



**AIATSIS**  
Australian Institute of Aboriginal  
and Torres Strait Islander Studies

**Finding aid**

**DOUGLAS\_W01**

**Sound recordings collected by  
Wilfrid Douglas, 1964-1967**

## ACCESS

### Availability of copies

Listening copies are available. Contact the AIATSIS Audiovisual Access Unit by completing an [online enquiry form](#) or phone (02) 6261 4212 to arrange an appointment to listen to the recordings or to order copies.

### Restrictions on listening

Some materials in this collection are restricted and may only be listened to by those who have obtained permission from the family of Pastor Ron Williams. Refer to audition sheets below for more details.

### Restrictions on use

Some materials in this collection are restricted and may only be copied by those who have obtained permission from the family of Pastor Ron Williams. Refer to audition sheets below for more details. Permission must be sought from the relevant Indigenous individual, family or community as well as the family of Pastor Ron Williams. Any publication or quotation must be consistent with the *Copyright Act* (1968).

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

**Date:** 1964-1967

**Extent:** 4 sound tape reels (5 hr., 20 min.) : analogue, 3 3/4 ips, mono.

### Production history

These recordings were collected by Wilfrid H. Douglas, between 1964 and 1967 as part of an AIAS-funded field study into the languages of the South West region of Western Australia, including Noongar languages and 'South West English'. Douglas, a linguist, missionary and translator, was a member of the United Aborigines Mission (UAM) and headed up the Mission's Language Department at the time these recordings were made. People recorded include Ivan Williams, May Colbung, Grace Williams, Craig Williams, Rosie Williams, Auntie Maude, Kevin Williams, Rebel Williams, Rita Dempster, Brian Colbung, Rosie Johnston, Frank Johnston, Sandy Mindam, Mrs Woods, Garnett Jones, Denzil Humphries, Ron Williams, Felix Bennell and Liza Narriel. The material was deposited at the AIAS (now AIATSIS) on 17 December 1968.

## RELATED MATERIAL

**Important:** before you click on any links in this section, please read our [sensitivity message](#).

Partial transcripts of the recordings are held in the AIATSIS Library, see [PMS 466](#). A preliminary field work report compiled in 1964 is also held, see [PMS 2166](#). The book resulting from this research is titled *The Aboriginal languages of south-west Australia: speech forms in current use and a technical description of Njungar*, see [B D737.18/A1](#). For a complete listing of related material held by AIATSIS, consult our [online catalogue](#), Mura®. Other related works by Douglas include the *Illustrated dictionary of the south-west Aboriginal language* (published in 1996) and an article in the *Royal Society of Western Australia Journal*, v. 56,

pts 1-2 (1973) titled 'The language of southwestern Australia'.

### **ARCHIVIST'S NOTE**

This finding aid was compiled from information provided by Wilf Douglas and audition sheets prepared by AIATSIS staff.

## ITEM LIST

Archive number	Field recording number	Description
001322A 001322B	<a href="#">SW 1</a>	Messages, songs and language elicitation in English and Noongar languages with various people at Mount Barker, Gnowangerup and Kalgoorlie
001322B 001323A 001323B	<a href="#">SW 2</a>	Noongar language elicitation and history, songs in English and song in Ngatjumaya recorded in Narrogin and Gnowangerup
001323B	<a href="#">SW 3</a>	Nooongar language elicitation with Denzil Humphries and Ron Williams at Kalgoorlie <b>RESTRICTED – personal material.</b>
001324A 001324B	<a href="#">SW 4</a>	Noongar language elicitation with Felix Bennell, Dick Reidy, the Reidy family and Liza Narriel at Brookton and Merredin

## ITEM DESCRIPTIONS

001322A + 001322B/SW 1

Performer/speaker(s):	Kevin Williams, Ivan Williams, May Colbung, Grace Williams, Craig Williams, Rosie Williams, Auntie Maude, Rebel Williams, Rita Dempster, Bob Yorkshire
Personal subject(s):	Williams family
Subject keywords:	Language - Linguistics - Language elicitation, Communications, Music – Vocal, Stories and motifs
Language/people:	Noongar / Nyungar / Nyungah languages, English
Places:	Mount Barker (SW WA SI50-11), Gnowangerup (SW WA SI50-07), Kalgoorlie-Boulder (SE WA Goldfields SH51-09), Albany / King George Sound (SW WA SI50-11, SI50-15)
Recording quality:	Poor (low levels throughout, a number of silences, loud tape squeals, starts and stops)

Archive item number	Timing point	Description	Date	Place
DOUGLAS_W0 1-001322A	00:00:42	Kevin Williams sends a message to Ron Williams in English.	13 April 1965	Mount Barker, WA
	00:02:16	Ivan Williams sends a message to Ron Williams in English.		
	00:03:27	Words and sentences in Noongar language, by Ivan Williams. A woman joins in at 00:12:18 and contributes occasionally (not announced).		
	00:17:39	May Colbung sends a message to Ron Williams in English. Incomplete – ends with extended high pitch tone.		
	00:19:13	Words and sentences in Noongar language, by Grace Williams. Occasional contributions from Craig Williams (a small boy).		
	00:35:32	Christian songs sung in English by Craig and Rosie Williams.		
	00:44:57	Auntie Maud sends a message to Ron Williams in English. Some kids are also present.		
	00:45:50	Kevin Williams sends a message to Ron Williams in English. Other kids are present too. Two songs follow: 'crossroads' and 'a sunbeam', both		

Archive item number	Timing point	Description	Date	Place
		in English, explained by Craig Williams.		
	00:49:30	End of side 1 of field tape SW 1 and end of DOUGLAS_W01-001322A.		
DOUGLAS_W01-001322B	00:00:00	Douglas introduces the recording session, which takes place in the home of Rita Dempster.	14 April 1965	Gnowangerup, WA
	00:01:04	Rebel Williams (guitar and vocals) performs songs in English. Includes brief message to Ron Williams. Others singers join in.		
	00:11:01	Noongar language elicitation with Rebel Williams. Others are present and contribute occasionally.		
	00:16:45	Rita Dempster sends a message to Ron Williams in English.		
	00:18:55	More songs in English. Performers are not identified, but presumably Rebel Williams and family members.		
	00:23:46	Mrs Yorkshire discusses the Night Well in English, followed by a version in Noongar. Bob Yorkshire and Garnett Jones are also present. Casual conversation and discussion in English with many Noongar words. Other stories follow.	13 June 1965	Kalgoorlie, WA
	00:45:12	Mrs Yorkshire sends a brief message to Ron Williams in Noongar and English.		
	00:45:45	End of field tape SW 1. Blank section on archive tape before SW 2 starts.		

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001322B + 001323A + 001323B/SW 2

Performer/speaker(s):	Brian Colbung, Rosie Johnston, Frank Johnston, Sandy Mindam, Mrs Woods, Garnett Jones, Rita Dempster, Sam Yorkshire
Subject keywords:	History - Genealogy and family history, History - Oral history, Geography - Territories and boundaries, Language - Linguistics - Language elicitation, Music - Vocal - Solo
Language/people:	Noongar / Nyungar / Nyungah languages, Ngatjumaya / Ngatjumay / Ngatju, English
Places:	Narrogin (SW WA SI50-03)
Recording quality:	Poor

Archive item number	Timing point	Description	Date	Place
DOUGLAS_W01-001322B	00:46:31	Brian Colbung discusses Noongar families and their movements, in English.	28 April 1964	Narrogin, WA
	01:05:24	End of DOUGLAS_W01-001322B.		
DOUGLAS_W01-001323A	00:00:45	Brian Colbung talks about racial discrimination. Comparison to what is happening in New York.		
	00:08:00	Rosie Johnston (nee Winmar) recalls some Noongar words and families.		
	00:12:38	Rosie Johnston and Frank Johnston perform a Christian song in English.		
	00:13:10	A Christian message from Frank Johnston in English.		
	00:17:00	A Christian message from Rosie Johnston in English.		
	00:19:03	Attempt to record children talking at the Narrogin Reserve, but the children are reluctant to speak up. Includes one Christian song in English. A lot of background noise.		
	00:24:17	Noongar language elicitation with Sandy Mindam.		Gnowangerup, WA
	00:29:47	Mrs Woods speaks very briefly in Ngatjumaya (Wangka Malpa).		
	00:30:39	Douglas introduces side 2 of field tape SW 2.		
00:31:07	Garnett Jones talks very briefly			

Archive item number	Timing point	Description	Date	Place
		about his life in English. One or two Noongar phrases.		
	00:32:52	Ngatjumaya language elicitation with Mrs Woods. Ends with a song in language with discussion in English.		
	01:06:16	End of DOUGLAS_W01-001323A.		
DOUGLAS_W01-001323B	00:00:30	Rita Dempster discusses her belief in Christianity in English, followed by a hymn.		
	00:06:40	Ngatjumaya song performed by Mrs Woods, followed by hymn in English. Substantial gap in recording before next session.		
	00:09:05	Various people speaking Noongar words and phrases, including Sam Yorkshire, Garnett Jones and others.		
	00:13:30	End of field tape SW 2.		

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## 001323B/SW 3

Performer/speaker(s):	Denzil Humphries, Ron Williams
Subject keywords:	Language - Linguistics - Language elicitation, History - Genealogy and family history, History - Oral history, Stories and motifs
Language/people:	Noongar / Nyungar / Nyungah languages, English
Places:	Kalgoorlie-Boulder (SE WA Goldfields SH51-09)
Recording quality:	Fair to good

Archive item number	Timing point	Description	Date	Place
DOUGLAS_W01-001323B	00:14:40	Noongar language elicitation with Denzil Humphries.	20 December 1966	Kalgoorlie, WA
	00:27:09	Interview with Ron Williams in English. Includes some Noongar language, biographical information, belief in Christianity, mention of various Noongar people, traditional stories in English.		
	00:51:30	<b>RESTRICTED – personal material.</b> Ron Williams talks about a personal belief.	29 November 1966	Kalgoorlie, WA
	00:59:30	End of field tape SW 3 and end of DOUGLAS_W01-001323B.		

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001324A + 001324B/SW 4

Performer/speaker(s):	Felix Bennell, Dick Reidy, Reidy family, Liza Narriel
Subject keywords:	Language - Linguistics - Language elicitation, Stories and motifs
Language/people:	Noongar / Nyungar / Nyungah languages, English
Places:	Brookton (SW WA SI50-02, SI50-03), Merredin (SW WA SH50-15)
Recording quality:	Fair to good

Archive item number	Timing point	Description	Date	Place
DOUGLAS_W01-001324A	00:00:00	Noongar language elicitation with Felix Bennell and members of the Reidy family.	28 January 1967	Brookton, WA
	01:01:22	Noongar language elicitation with Liza Narriel. Includes various stories and discussions about birds and animals.	1 January 1967	Merredin, WA
	01:06:27	End of DOUGLAS_W01-001324A.		
DOUGLAS_W01-001324B	00:00:00	Continuation of interview with Liza Narriel. Noongar language elicitation.		
	00:16:35	End of field tape SW 4 and end of DOUGLAS_W01-001324B.		

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