.

After this experience, Willwill stayed at the mission and in 1880 he married Elizabeth or Eliza Tainan. Elizabeth was born in 1863, and had first come to the mission from Bunbury with her six-year-old sister, Mary Ellen or Helen Tainan, born 1859, when she herself was only two years old, in 1865. When the couple were married by the monks of New Norcia, Willwill's name was registered as William Willway.

William and Elizabeth Willway had at least seven children who grew up at New Norcia. One son, Gabriel, born 1886, married Molly Wells or Davis in 1908, and had one son, Harold, in 1911. When he grew up, Harold Willway married a girl who had also lived at New Norcia, Florence Ryder. However, this marriage ended in tragedy when the young wife died, and three years later in 1943 Harold Willway married another girl from New Norcia, Ellen 'Philomena' Nettle. The sisters at the mission did all the cooking for the wedding feast, and embroidered the young bride's wedding veil in a lacy pattern. By this time the Willway family name was spelt Willaway.

Ellen 'Philomena' Willaway née Nettle was a descendant of Tommy Nettle or Nittle who came to Dandaragan from the Kimberleys in the early 1880s. There, he met Alice Berejan of Gingin, said to be Chinese, and the couple had a family of three daughters. Their marriage was not always a happy one, and in 1886 Tommy Nettle speared his wife in the thigh for something she did wrong. This was a traditional Aboriginal method of punishment, where a non-fatal wound was inflicted. Usually, the husband was considered the appropriate person to punish a wife who had behaved badly. However, European settlement had spread to the Victoria Plains over the previous fifty years, and so this action brought Tommy Nettle into conflict with the Gingin police. It was the duty of the police to impose British law, which did not recog-

nize the right of a husband to spear his wife, and so the two legal systems clashed.

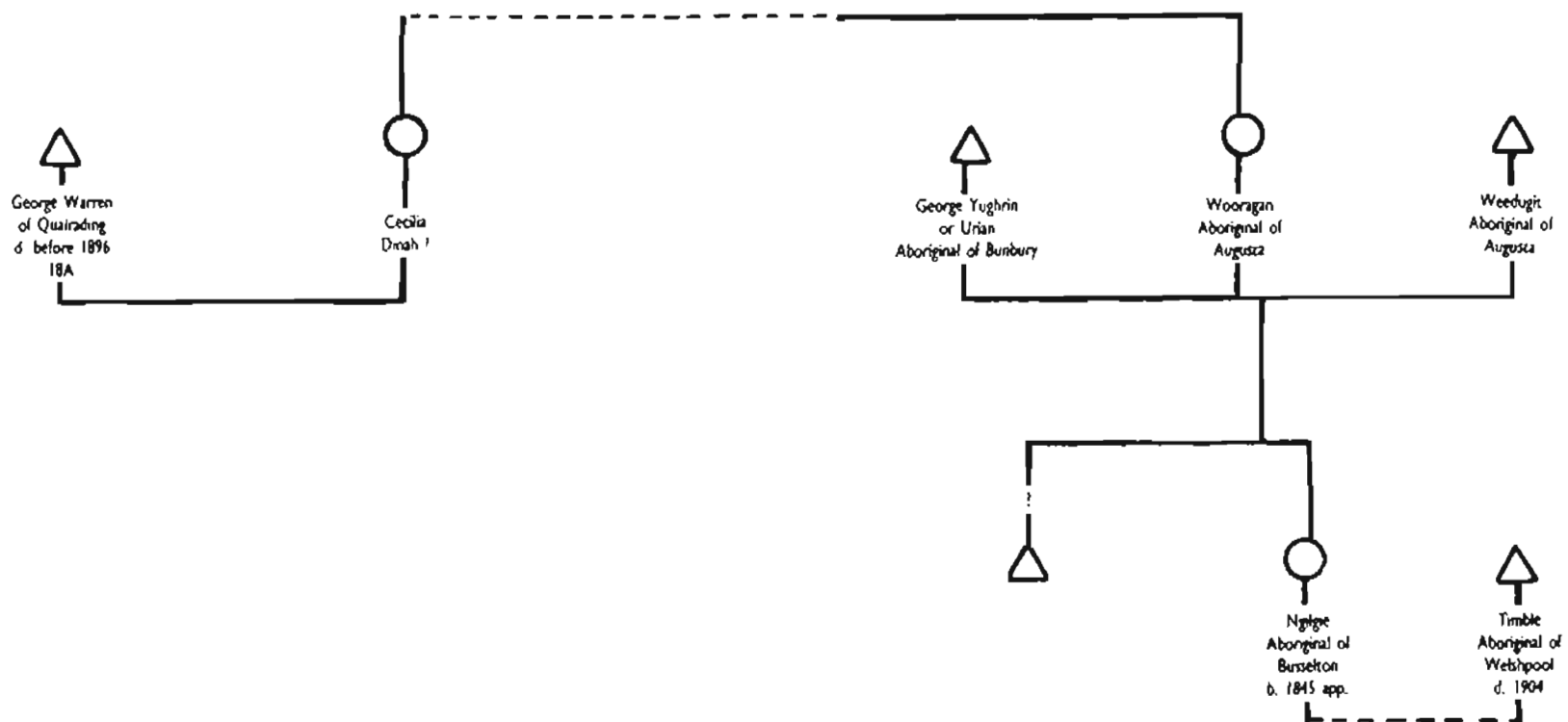
One of Tommy and Alice Nettle's daughters, Paula Nettle, married a man from the Northern Territory called Freddy, and had two daughters and one son. The children were all registered under their mother's name of Nettle. Ellen 'Philomena' was one of these girls. She grew up in St Joseph's Orphanage for Girls at New Norcia Mission, and later worked in St Mary's Orphanage for Boys at the mission. At the time, a lot of girls at the mission were called Ellen, and so she adopted the name Philomena to distinguish her from the others.

After their marriage, Ellen 'Philomena' and Harold Willaway continued to live at New Norcia, and to play an important role in the life of the community. Their four children grew up there, and one daughter, Mary Teresa Willaway, took vows in the Benedictine Missionary Congregation and worked as a missionary in Kalumburu in the northernmost Kimberleys for a number of years.

In recognition of their ties with the New Norcia Benedictine Community, Harold and 'Philomena' Willaway were made Benedictine Oblates, and when 'Philomena' Willaway died she was buried in her Benedictine scapula in accordance with her Oblate rights.



*(left)* Harold Willaway (31) and Florence Willaway nee Ryder (14C) on their wedding day, at New Norcia Mission, 1940.



## NGILGIE

Ngilgie (Nilgie, Nyilgee) was living on the Welshpool reserve at the time that Daisy Bates took up residence there to collect information from the older people about traditional Aboriginal culture in the south-west. Daisy Bates was an English woman who travelled over much of Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory in the early part of this century, taking notes on Aboriginal society and culture. She also wrote for several Australian and English newspapers and magazines, on Aborigines of Australia. Daisy Bates was particularly interested in the languages spoken throughout the south-western region, and Ngilgie supplied her with a vocabulary of 1400 words of Bibbulmun, one of the languages now classified as belonging to the Nyungar group of languages. In addition, Ngilgie gave Daisy Bates several sentences in Bibbulmun, which she was able to transcribe. In this way, Ngilgie has contributed directly to what is now known about the language of the region. As Bibbulmun was the principal language recorded by Daisy Bates, this could account for how the term has come to be applied generally by some authors. The Bibbulmun lands were in the Margaret River area, where Ngilgie was born.

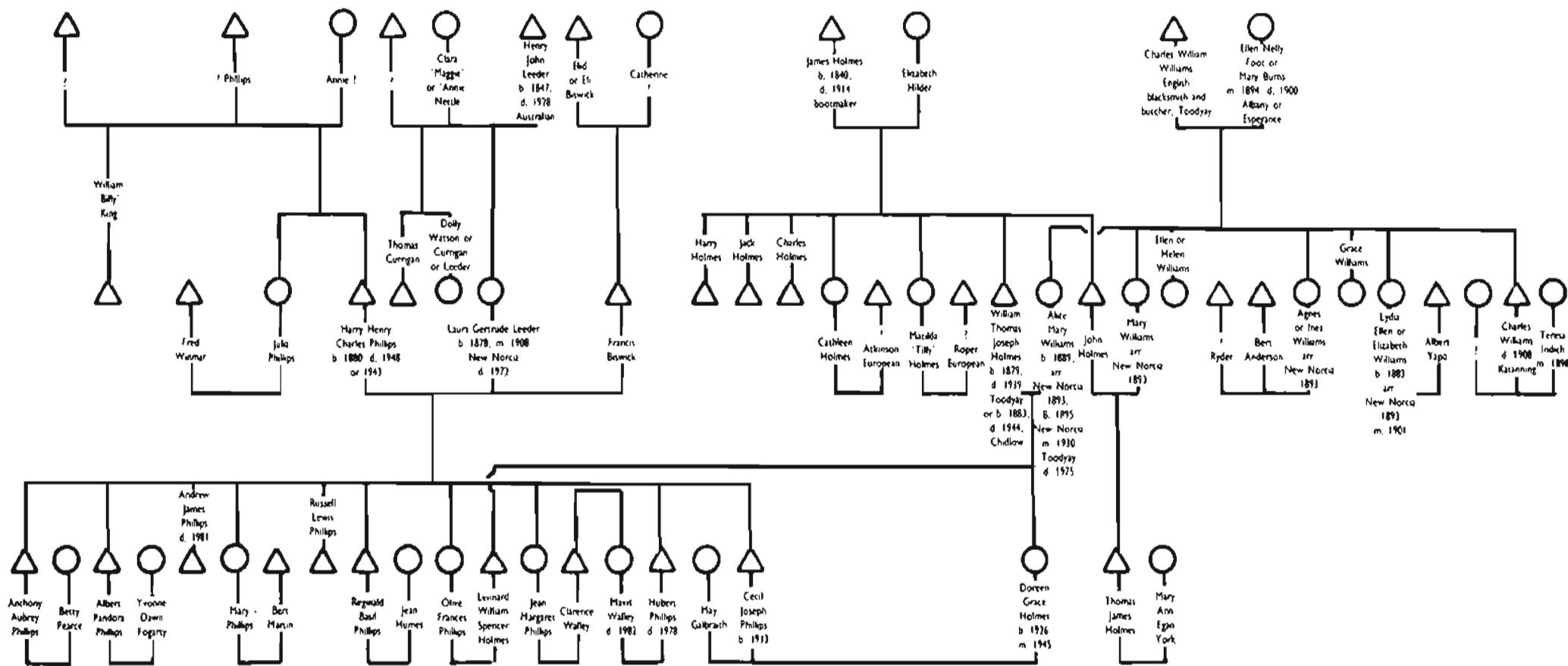
Ngilgie is said by Daisy Bates to have been named after a swamp wallaby. At around the time she was born, her father was about to kill

the wallaby which he came across while hunting for food. However, the animal escaped from him, and in this way revealed to him that it shared a totem, or life spirit, with his baby daughter.

Ngilgie grew up in the Ellensbrook area where she formed a close bond with the Bussell family, maintaining these ties throughout her lifetime. She was known for her gentle manner, perfect English, and her kindness to others. She had a great love of animals, and when living at Welshpool at the approximate age of sixty she had 32 dogs, 7 goats and 12 fowl. Her fondness for animals sometimes led her into trouble as when her goats damaged property on and around the reserve. Eventually, the police shot her 32 dogs, presumably because they were not licensed. Ngilgie was deeply upset, and she left Welshpool and returned home to Busselton.

According to Daisy Bates, Ngilgie was born around 1845 in the Busselton area, and her parents were Aborigines from that locality. However, the Aborigines Department records show her to be the niece of George Warren, a settler. George Warren's wife, Cecilia Dinah Warren (née ?), was from the Bunbury district originally so that this relationship could have been through her and either Ngilgie's father, Weedugit, or her mother, Wooragan.<sup>13</sup>





additional children of Henry John Leader and Clara Nettie:  
 Amy Idonee Leader b. 1874  
 Selby Cecil Leader b. 1875 d. 1945  
 Lucian Leader b. 1880  
 Ernest Leader b. 1883  
 Lilla Carlotta Leader b. 1884  
 Ethel Irene Leader b. 1887  
 Bena Therophila S. Leader b. 1890

As this tree was a late inclusion, it has not been possible to cross-reference it with the other family trees



Harry Henry Charles Phillips with his seven sons:  
*Back row:* Cecil Joseph Phillips, Albert Pandora Phillips, and father Harry Henry Charles Phillips.  
*Second Row:* Reginald Basil Phillips and Anthony Aubrey Phillips.  
*Third row:* Andrew James Phillips (or Bliswick, stepson), and Hubert Phillips.  
*Front:* Russell Lewis Phillips, Northern wheatbelt, c. 1940.



Donkey teamsters at Paynes Find, 1930s.

Cecil Joseph Phillips (34) worked as a teamster carting gold ore from the mines at Paynes Find, to the battery at Yaigoo. There were thirty-four donkeys in the team, which was owned by the Clark family, and each donkey had a name. Cecil Joseph Phillips is not in this photograph, as he was the photographer.



Laura Gertrude Phillips nee Leeder (34), holding her grandson Aden Walley, with her son Russell Lewis Phillips (34) looking on. Perenjori, 1938.



*Back row:* Doreen Grace Phillips nee Holmes (34), Albert Mervyn Phillips (son of May Galbraith and Cecil Joseph Phillips), Cecil Joseph Phillips (34).  
*Front:* Cecily Pandora Phillips, Garry Basil Berwin Phillips, and Geoffrey Phillips, 1950.



A soldier friend with Alice Mary Homes nee Williams (34) and Thomas Joseph Homes (30), Northam, c. 1939.

When this photograph was taken, Thomas Joseph Holmes had lost his sight, and his soldier friend had helped him cross the road and reach home.

## NOTES

### 1. INTRODUCTION

1. Douglas 1973: 48-50.
2. Berndt 1973: 50-54.
3. SRP Vol. 9, Stirling to Goderich, 1832. This estimation was based on the number of Aborigines who had made contact with the principal centres of British settlement in the south-west.
4. Hallam 1977: 27. This estimate corresponds with those made by A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, which were based on work by Daisy Bates of the early twentieth century, including a search of government records of the nineteenth century, and published in the *Official Yearbook of the Commonwealth of Australia* No. 23, 1936.
5. Grey 1841; Eyre 1845.

### 2. ABORIGINES AND SETTLERS

1. Moore 1884: 237, 239, 323.
2. CSR 1834 Vol. 31/181-182.
3. CSR 1840 Vol. 89/np.
4. CSR 1831 Vol. 12/96-97, 133; Vol. 16/196.
5. Hallam 1975: 32.
6. SRP Vol. 14, Morgan to Hay 8/3/1832.
7. CSR 1831 Vol. 12/154.
8. CSR 1841 Vol. 85/np.
9. Clifton, n.d.
10. CSR 1832 Vol. 22/171.
11. Dix and Meagher 1976: 181-185.
12. CSR 1832 Vol. 24/100.
13. CSR 1834 Vol. 31/198, 202-205; Vol. 32/82-90.
14. CSR 1835 Vol. 38/192-193, 188-191; 1834 Vol. 33/101-105; Moore 1884: 236-243.
15. W. McNair, personal notes.
16. SRP Vol. 9, Collie to Governor 24/1/1832.
17. CSR 1834 Vol. 32/92.
18. CSR 1834 Vol. 32/114, 297.
19. SRP Vol. 13, H.M.S. *Olmaney* Report to Governor 1834.
20. CSR 1834 Vol. 33/28; Vol. 32/273; Moore 1884: 225-228.

21. CSR 1831 Vol. 17/45-47.
22. CSR 1832 Vol. 20/93.
23. CSR 1833 Vol. 27/123-127.
24. Curr 1886: 325-353, Vol. 1.
25. SRP Vol. 15, Morgan to Hay 28/1/1833 and 3/2/1833; CSR 1833 Vol. 27/123-127.
26. SRP Vol. 10, Lyon to Colonial Department and Lyon to Stirling 1832; CSR 1832 Vol. 24/225.
27. CSR 1833 Vol. 26/130.
28. CSR 1833 Vol. 27/71.
29. CSR 1833 Vol. 28/25-26, 57.
30. Moore 1884; Grey, 1841; Collie 1834; Bunbury 1930; Salvado 1851; Hassell 1975; Nind 1831; Curr 1886.
31. Rev. J. Smithies to the Wesleyan Missionary Society, London, 18/1/1841, reproduced in McNair and Rumley 1981: 154-155.
32. Bates, manuscript 365-88/436, and *West Australian* 5/1/1935; CSR 1834 Vol. 38/192-193.

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1. CSR 1833 Vol. 29/112-114, 163.
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19. ADF 1899, 655.
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22. ADF 1907, 186.
23. ADF 1908, 887.
24. ADF 1904, 263.
25. Ibid.
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27. Ibid.
28. ADF 1901, 64.
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30. ADF 1905, 128.
31. ADF 1907, 586.
32. CSR 1834 Vol. 31/64, 81-82; 1840 Vol. 89/np.

#### 4. ON THE LAND

1. SRP Vol. 9, Collie to Governor 24/1/1832.
2. CSR 1832 Vol. 22/171
3. Hasluck 1942: 114-115.
4. ADF 1905, 75.
5. ADF 1904, 226.
6. ADF 1905, 726.
7. ADF 1906, 679.
8. ADF 1907, 35.
9. ADF 1907, 357.
10. ADF 1902, 253.
11. ADF 1907, 747.

#### 5. EARLY HUSBANDS, MARRIAGE AND THE 1905 ACT

1. Smithies, Letters, 9/1/1849.
2. ADF 1898, 219.
3. ADF 1908, 444.
4. ADF 1898, 549.

5. ADF 1908, 525.
6. ADF 1907, 714.
7. ADF 1906, 714.
8. ADF 1908, 818.
9. ADF 1906, 979.
10. ADF 1907, 343.
11. ADF 1906, 614.

#### 6. INSTITUTIONS AND CHILDREN

1. Smithies, Letters, 8/10/1840.
2. Ibid.
3. CSR 1845 Vol. 138.
4. McNair and Rumley 1981: 96.
5. Smithies, Letters, 1/5/1842.
6. Ibid. 25/10/1843.
7. McNair and Rumley 1981: 125.
8. Western Australian Legislative Council 1871: 23-26.
9. Brough-Smyth 1878: 260-263.
10. ADF 1902, 178.
11. ADF 1904, 23.
12. ADF 1904, 538.
13. ADF 1901, 84.
14. ADF 1902, 117.
15. ADF 1901, 969.
16. ADF 1903, 12.
17. ADF 1906, 423.
18. ADF 1903, 148.

#### 7. GUILDFORD, AND THE WELSHPOOL RESERVE

1. CSR 1840 Vol. 89/np.
2. CSR 1841 Vol. 95/np.
3. ADF 1901, 44.
4. Ibid.
5. ADF 1901, 350.

6. Ibid.
7. ADF 1905, 156.
8. ADF 1906, 593.
9. ADF 1903, 3.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. ADF 1902, 36.
13. ADF 1905, 153.

#### 8. THE STATUS OF THE ABORIGINAL

1. ADF 1898, 630.
2. ADF 1905, 164.
3. ADF 1898, 791.
4. ADF 1908, 859.
5. Brockman 1874, microfilm.
6. ADF 1902, 552.
7. ADF 1901, 412.
8. ADF 1906, 640.

#### 10. FEATURES OF THE FAMILY TREES

1. William Harris to the editor, *Sunday Times* 6/4/1913.
2. Moore 1884: 256, 413.
3. Salvado 1977: 63.
4. Curr 1886: 352.
5. Smithies, Letters, 26/10/1844, 2/11/1841.

#### 11. NYUNGAR FAMILY TREES

1. Jack Davis's works include two plays, *Kulark* and *The Dreamers*, in addi-

tion to several volumes of poetry. He was editor of the magazine *Identity* produced by the Aboriginal Publications Foundation, for several years. He is represented in a number of volumes, including Berndt and Berndt 1979, in which he gives an overview of Aboriginal/European relations in Western Australia over the previous 150 years.

2. ADF 1901, 51.
3. The Hayward family sporting history is being researched and written up by Eric Hayward, son of Eric Hayward the footballer, with support from the Aboriginal Arts Board of Australia.
4. An account of the deputation to the premier by William Harris and party, is given in Biskup 1973: 158-60, and also in the *Native Union Newsletter* January 1970. Articles also appear in the *West Australian* 9/2/1906 and 14/2/1913; and the *Sunday Times* of 6/4/1913 and 11/3/1928.
5. This tree has been researched by Anna Haebich as part of her Ph.D studies.
6. Collett Barker, Journal of Captain C. Barker 18/1/1830-26/3/1831 at King George's Sound, extracted by Neville Green.
7. The lyrics for this song were told to SWAS by Jan Young.
8. Research on the Quartermaine family name has been carried out by descendants of Elijah Quartermaine, in preparation for a family history which they are compiling.
9. The story of Mary Helen Pangieran has been written up by Rica Erickson in Popham 1979: 28.
10. Schorer 1974.
11. See Mulvaney 1967: 11 especially; *Native Welfare Department Newsletter*, 1971; and an article by George Russo in the *Sunday Times* December 1978.
12. An account of the rescue of the passengers and crew off the wreck the *Georgette*, emphasizing Grace Bussell's role, has been written up in several newspapers, including *Inquirer* of 31/1/1877 and 16/1/1878; *West Australian Times* of 4/1/1878; *West Australian* of 13/6/1932.
13. Reference is made to Ngilgie (Nilgie) in ADF files (1902, 139; 1901, 33) and also in Bates, typescript of notes.

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