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# MOTHER WILLIAMS

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*Muriel Williams*

Many of the older seasonal workers who used to do the Young-Orange-Griffith-Leeton circuit will remember Mrs Muriel Williams who once lived at Erambie Mission, Cowra. Listen to her talking, in her Newtown flat, about the days when she 'followed the fruit' in the southern and western parts of N.S.W.

"My family grew up in the gardens. I've got three boys who were reared up in the cherry trees. When the season was starting, our first stop would be Wombat Road, Young, for the first of the cherries. Then we'd go to Orange, also for cherries. In those days we travelled in horsedrawn wagonettes and would move on from Orange to Griffith for the tail-end of the apricots. When the 'cots' were done, we'd go to the cannery at Leeton while waiting for the peaches to start.

"Then it would be Griffith for grapes. When they were done, most of the dark people would go home, but we'd go to Darlington Point, 21 miles

from Griffith. There was a small five house mission there, and other dark people would camp around it. There wasn't much work, but some of us could sometimes get some winter carrot picking at Griffith.

"Most of the people who used to follow the fruit are dead now. I remember Mr and Mrs Jack Charles of Cummeragunga—she was from Cowra—who were great friends of ours. We used to camp in the lanes out at Hanwood near Griffith—there'd be tents all along the lanes. If we left there to go and camp somewhere else, it'd only be a day or so before those two would be along again. I can still see Roy Kennedy of Whitton and his late wife, Dolly Kennedy of Darlington Point, too.

"I miss the life and would love to have it again. We had many hardships, but it was good. We all lived together and shared what we had. Like Albert Namatjira. What he had, he shared and so did we. One Christmas, two friends of ours,