

East Kimberley Impact Assessment Project

IMPACT STORIES OF THE EAST KIMBERLEY

Helen Ross (Editor)
Eileen Bray (translator)

East Kimberley Working Paper No. 28
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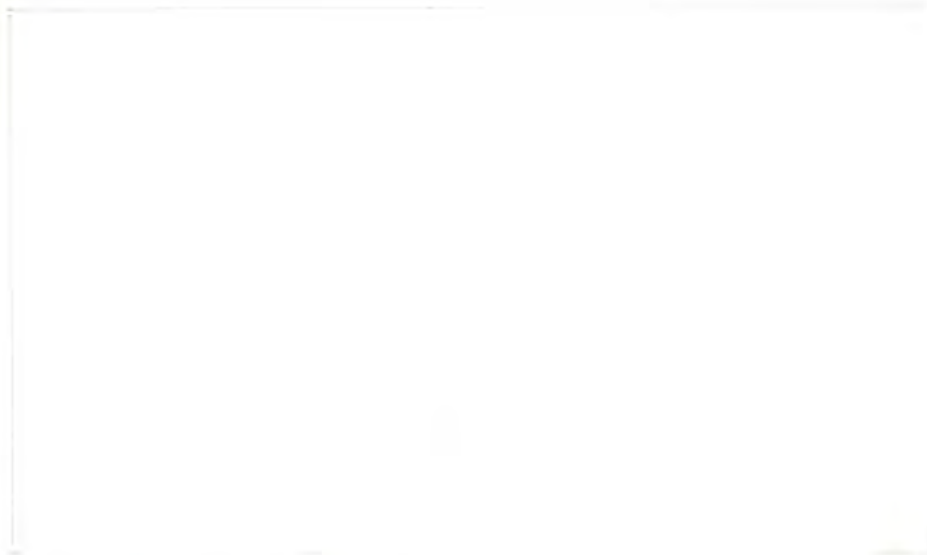
A Joint Project Of The:

Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies
Australian National University

Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies

Anthropology Department
University of Western Australia

Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia



The aims of the project are as follows:

1. To compile a comprehensive profile of the contemporary social environment of the East Kimberley region utilising both existing information sources and limited fieldwork.
2. Develop and utilise appropriate methodological approaches to social impact assessment within a multi-disciplinary framework.
3. Assess the social impact of major public and private developments of the East Kimberley region's resources (physical, mineral and environmental) on resident Aboriginal communities. Attempt to identify problems/issues which, while possibly dormant at present, are likely to have implications that will affect communities at some stage in the future.
4. Establish a framework to allow the dissemination of research results to Aboriginal communities so as to enable them to develop their own strategies for dealing with social impact issues.
5. To identify in consultation with Governments and regional interests issues and problems which may be susceptible to further research.

Views expressed in the Project's publications are the views of the authors, and are not necessarily shared by the sponsoring organisations.

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a selection of stories and commentaries by Aboriginal people of the Turkey Creek area, collected for a community social impact study (Ross, East Kimberley working paper no. 27).

The accounts extend from the early impact history of the area, about a century ago, through the pastoral working era, leaving cattle stations in the 1970s and building up new communities, to Aboriginal aspirations in the present. These present Aboriginal points of view; further historical information is presented in historical notes by Clement (East Kimberley working paper no. 29).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to thank all of the story tellers from the Warmun (Turkey Creek), Wurreranginy (Frog Hollow), Baulu-Wah (Violet Valley), Yarrunga (Chinaman's Garden) and Juwulinypany (Bow River) communities for their enthusiastic participation in this project. I regret that not all of their stories can be reproduced here.

Special thanks are due to Cathie Clement for her archival research.

We also thank Frances Kofod, Ian Kirkby, Mike Dillon, Ted Beard and Jimmy Klein for their assistance with background information and verification. Barbara Jones, Kaye Thies, Joyce Hudson, Margaret Mickan, Tasaku Tsunoda, Frances Kofod, Peter Read, Nancy Williams, Rachel and Phillip Fry and Michael Adams for their comments on the draft and forms of presentation; and Ettie Oakman and Wendy Chan who handled the laborious task of typing, and Judy Johnson who handled the proof reading through many amendments.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

These stories were collected in late 1986 and early 1987 as source material for the study 'Community social impact assessment: a cumulative study in the Turkey Creek area, Western Australia' (Helen Ross, East Kimberley working paper no. 27). The project has since grown around the stories. The Aboriginal people participating in the study were keen to disseminate the stories as a means of public awareness for non-Aborigines, especially those in a position to influence their affairs, and to record them for succeeding generations in their own communities. After the stories were collected, Cathie Clement joined the study to contribute archival research based on the stories. This is presented in 'Historical notes relevant to impact stories of the East Kimberley' (East Kimberley working paper no. 28) in the form of details concerning the places, people and incidents mentioned in the stories.

The communities participating chose oral history as the main research method for the social impact study. Their aims were to help white people to understand what has happened to their people, to explain their current aspirations, and to record their stories for the benefit of younger generations. This collection has been published in fulfilment of these aims.

The participating communities were the Warmun community at Turkey Creek, and a number of 'outstation' communities which whose members once lived there and who remain associated with Warmun: Wurreranginy (Frog Hollow), Baulu-Wah (Violet Valley), Yarrunga (Chinaman's Garden) and Juwulinypany (Bow River). Apart from discussions with the Chairman, Kawarra (Bungle Bungle) community was not included on the grounds of its intensive involvement with other East Kimberley Impact Assessment Project researchers. The locations of the participating communities, and the places they refer to, and shown in figure 1.

Transcription and orthography

The storytellers spoke in Kija, Kriol and English. Many switched between languages within their stories, even within sentences. The choice of a written form in which to present Kriol stories and Kriol passages has been most difficult. The 'public relations' aim of the storytellers requires a document that the intended non-Aboriginal readership can understand, but their aim of recording the stories for Aboriginal posterity suggests that distortion of the speakers' versions should be avoided.

Translation into standard English would suit the first aim, but not the second. In attempts at translation it proved impossible to retain the character given to the stories by the idiom of individual speakers, and to translate ambiguous passages. I opted for transcriptions with a minimum of editing, in order to avoid distortion of the speaker's versions. Goodrooroo Narrogin (1988) warns against wholesale rewriting, and massive framing and intrusions, and others have advised me similarly. While the transcripts are difficult for some readers of English to follow, most of the intended readership can, with concentration, understand and appreciate the stories in this form.

Use of transcripts rather than translation presented another problem. Some linguists feel that the use of English spelling with Kriol risks misrepresenting Kriol and that it is far preferable to use Kriol orthography, side-by-side translation, or to translate into standard English. Kriol is a language in its own right, with its own grammar, yet the use of English spelling makes the storyteller appear to be speaking English incorrectly. Also, the different meanings some words carry in Kriol and English (such as 'cheeky') may confuse English-speaking readers. There is a Kriol orthography, developed in the Northern Territory, but it is in very limited use in the East Kimberley and is not read by any of the intended readership of this paper, Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal. This ruled it out as a suitable medium, quite apart from the fact that I did not have resources to have the stories converted to the Kriol orthography.

It was necessary to use a form reasonably accessible to the intended readerships, of (mainly) non-Aboriginal people familiar with Aboriginal affairs and the Kimberley, and Kimberley Aboriginal people. Most of this readership has at least some familiarity with the form and idiom of Kriol. My eventual choice has been to use English orthography, giving explanations in brackets at times to assist readers.

Kriol

Some features of Kriol should be noted (see Eagleson, Kaldor and Malcolm 1982, p.86-91):

- . the pronoun 'he' tends to be used as a general form representing 'he, she or it'. Occasionally, 'she' is used in a similarly generic way.
- . Kriol, in common with other Aboriginal languages, has an elaborate pronoun system, which distinguishes single, dual and plural forms, and forms inclusive or exclusive of the first person.
- . the auxiliary verb 'bin' is used as the regular marker of past tense, followed by a present tense verb form.

- . transitivity, or the property of having an object, is marked by the suffix 'em' being added to verb roots.
- . continuous aspect is distinguished from non-continuous through the use of the suffix 'bat'.

Presentation conventions

Some clarification for readers has been provided in brackets and footnotes. Round brackets represent my explanations, including unfamiliar terms, and square brackets show where a word necessary to the flow of a passage has been inserted. Three dots in succession indicate where words (often digressions) have been excluded.

Kija words included in the text are written in the orthography recommended in 'Kija sounds and spelling' by Patrick McConvell (1986). Most of these spellings have been checked by Eileen Bray and Frances Kofod; I am responsible for any errors which may remain.

Only brief explanations and comments have been included by the editor. Detail is available in the companion papers by Cathie Clement and myself (East Kimberley working papers nos. 27 and 29).

The storytellers are identified by the names they use in public contacts and around their communities, spelt according to the Western Australian Department of Health versions. Certain difficulties are involved in using Aboriginal names alone (many of the 'surnames' are Aboriginal names), besides their lack of familiarity to readers outside the communities.

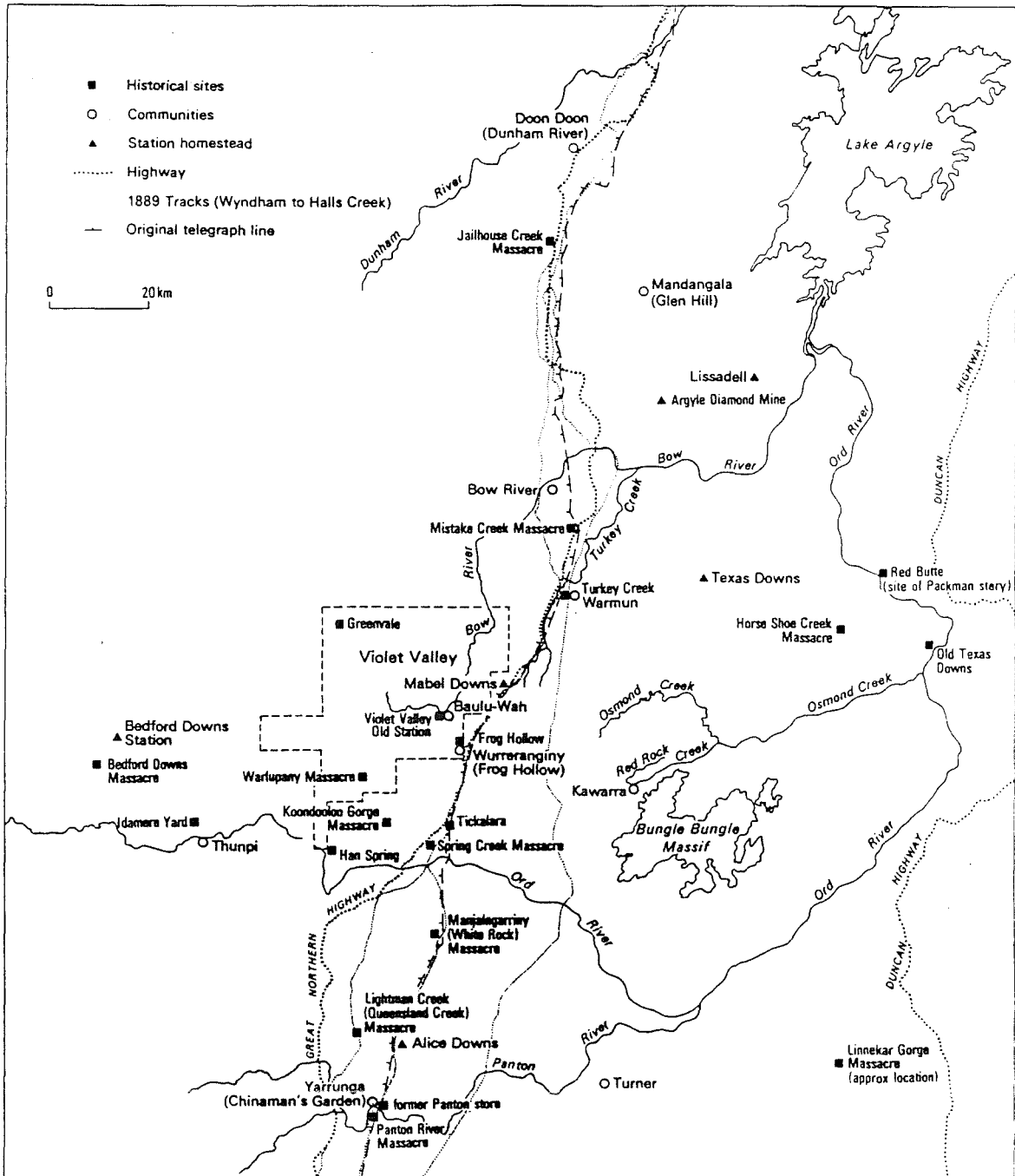
Readers should note that the names of Europeans have been included as given by the storytellers, but that there are some discrepancies between the storytellers, and with the archives, in this respect. In a couple of cases it appears that the actions of employees may have been attributed to station managers.

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LOCATIONS OF HISTORICAL SITES AND PRESENT COMMUNITIES.

MURDERS AND MASSACRES

The killing times began around 1888 and lasted into the early 1900s. Many of the killings occurred near the Wyndham-Halls Creek 'road', (in reality no more than tracks) formed following the Halls Creek gold rush of 1886 (gold was discovered in 1885). The massacres along the road and telegraph line (erected 1888-1890) were the major impact of early colonisation on Aboriginal people - though Aboriginal people do not distinguish the massacres associated with the road and telegraph line from those connected with pastoral development.

Kija and Miriwoong story tellers see their ancestors as having provoked the widespread killings by spearing lone white men.

Dotty Whatebee (translated from Kija by Eileen Bray)

They were chasing each other, black man and white people. Whitefellas with rifles, blackfellas with spears.

Once at Mt King (on Bedford Downs station) a white man was walking up with a rifle and a black man found him and was waiting for him by a rock. The blackfella hooked his spear up ready, and the blackfella was coming closer towards him. That blackfella got up and speared the whitefella, and the white bloke ran off with the spear in his body. He chucked away his rifle, and the blackfella ran away. He ran up the hill, and the *kartiya* was running back to the house, crying 'oh somebody come'. He was right up on top, the blackfella, watching them from the top of the hill. He was waving at them from on top, 'I'm here', he was telling them, 'here I am, I bin kill (speared) that white bloke'.

Early days people used to chase white men with spears.

One *kartiya* got killed at Adavale, at Jirripany. The blackfella speared him right in the heart, finished. He never got up, that *kartiya*. He was lying down there. The other *kartiya* were counting each other at supper time, they were all looking for that *kartiya*. They saw him with the spear in his heart. They were all getting cheeky (aggressive) now, when they found that other white man dead. They were chasing all the black men, chasing them and killing them. They were shooting them. My uncle got shot too. He was wearing a *jakuli* (pubic ornament). All the *kartiya* found the *jakuli*. He was shot the other side of Tirruni, Yulumpu country (on Tableland station).

Frank Budbaria

Before in this country they used to shoot blackfellas, and blackfellas used to murder white people, got a buggy when they used to come across here. They used to see em coming along, they reckon 'that's the big water snake coming along the road' (referring to the appearance of the cart tracks). They used to go across with a spear, wait in the road. They used to kill em. One white bloke shoot em one, another bloke spear em white man, all that used to be before, all over this country, in the hills.

They had road there other side of this big hill here (by Turkey Creek). The old road, across over that side. [From] Frog Hollow come out, keep going in that road. , go down to Stony Creek way, go down, follow that road. That road, used to be (before) blackfellas bin murder lot of white people through there, and white man used to murder some blackfellas. And they used to go in, get some blackfellas out la (in the) bush you know, and bring em back. And some blackfellas when they see white people come in to bush camp you know - oh big mob of blackfellas go round and the white man there - and when he come into camp they spear em white people now. And some white people shooting em blackfella down. Kill em, might be thousand head of blackfellas, and burn em up in this country. They used to do em down here, they shot big mob just down the bottom camp here (Turkey Creek) that side of the flat rock there. Just past the bottom camp, they shot big mob there. Burn em up on the flat rock on top. All them sort of ideas, bin (all those sort of things happened) in this country.

Some of the early encounters between black and white now seem very amusing.

Queenie McKenzie

*The Packman*¹

They reckon this packman bin come from Territory, come across this way from Mistake Creek somewhere. No station bin la Mistake Creek yet. He bin come through there somewhere, follow the river. He bin come, he bin cross the river, he bin go make a camp la that bottle (boab) tree (at Red Butte). We call em 'Policeman's Crossing', that's the name of that place (on the Ord River, Texas Downs station). Doesn't matter he run floodwater you can still cross him. Shallow place.

Well there now he bin make em camp. He bin pull up, he had a two pack horse, one riding horse, saddle horse, one canteen horse for him, make a camp there and stuff. And this lot blackfellas bin looking at him from that cave, from top of that cave there, you know. They reckoned '*marranpala, marranpala!*²' *Kartiya* - early days they used to call em *marranpala*. He like a fig tree tucker, white like you now, colour, they used to call em like a fig tree, see.

Right, this nother two bin sneak up. 'Go look him'. He boil em bat billy can. Dinner or something. True, they reckon old people used to tell em bat me. He bin boil his billy can, have a tea, these two fellas bin go back tell em, this mob, la top. They bin come down then. Come down and stand up and have a talk to him. And he talking English, like that. And this lot don't understand what he's saying. He give it all abat and pull em out tea, sugar, half a bag of flour, he bin give it them tobacco. All a bat looking at him and this nother boy bin go round the back one side. He bin hook em up spear bla (belonging to) him, get that man right there (right in the middle of the back). Kill him. Kill him there, bin get em that backpack bla him now, empty em

¹ Archival records do not contain any evidence of a specific disappearance or death which can be equated with this story. There were, however, at least two men who travelled through the East Kimberley, and then disappeared in 1881 (Clement, 1988). Two others were last seen alive near the Wilson River in December 1884 when the rest of their party went on into the Territory.

² Miriwoong word, referring to the colour of fig flesh.

out. Empty em out everything, they bin talk talk then. Leave em them horse (they left the horses), they never touch it. Them horses bin go himself. They bin coming this way somewhere (westwards) now that lot horse, I don't know where.

Empty em out backpack, saddle horse, they bin carry em up all the backpack up la hill there, straight up like that. You can see em that cave from side. They bin carry em up there. They bin thinking now, they bin make a corroboree out of em. Make em (have a) corroboree now. They bin put em bat paint la them pack bags and pack saddles (laughs). Put a paint la that packsaddle. Dance em got em now, corroboree! Just like I dance em got a wurrangku, you know. Saddles, too, they bin put em kumunangu (paper bark hats) a la saddles. I don't know what them corroboree (what it was called), they used to sing em for mefellas (us), you know, but I can't find out. I don't know where he gone. Dance em got em, they bin bring em all the way now, that way (they spread, taught or demonstrated the corroboree in other areas). Coming up this way. That corroboree, that saddles and packsaddles.

They bin come la... Lajipany, Horseshoe Creek (on Texas Downs station). Them horses now that bin lost from that kartiya. Right there now they bin find em, kartiya bin find em there... Kartiya from Turkey Creek bin find em.

They bin have em for corroboree, you know, that rifle too. They bin dance em got a rifle, make em corroboree. They didn't know what it is. That rifle bin live (survive), till we bin grow up anyhow. We bin see that rifle, shotgun too, we bin catch em up³. All along leave em (they stored them) right la Horse Creek yard, la nawane (cave), la biggest nawane blackfella camp, there now all abat leave em packsaddle everything. We bin see em. Only we bin see em white ants bin tucker everything, but we bin see all the gear, buckles and things. Iron, packsaddle irons, saddle irons, some leather. There now rifle we bin find em. He bin still live (still OK) that rifle, white ants never tucker, shotgun. When I bin grown I bin see that but they bin hide em there long long time before I bin born. But they bin leave em la safer place, you know, you know where they have em nawane. They bin hang em up like that, that rifle (put it on a ledge). White ants couldn't get em. He was really good that rifle.

³ A figure of speech referring to time.

All right, they reckon they bin hunting for this lot kartiya now, law bat. Some kartiya you know, early days. They used to hunting, looking for this lot blackfellas, what bin kill em that man. Bin fetch em up horse, bring em up, put em somewhere. They known blackfellas bin killem, that man...

Before we bin born Jack Kelly went out looking for blackfellas, all them blackfellas, he bin shoot em all abat right longa that Horseshoe Creek. Right there la top. Big mob of em he bin shoot em, big mob. Kids like this one, look, just pick em up and hit em on the head. Hit em on the stone, like that. Big mob. You can see em that burn place where he bin burn em up all abat la that flat rock. You can see em that flat rock still black. With the kerosene he bin burn em them.

That before I bin born. My mother bin live still. My mother bin a young woman now (then)⁴. They see em this big black smoke from old Texas, well long way, but they bin see em you know. Used to come back, camp la house, always fill em up kerosene, two drums of kerosene, them four gallons (drums) you know. And take em and burn em them. Go back and burn em up, till no bones bin left, only ashes. You can see em that ground, see, that flat rock, just black. I can show you today, you can see em that burn place. But you might reckon that stone bin breed like that. No, that's the one he bin burn em. Finished. He bin come back again, look abat more, they bin shoot em all abat. La top here somewhere, I don't know where. But I know that mob - no more little mob, big mob, that one, kids and all. You know Jumpany's (Bob Nyalcas') mother? She was with that mob now what they bin shoot em there. Them kartiya. His granny and his mother⁵. They got away that two. They bin get away and hide... Soon as they bin hear em kartiya got shooting everywhere they bin take off, bush. And his grandpa bin find em out la bush, his daughter and his wife. They bin come this way then.

⁴ This could date the event around 1910-1915, though the date of Queenie's mother Dinah's birth is uncertain.

⁵ This would date it around the turn of the century.

In July 1888, after the killing of George Barnett north of Fletcher Creek, massacre parties travelled hundreds of miles killing Aborigines (see Clement's entry on Fletcher Creek).

Biddy Malingal (translated by Eileen Bray)

Massacres at Lightman Creek, Violet Valley and Panton River

They came from the west.
 A big mob of people came, from Moola Bulla, from Halls Creek and from Turner.
 To the ceremony place at Lightman Creek.
 That's the biggest place for young men's ceremonies.
 They all called out.
 All the Lungka people from the west, then from the east, all the Jaru people.
 Miriwoong people from the north.
 They had a fight then.
 'There, there, all the *kartiya* coming!'

They came galloping on horses.
 The people called out 'ah, here come all the *kartiya*.'
 They all ran away.

Kalypany, Kalykuny and Pujinyngany, three brothers ran away.
 They chased them west.
 They kept chasing them right across to the Roses Yard.
 Half way the *kartiya* got tired and thirsty so they came back.

They went back and shot all the babies, kids and teenage girls, and all the old ladies, their mothers and grandmothers, and all the old men.
 They had all climbed up trees, poor things.
 They shot them like birds and they fell down like birds.

Finished.
 They got all the wood, and piled it up.
 They pulled all the people and put them on top of the wood, put kerosene on it and lit the fire.

The white people asked each other, 'where are we going to go now?'

'Let's go to Violet Valley.'

They went north to Old Station.⁶

(There was no government there yet, nothing yet.)

They didn't know sugar, they didn't know flour and tobacco.

They thought the flour was white paint.

They put it on themselves like this.

The sugar, they just used to throw it out.

They didn't know sugar and tobacco.

They used to throw it in the water, the tobacco and tea.)

Right, after that they went.

Here they are at Violet Valley.

They came up to the people.

I don't know who that old man was, who escaped.

Old brother Tawaruny, who died at Turkey Creek.

He's the one who ran away.

And brother Larlarji.

Those two ran away from Old Station, and the rest were shot.

They burnt them again.

From there they went back and came up the river.⁷

By that white gum coming up from the creek.

Long time ago people.

At a place called Walimaliny, Flying Fox, they chained all the olden days people.

Like the time before they were laying everywhere.

The kids, the mothers and the teenage girls.

And the old man was in the middle.

He took blood from someone else and rubbed it on his body and his eyes.

He pretended he was dead.

He put blood on his lips.

The white men got matches, and poked all the peoples' eyes to see if they were alive or dead.

The old man didn't blink.

He just stared at the *kartiya* poking him.

Then the *kartiya* said, 'they're all dead, go and get firewood.'

⁶ Violet Valley, said by Aboriginal people in 1910 to have been a regular meeting and camping ground for groups from the Ord, Chamberlain, Panton, Wilson, Bow, Dunham, Elvire and Negri rivers for hundreds of years.

⁷ Panton River.

They all went for firewood then, to the east.
The old man got up and had a look to see how far they'd gone.

They were still close. He lay down again.
They were still looking back. He lay down.

He got up again to see how far they'd gone, and said to himself.

'They've gone a long way now'.
'Catch me if you can!'

He was a good runner, like a kangaroo.
One *kartiya* sang out 'ah, one man's gone'.
They chased him with a gun.
They were shooting and shooting, but couldn't kill him.

He ran across the river and up the side of the hill.
He went up and went in the cave.
They lit a fire in the cave behind where he was.
They kept pushing it in with sticks.

They heard the old man groaning 'oh, oh'.
'Oh, we got him', the *kartiya* said
'He's died now inside.'

That old man was looking at them from the top.
He had a little tiny hole just big enough for his eyes.
He was watching them.
He was waiting until they'd gone far away.

First thing in the morning when the first fowls sing out
he was crawling down and feeling if the ashes were still hot.

'Ah, it's cold, he said'.
He put his foot on the ashes, then he ran to the west.

He came out to the other old people Kalykuny,
Pujinyngany, Kalypany and Kumuruny, all his brothers
Karrawarrlilngarrum, his sister.
They cried for him.

'I wouldn't have been alive because they lit a fire
behind me' he told them.

'They all came up and lit a fire behind me, nearly killed
me' the old man told them.

'Ah, where've we got to go?' they asked each other.

'Let's go to Tarrajayinji', the ranges west of Roses
Yard.

Kenny Bray (translated by Eileen Bray)

When we were children white men came. He used to kill our uncles, grannies; and my two brothers - they got killed and my two sisters.

He killed my grandmother and grandfather and my uncle and my aunty.

Long time ago when Captain Cook came la that white gum tree across the creek (at Panton River). He killed all the mob and the bones are laying everywhere in the middle of the prickly bush. He burned all of their bodies with kerosene.

Jack Britten*Grandfather's Escape*

This Spring Creek here, lot of *kartiya* bin come along there, shoot all them blackfellas, low down side alonga Spring Creek right along crossing. Where the (road) crossing go like that, you go little bit there (east), you see em this creek come down there. All bin fill in la that one creek now, kill em. My old granny⁸ and grandpa, they bin inside longa them dead bodies, what they bin shooting em. Underneath the bodies. They bin reckon they dead. They bin keep looking, they still here, keep chuck em on too (bodies), come back everywhere.

Grandpa look, 'oh, that way, clean way'.

Bodies, chuck em down there la gully. Right, my grandpa got up from underneath them bodies, he just looked quietly, 'ah, all the *kartiya* gone'.

He went out of that same creek, that little creek... He run this way, you see em bit of hill that way (just to the east). All the mob bin there, shooting em one old man bin run away. And grandpa and granny bin look, 'ah they all that way'.

They bin take off this way. They got away la one sharp hill, that way, higher up. They bin climb up. They bin looking out, 'ah, they coming back,' bring em up carry em la horse, you know, bodies, take em to that creek.

When my granny and grandpa bin run away from there, they went up right up to Koondooloo, come in to another *palangkarany* (mob) people. Stop there now. Big gorge there, Koondooloo. They bin reckon they want to saved. And tracks bin all up and down, go higher up, come back, all these *kartiya* bin *kitakitap* (sound effect), follow that track, where they bin up and down longa this Spring Creek. They been follow em right round, Koondooloo.

Kartiya go, 'ah, big mob here, big mob blacks'. Nearly about a hundred people. Big hole there longa rock. 'All right, we'll see that tomorrow', they reckon. They bin look through.

⁸ Two brothers, Jack's maternal grandfather and his brother.

Some bin go round this side, some that side, some this side, some this side, from top. And all them poor old blackfellas no hope to run away. They bin sitting la that one place. My grandpa bin do the same, get in la them bodies again. Two grandpas mine, and one granny. Get in inside. This lot *kartiya* keep chuck em in them bodies. Chuck em in. One blackfella bin take off, straight down, low down. Now horses chase em. Some fellas bin on top, galloping on top.

'Leave it this place, long as we bin finish em', they (the *kartiya*) reckon. That old man and two old grandpa bin *kitakitap*, ah, they gone. Just go la one little creek, go this way, way down here (west). One big hill there. We call em Warlupany. They bin come there now, longa nother mob. They safe all the way now. They bin saved all the way till them *kartiya*, welfare bin come along from everywhere, stop policemen. Welfare come to stop em policemen 'ah, leave em poor buggers, don't knocking em.'

Reprisals

Many of the stories, including Bob Nyalcas' account of the massacre above, centre on the cleverness of someone who escaped.

Bob Nyalcas

Lajipany

La Ngarrkuruny, old Jack Kelly bin come from Old Texas. He bin come place called Black Gin yard. He bin get up from horse. He bin see this cattle galloping, creek bin like this one now (dry). He bin see this cattle galloping. 'Oh, pull up here', he bin tell em all his mob. 'Tie your pack horse up.' He bin tell em all, 'pull up, leave em horse tie it up, we'll follow this cattle galloping.' [He] get on em horse and get his rifle, 44 rifle, follow em that cattle now *partartup partartup partartup* (sound effect), follow that track.

This lot old old people bin start already cutting that beef. All along look around, see em this - and my grandpa, he bin [underneath] one killer. They bin knock em like from here to that sandy place. Well he's (grand father) the first one bin see em and cut em already this one beef la (from) that killer, you know. He bin see this *kartiya* galloping la him, and just catch hold of em that killer, roll him over la him body, he bin sleeping inside now (lying hiding under the carcass).

And old Jack Kelly bin come up, bin see em this lot bin cut em beef already.

'Oh, where you fellas camp?'

'We camping here la top' some bin talk, short-cut English, you know, 'we camp here la top'.

'Well, carry em you good beef. Ah, there one killer'. He didn't know my grandpa under la that killer!

He bin gallop up, look, 'ah, they never touch em this one'.

Old man bin inside. He bin hide em all his spear la spinifex. He bin hear em, 'go on, keep going'. All bla carry em la him. He bin drive em all abat going up the hill. Horseshoe Creek, we call em that place.

Right, old man bin look, old grandpa bin look. 'Ah, he driving that lot'. He bin roll em over that killer, get his spear, cut em bit of beef and get going.

He bin get - before him [Jack Kelly] he bin get there long camp. And this old man bin singing out from top 'prrr, prrrk'. And this lot never listen. 'Eh eh eh' all the kids [were yelling], big mob. 'Prrrrrk'. Well, old mother belong me bin only little baby. And granny bin listen this old man husband belong him singing out 'prrr' (whispers). 'Come on, like a that got to go away', finger talk (sign language), you know. He bin tell em (in sign language) 'man coming got a horse there, you come away'.

Old woman (his mother) bin just a little one. Mother bla my mother (his grandmother) take em, leave em la grass, got em paperbark (lying on paperbark) and leave em.

He bin go longa him, he hear him (Jack Kelly) drive em all abat (the others).

'Righto, he bin talk, get em firewood now, you fellas want to have a good feed.' 'Christ, you don't waste em' he (Jack Kelly) reckon all abat. All bin carry em bat wood now, stack em up.

I don't think he bin have em much bullets. He bin blow some. He bin tell em them, walk up la him, grab em that little little ones, bang em la flat rock like this one (banged the children's heads on rocks). Knock em and chuck em la that fire. You can see that place any time, he still black that place where he bin burn em, you know. Burn em. And one silly old woman, auntie mine, he bin have em one fella 44 bullet. He bin short (Kelly was short of bullets). He (the woman) bin tell em:

'Oh here's one, boss', he reckon la him.

He bin give him, that silly one. Old woman bin give it em one bullet la Jack Kelly. Old woman bin take off. BANG, he bin get em here, look, through la this (her) shoulder. But still that old woman bin travelling, till he bin get that way. He Miriwoong woman, that old woman, auntie. Him name Tatpawin, I call him la him name, Tatpawin.

Old woman keep going (lived) till he bin, while we bin growing we bin catch em up that old woman.

Biddy Malingal (translated by Sophie Martin and Eileen Bray)

*Mankirtipany's Escape*⁹

This place (yarrunga community) where we are living is our father country, our mother country, uncle country, and brother country.

A mob of people were killed the other side of the river from Kulungurru¹⁰. My old uncle Mankirtipany was sleeping there. They put him on top of those dead people. He grabbed blood from the other people's heads, and rubbed it on his nose, and lips, and his eyes, and cheeks. He lay there with his eyes open, as if he was dead. They poked him in his eye, but he didn't move. Someone said, 'he's dead'. He was breathing slowly, so nobody would notice. The whitefellas went eastwards for wood to make the fire. That old man got up and shouted out, 'well here I am, you mob can catch me!'

He ran down the river, and jumped across. He ran up the hill, and went inside a cave. The whitefellas chased him with horses and some on foot, making a noise behind the old man. They climbed up behind him and went inside but the old man had gone further up to another cave. He was looking at them from the other cave up top. They started making a fire in the lower cave and the old man sang out from up top, pretending he was hurt. 'We've got him', they said to themselves. 'He is dying now, that old man'.

From on top he was looking at them through a hole just big enough for his eye. He made the hole larger so he could look at them. He went to sleep then, till dawn. Then he crawled down. He thought the hole was big enough. He felt the burnt ground to see if it was cool. He went through then, came out and went west to all his brothers. All his brothers cried - Karrkuruny, Pojenany, Karlpany, Kumurruny, Kapany, and Wilkmayarrin who was the youngest. He was Jemima's (Kangarie) and (Ben) Demi's father.

He went northward through rock country and deep gullies, to Turkey Creek. He went to his brother Frank, a police boy in Turkey Creek, and his wife Lola, mother of Hector (Chunda), Martin (Joogood) and Winnie (Budbaria). He never went back to that place, but died at Turkey Creek.

⁹ This gives more detail of the massacre at Panton River mentioned in the previous story by Biddy Malingal.

¹⁰ A hill near Yarrunga community.

Dating the above story is difficult. Kenny Bray has said that it happened before the establishment of Panton store (1888 or before), and that his father was a small boy then. Frank, however, was at Turkey Creek from 1924 to 1951. Fragments of bone remain at the site where the other people were massacred and burnt.

Confusion is another theme of the massacre stories, some of those massacred had never seen white people, and had no idea what was happening.

Hector Chunda

They reckon they didn't know what the English bin, *kartiya*. They bin reckon some kind of people, devil devil.

They reckon, 'I don't know what this one, got a red ochre' (with skin seeming to be painted with red ochre) they said got their language.

Nothing, that *kartiya* bin go 'thuwu' (sound effect), knock em.

And that nother blackfella reckon 'oh, knock em over got a lightning' (gunfire), he reckon.

'Oh, he bin kill em got a lightning', he reckon.

He bin crying, and that *kartiya* come behind now 'thuwu', knock em again. Two of them gone, oh, three of them gone, oh, one hundred gone. They didn't know what happening.

Jack Britten*Warlupany*

And Warlupany, I never tell you for this Warlupany, just the other side of Violet Valley. That's the other place they bin catch em again, big mob of people.

They reckon, 'oh, lightning knocking em now, they shooting em everywhere'.

Some fella come up cry with that dead body, he lay top of that dead bodies again, all that.

Just other side la Violet Valley. Bamboo, we call it, Bamboo Creek. Just off Koondooloo River, well Spring Creek now, right up la head of it, by the hills. That hill come around right round close up la Violet Valley. End of the river. Some people there bin getting shot there, everywhere. They don't know what's coming. They didn't know what to get away or just ...

Hector Chunda*Manjalngarriny*

Mariyal¹¹ bin tell em bat me, when I was little one, you know. They bin go up that way longa Warlalgil, Manjaljirr. White Rock.

There bin all the big mob bin round up there, they kill it they kangaroo you know and cooking away, and all the kartiya bin come up round em up. And one old woman from here (Turkey Creek) they bin have em, his name Mariyal. When there bin lot of shots going, this lot blackfellas reckon 'oh, lightning! One fella might be bin get shot', he go 'oh, lightning bin break em that ..'

They didn't know. And this one old woman bin know, he bin working at place here (Turkey Creek police station), la kartiya. He bin sneak away get his baby, run away, come back this way. Come back to home. That lot bin getting shot now. Oh, they didn't know how to run away. Ooh, all thousand people hit.

¹¹ One of the early Aboriginal workers at Turkey Creek.

Similar methods of carrying out a massacre recur in many of the stories. The bodies are piled up and burnt with kerosene. Sometimes the Aboriginal people were made to cut the wood for the fire.

Hector Chunda

Jail Creek Massacre

Some *kartiya* bin round em up all the blackfellas longa bush, put em chains round their necks. They used to bring em, camp along the road, footwalk, drive em like a mob of cattle. They took em to the right place, Jail Creek. They went up to rockhole there, having the camp, dinner. Then they was carting wood, take em back to the place where they camping, then tie em up them, like a dog.

Right, all the *kartiya* get em their guns, line em up every girl and boy, and shoot em down got a rifle. Whang em all the children on the rocks¹². Chuck em kerosene, put em on the firewood and chuck em all them dead bodies in the firewood place, put em kerosene and chuck em matches.

Burn em up them, finished, they all there. That's the way (that's why) they bin call em Jail Creek.

Boy and girl and children, all bin burn em up, shoot em down, get em all the kids like this one, whang em longa tree. That's the way not much *Kija* people and *Miriwoong* people longa this country. They bin finish em up. *Kartiya* bin finish em up, killed the lot.¹³

¹² Swung the children by the legs to bash their heads against the rocks.

¹³ The rockhole is just west of the Great Northern Highway crossing of Jailhouse Creek. Hector says this happened after Frog Hollow and Turkey Creek were settled (ie after 1897 or 1900).

In 1897 Aboriginal people in this area reported that one white man and two aborigines killed and burnt three women and an old man early in 1896.

David Turner

Linnekar Gorge

Well, we got [story] some of them people got shot la Linnekar Gorge (on former Turner station). *Kartiya* bin come there to shoot blackfellas for no reason. Gather all the blackfellas and tie em up with the chains. Told em blackfellas to get all the wood. Stack em on woodheap. With the chains - started shooting the blackfellas with the chains (still on). They had a bottle of kerosene and just pour em on and burn it up.

Hector Chunda

Texas Downs

Lot a people bin get killed longa Texas Downs. Right longa where that house is (present homestead). Right under there. He never bin have em house there then. They bin have em bamboo, what they make em spear with, that kind of thing bin grow there. Shoot em them and burn em up there. And next time they bin go over to Mirririji there, nother creek. That's the station creek, nother creek there. Just not too far away from house. Shot em there, shoot em there, finish em up. Some young women they bin tie em up, bring em here (Turkey Creek). Young women, for working. Some *kartiya* bin married to him, black woman, young girl. They bin have em for wife or something like that. That's the way plenty half-castes now.

Police were sometimes involved.

Frank Budbaria

From there, used to bin before you know, being bad blackfellas they used to come in this country. And this Violet Valley country (at Violet Valley) bin, I think, policeman go down to some bushman blackfellas there. Used to bin before. Old fella told me about this story, my old grandpa told me the policeman bin round this mob [up] in the camp, and these fellas run away. When policeman come into the camp and start shooting dogs, and this other mob bin run away, they just ducked back and put a spear on the policeman. Some police boys they had there, they had lot of police boys from Darwin, they shot some people down there. They bin burn em somewhere down low down there, Violet Valley Gorge. Burn em all down there. After, when they were finished there they come back here (Turkey Creek), bring em back in this police station here, chain them up there. Keep em there, learn em. One old girl named Maudie and Mariyal, they bin get em in the chains, when they bin young girls, keep em there, and old boy called Wilyarrany belong to Turkey Creek, they bin learn em here. They bin keep em there till they bin understand white man's English, and how to working, they bin teach them to work, what job to do, all that. He used to tell em like that, 'do this and that', and old people and that old girl bin start get understand now, in this country, and they bin know white people in this country.

Right up till now we bin born in this country, and them two old woman and old man was here, and my father was here and my own mother. They was all right now, they bin understand white man, and they bin understand white man English and understand white man work, everything. When they used to tell em not to touch all this they never touch anything 'that poison, you know'. And white people used to tell em 'we'll leave your tucker here and just touch this, don't touch any of this other one'. Well they bin start get to understand all the way like that now till they bin learn really. Lot of this mob bin born in this country now. And they bin understand by old white people now.

SETTLING DOWN

The stories show that some young people were brought in after massacres for work in the new white settlements. Later a few children were brought up in white peoples' households, a practice which continued until perhaps the 1950s.

Hector Chunda

My mother was tell em bat me for early days. *Kartiya* and blackfella. And I never born yet.

She was telling me story from mine country, mine *jawuji*, grandpa (maternal grandfather). My mother's father. *Kartiya* bin shoot him and he bin fall down in the water. Place name *Kurlany*. That's the Growler's Gully. Through the *pinji* (stomach) they bin shoot him, bust em all his guts. He had to run down, and this water hole got a lot of bamboo. Sometime there, he want to trying to keep himself alive, but nothing. He have to die there under the water. Right, that's my grandpa, for my mother daddy.

All right, they bin tie em up mine *kangkayi*, granny (maternal grandmother), *kartiya* bin catch hold of her in the bush, longa that *Ngarrkuruny*, my country (on Texas Downs). They bin tie em up mine *kangkayi*, bring em here. And some old people for *kangkayi*, relations you know, bring em here, tie em up, tie em up all the young girls. *Kangkayi*, she was a young girl. But they bin shoot em his countrymen, old old people, pensioner-like. Burn em up longa that clinic.¹⁴

Like that *kangkayi* bin tied up there¹⁵ got (with) a few more young girls. Then, they bin start to teach em bat got em tucker and things like that, *Kangkayi* and all, some fellas, whole mob, all the young boys and girls. Then they bin quieten em mine *kangkayi*. Then he bin married longa that young boy, mine *jawuji*. And that's the way he got mummy, my mother. Already *kangkayi* bin know this English word. He bin know eat em tobacco, everything for *kartiya*. Right after he bin die then. My mummy bin born, then that *kangkayi* mine bin dead. After, you know, after a good while. When that *kangkayi* mine bin lying, you know, lying down. He bin grow up now. My mummy bin crawling round then. That's why (when) he bin die then, *kangkayi* mine.

¹⁴ Where the Warmun clinic stands now.

¹⁵ A bloodwood tree in the school grounds, which still shows the chain marks.

Right after that, that *kartiya*, his name Rhatigan that *kartiya*, and that missus for Rhatigan (the telegraph linesman and his wife), they bin come up and pick em up my mummy that way alonga junction¹⁶, along the creek. He bin come to look (for) *kangkayi*. *Kangkayi* bin passed away. And my mummy, he (she) bin drink em bat milk longa dead body. Longa that *kangkayi* mine, he bin drinking.

Mrs Rhatigan bin come, pull em out mummy, take em longa - he bin grow em up. That *kartiya* bin grow em up. That's the way he never understand much language. He bin educated, my mother. He talk talk like a *kartiya*, because that white woman bin grow em up...

Right, when my mother bin grow up, my nother father, he (an unknown *kartiya*) bin take em shoot em longa [unclear] Gorge. They bin jealous longa him from mummy. Then mummy bin carrying for me now. And they bin take it away my *ngapuny* (father), shoot em that way now. *Kartiya* bin shoot him. Might be blackfella might get jealous for white lady - well like that, now, that *kartiya* bin jealous for black lady. They bin shoot him, jealous for my mother, poor fellow.

Helen Ross: 'and what bin happen then?' Nothing bin happen. Oh, early *kartiya* days they didn't care. They didn't care about to put em in jail or not. They bin only start off, you know. Just quieten em down people for acting like a white people. English and all, like what I'm talking now.

¹⁶ Next to where a small creek enters Turkey Creek, by the Wungul waterhole just south of the present road crossing.

Frank Budbaria

Blackfellas was wild people round this country, and white people used to come across from overseas, take over this country. White people from Queensland bin come into this country, and chasing the blackfellas round this country. And blackfella used to spear em white people, you know, and kill em, and white people bin start thinking abat to shooting em cheeky people down.

And when they bin shooting em cheeky people down, the blackfellas down, they used to pick up any girls and young boys, and they bin grow em up (reared them), make em understand, talk English. You know, make em understand what white man rule is. And old people bin learn like that all the way along, and they bin understand English now. They bin start talk English for white man, and white man bin know now, they bin sort of pick up on things and get them to learn the horses, work em in the cattle work, and teach em for breaking in horse, work on the cattle, brand em bullock round the bush, learn em. When boy used to never do something straight, them job, well old time whitefella used to give em a hiding, learn em to do it... Well, that's the way when our mother bin start carrying, from our old grandpa, and father, and our mother, we bin born in this country now. And we bin sort of grow up with white man now, all the olden time white people.

David Turner

Most of the people lost its life.

Helen Ross: The stories people have been telling me, it looks like the only ones who got saved were young ones they brought in to work.

David Turner: Yeh, yeh the little ones, took em and, question em English and things.

'You say "yes".'

'Yes.'

They say 'orright.'

'Orright.'

Till young fellas got pick up speaking English.

'There.'

'There.'

'Pick em up. Keep going, pick em up.'

Kartiya tell him you know, 'pick em up'. 'Bring em back.' Till he learn to pick em up and come back. All right, they bin learning, then they married la the kartiya side. They bin learn English now. That child get more experience from kartiya schooling now. Till today.

Some people who tried to run away from the early white settlements were followed and recaptured.

Winnie Budbaria

This old lady used to be at Turkey Creek, in police station. That was before the police station house, only just a calico.¹⁷ His name Maria (Mariyal). He come from this part of the country, Bow River country. And this old man from that Bungle Bungle country, he bin come and steal that old lady, trying to take him back to Bungle Bungle country. His name Tommy Wilyarraying. He bin steal that old lady. They bin up there longa camping place called Manjalngarriny.¹⁸ And white bloke catch them up again there. And this silly looking other people, blackfella, they bin fight, trying to kill em with a spear.

They said, 'oh, something, this red one coming'. And this Tommy never get away from that cave he was only staying like this (gestured shielding herself with bark) and wife too, just cover em up with paper bark, trying to stop the bullets (laughs). That's what they was telling me when I was a little girl.

Some of them white people bin bring em in all the Aboriginal to Turkey Creek. And these fellas bin fight back with the spears, and this old Tommy Wilyarraying wasn't (didn't) get a spear and fight back longa white people, he only bin just cover em up with a paperbark, and his wife and his baby.

He was working for the policeman.¹⁹ Worked till the house bin come, they bin have big address, house, now.

¹⁷ The police station was built in 1908. Prior to this police would have only camped briefly at Turkey Creek during patrols, except during the hunt for Major and while the station was under construction in 1908.

¹⁸ See Also Jack Britten's account of a massacre at Manjalngarriny.

¹⁹ Tommy worked as a tracker in 1914-15.

Some came to white occupied areas such as Turkey Creek and Frog Hollow seeking refuge from other Aborigines (Bob Nyalcas' mother, Judy) or massacres (Jack Britten's family).

Winnie Budbaria

Judy's Arrival

One man came from town, he bin pull out from the horse job, man name Billy. Staying there with Mrs Rhatigan, working for him.

And this Paddy Rhatigan and Chairman of us mob (Bob Nyalcas') mother (Judy) - these blackfella from Turkey Creek side, they used to walk round go over there longa Texas Hill, find this old Judy. They bin steal him from there and carry em away, Paddy Rhatigan too, he was a little one. Take em cross this way, where they get em longa Purrarla country. And after when they go round there, they bin start to make this ration camp for all the people at Violet Valley. And this old Judy bin run away from them already, come back to his country.

My mother get up in the morning for drink of tea, went out in courtyard, and get some milk for drink of tea. He look in that old yard, that side, find this little thing (Paddy Rhatigan) climb up all the time, and go down again. 'Oh no, he can't be crow, he must be a human being!'

My mother went back, tell this Billy and Big Paddy Wumpalminy, 'something over there, you two come'.

They went out there, now, la that creek, find this old Judy sitting up hiding in the rock place there, just near Post Office other side (of the river). When they find this little thing climbing up in that rock, and his mother was hiding there. They don't know he came back from the hill, his mother. He was hiding there, he bin frightened for policeman and all the cheeky man might follow him again. And these two old men walk up there now, find this old Judy hiding, and Paddy Rhatigan still playing around longa rock. Old Big Paddy bin tell em old lady (Mrs Rhatigan) he bin know that old Judy, 'you better come alonga house, work.'

'You better come in la missus because my mob, my countrymen might come and pick you up again. They might kill you', he said.

He brought em in longa house, and they told Mrs Rhatigan, 'one lady came from bush, she bin run away from them bush Aborigines'.

'All right, he can work here and you can have her for your wife', he told old Billy from Darwin. They was working there longa - they had big house there, boarding house and store. Pub was this side, and post office was that side. Police station was other side where that Chairman's staying now (garden camp).

Jack Britten

Frog Hollow

They bin wild people, early days. Well they bin quiet down there (Frog Hollow) la that kartiya (Sam Muggleton). They bin feed em up gotta tucker, everything. One old girl from Borroloola, black girl,²⁰ he bin keep telling em, 'good them kartiya, don't run away, leave em bat', that old girl bin always tell em. 'All work bla all abat, they give it we everything, tucker, tobacco. Don't leave em bat.' That one old girl bin always tell em. And he bin get more interest. They bin work for them, all the way. When they bin come to learn English, right, well they didn't care. They bin have em English now...

Bigger and bigger that station bin growing, more cattle station now, bigger. Right, after that, when that bin cattle station, well that old kartiya bin go out ride about somewhere, look around the boundary, you know. When we bin come back he got revolver bin load up longa packbag somewhere. When he bin drop em, well he bin go up, you know, magazine.

He went around, go that-a-way, riding round the boundary, riding round got a horse, got em (with) that old girl, now, Borroloola girl. That old girl bin driving pack horse, and old kartiya going lead, ride around the country. ...Grandpa, he bin young fella then, him and that girl bin driving that packhorse, I think. They bin go round, right round to Two-mile, right round to Ord River, back to Han Spring, come back.

When they bin get in to station, well he never think about pulling bullet from that little revolver. Them old days revolver, you know, automatic. Well they bin have that. Well he never get em that thing, spring bin open, I think. He just bin drop em (his pack, with the revolver inside) and that bullet all steel, see. Just drop his pack on the ground and bullet bin go up (gestures straight through his chest and back). Straight through, right through... Steel bullet, old days revolver, one of them automatic ones. He got a pin on the side, you know. He never pinned em. Revolver bin just go up when they bin drop em (the pack). Well he might be bin just touched there, go up, shot himself.

²⁰ Archives show her name as Turkey.

Oh, my granny and grandpa all bin run, oh, poor bugger. Cover him up there, bin run down police station (Fletcher) he only about half a mile, you know, from Frog Hollow. Go down, get em policeman to come have a look. They reckon we can't send him anywhere, they bin have to make cemetery there for him, not too far. Send him back that way Wyndham, he only go bad la buggy, wagon. Well they bin just leave em there, cover em up. And they reckon two man (are buried) there, that old Jim McKenzie again.²¹

And that manager he never do anything with em. He never trying to belt a man or he never trying to shoot em, nothing. He was a good kartiya. That's the way (that's why) all the blackfellas bin like em, living la him. And old boss bin die, they bin go nowhere, they bin have to split everywhere. Some come back this way (Turkey Creek) some go back there la Violet Valley, that bin government station then...

She used to go round that old girl, used to go round got a packhorse, you know, taking tucker round la all abat, he know where that place. He's bit civilized that girl. Because that people (NT Aborigines) bin learn before these people. That people bin on whiteman's side and schooling same time. This side all bin still myall wild, (uneducated).

²¹ Idriess' (1954) version is that this accident happened to McKenzie, while going to the aid of Muggleton who had been found unconscious. Archival records show that Muggleton died in March 1910 some time after William Yates found him lying sick on the road. The policeman mentioned here was Constable Fanning who was en route from Halls Creek to Wyndham. The police still used Fletcher as a camp when travelling or on patrol.

GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION

Aborigines of the area are very grateful to government for 'saving' them, rather belatedly, by intervening to stop the killings and creating government-run stations (Moola Bulla, 1910, and Violet Valley 1912). The era of 'protection' began. Killings continued, but on a smaller scale and less openly.

Jack Britten

Policeman and welfare bin start come in. Policeman bin come all right, keep his mob all abat. He put em la station to station, give em a job. Welfare come along from Perth, two welfare. They come along, stop every people round here, everywhere. 'Don't knocking them people, poor buggers, we want to give em jobs! They good. They might be learn someway', they reckon. All right, they bin believe in that. But sneaking, some policeman bin knocking em sneaking, (killing on the sly), too. Anyway, when they bin run away, you know, policeman bin doing a trick, too, without welfare. But that welfare, that's the one bin put a stop on it. ...

Helen Ross: who was sneaking?

Oh, them police. Come might be here, where we're here now. They look from hill there. 'Oh, big mob here'. Well they camp, go back that way. Stop that way till the morning. Then they round (surround) this place. Policeman, and some blackfellas, they bin have em police boy.

All right, some people what they bin always run away, they bin always tie em up. Take em back la home, la station, tie em up. Take em to police station, what from what place he bin work, send em back there (return them to the station they'd run away from). Might be Mabel Downs, might be Lissadell, might be Texas, might be Tickalara.

They bin just start off come in quiet now, quiet down all the people. When them welfare bin start quieten em down.

All right, that welfare bin come right up, Turkey Creek, that bin only one police there. Tell em policeman 'you can be stay here, keep chase em people, bring em back, give em rations. We want em for work, don't knock them young girls and young boys. That's cruel', he's told em ...

When they bin hear em too much people getting shot, well, one old welfare bin come along and put a stop onto em. Well I reckon, myself, we can't condemn that welfare, he's the one bin put a stop. You know, he bin save our lives. I reckon. He save our life, and grandmother. Because [if] they bin keep carry on, well that lot would've bin finished, whole lot. Nobody left...

When sergeant (constable) was there (at Fletcher police station), he bin stop every kartiya. Stop every kartiya 'don't trying to do cruel thing on a blackfella. I got a word from government' he told em.

He bin always go out this way, go out that way, keep bring em back you know, give em a job. Keep quieten em down. Till that Violet Valley bin open for Aborigines. That fellas bin start keep coming in there, everywhere from, that police bring em up and leave em there. Welfare. Not much there now (then), nothing, because that welfare and that sergeant bin put a stop on it.

Frank Budbaria

New white people bin come in this country now. Some quiet mob, not hurting native people much. Well, Government bin come in more close here, not shooting em down blackfellas in this country. People bin sort of settled down now. 'Don't hurting em fella', government bin start tell white people round this country. And black fella bin settle down too, not to hurting white people. They bin know white people, what sort he eats, feed em with the tucker, bullock beef, and understanding to ride a horse, go look for killer and bring em back, brand the cattle, horse, all that...

When the government bin find out they shooting em down blackfellas, and blackfellas spearing the white people down, well government bin come in this country now. To put everything down a bit good, you see, they bin settle all this country down. The blackfellas bin sort of get married up with white people, now we live together... Before, blackfellas didn't like white people, and white people didn't like to see black people round this country. They bin just look too bad in this country... But now everything sort of getting quiet down a bit now, it's all right now.

ABORIGINAL LABOUR

Aboriginal labour became indispensable to the cattle industry, and made an important contribution to government activities and service industries in the region. Though paid only in kind, Aboriginal people held jobs which took advantage of their unique skills and knowledge of the country. Kija and Miriwoong people today argue that their role in the region's economic development should be acknowledged, as white people could not have managed without them.

Frank Budbaria

Helping on the Telegraph Line

My father ... old bloke called Sandy, bin working in that post office (at Turkey Creek). He bin working in the police station. From there they bin shift him into the post office there, work on the telephone line from here to Halls Creek and back to Wyndham. He bin do all that job. He was a wild man too, wild bush man. He didn't know nothing about white people. Policeman bin grab him and settle him down, tie em up all the time in the chains. Get him to talk English proper way. They used to bring the tucker la him when they bin fetch him new time. He used to chuck the tucker away, he reckoned, 'that's no good'. Next time white man used to come up and make him to eat them tucker, now he bin know next time, that's the tucker for man to eat. They bin get to understand, they bin say, little bit, little bit, all the way, he can understand properly white man English now. So he bin talk really, so they bin get him to ride a horse. He never get away from this job now. He bin learn, learn, till he bin understand everything and he bin know what job belong to white man, what work they do and what they tell him. He bin know all that.

George Mung Mung (translated from Kija by Eileen Bray)

Helping Police

Kurlungurru is my father's country. His name was Yalanga Mung Mung. All the white people used to take him everywhere. The policemen got him. They said that he was a smart bloke, when he was a young bloke. He was a police boy for Turkey Creek. He used to go to Halls Creek, and past there to Gordon Downs. He used to tie up all the people. Not just a little mob of people, they used to line up a big mob. They used to tie them up with waramurr creeper. They used to walk along, back to Turkey Creek. They used to tie them up under a bloodwood tree, where the houses are now, where Bob (Nyalcas) lives. That was the place for all the policemen.

The people who were tied up used to wave at other people, for tobacco. My father used to tell them, 'you mob stay there, and later on they'll bring you tucker, down there at the (creek) junction'. They used to give them tucker and tobacco. Old Mung Mung used to tell them, 'when we give you mob tobacco, in return you have to bring back porcupine, when you go later on. The bushmen used to go then. They didn't know tobacco and tucker at first, but they liked it afterwards. The early days people didn't know flour, only one knew, Mung Mung, and police station Frank. Frank was uncle for this mob, he and Mung Mung were mates. Only those two learnt English and understood it...

Police station Charlie Mung Mung and Frank, only the two of them, used to be called police boys. Another policeman from Wyndham came to pick up Mung Mung, but not Frank, and they went with lots of horses and mules carrying tucker and chains. They went west to Parrangarlam, Kalumburu, and Forrest River. He went right over the hills to those two places. From there they started gathering people up. He tied most of them up, but some of them settled down.²² They all went west to Mt House, four months, might be, or more. Tableland, they got some there, and from Elgee Cliffs, Karrmarntany, and Bedford Downs last.²³ We used to walk around there when I was young. I found my father there, when I was walking round that country when I was young.

²² Both the Kija term used and the English translation are ambiguous here. The expression 'to settle' is frequently used as a euphemism for 'killed', but could also be used in the sense of 'to quieten' or 'to calm'.

²³ About 1919.

My father said, 'you'd better come back now'. I footwalked with all the policemen and my father back to Violet Valley. Hold them again at Violet Valley, Cartridge Springs, that's the real name for Mabel Downs. Today they call it Mabel Downs, that's the new name. Cartridge Springs was the other side of the river, right by the high bank.

From there he took them. My father settled all the people who are here now, today. My father settled people from the ranges, right round to Wyndham and Mowanjum. He was the only one who settled them, with a policeman called Jack Cooney, the old sergeant. We were born, and were little men carried in paperbark, when Jack Cooney was the sergeant for us fellas - me, Willie Mung Mung, police station Chunda, old Hector, and his mate Barney, only four little men were there. And Paddy Rhatigan was a young boy there.

They took all the mules and donkeys back then, back to Wyndham, and let them go. My father stayed there then. He finished all the mobs from the top end, settled them down. They were all here now, working with all the good white people. They were all quiet now. He quietened them down when they were all frightened of white people. In the east and the south, all the people felt good and they worked well with white people. They ate bread and beef, and liked it. Some worked then. They were sitting down at the camps, all the men who used to be frightened. They knew everything like tea, sugar, and flour, that they used to think were rubbish. They could cook with flour.

My father stayed in Turkey Creek while I was a young man, till his wife passed away. The policeman got him to marry Violet (Winnie), she was our step mother. I didn't know, I was at Jarlarlu (Tickalara). I was working for my own boss then, a boss from Queensland. He taught me how to ride horses and muster bullocks, and how to talk English. My father stayed at Turkey Creek until he got old. Old Mung Mung told the policemen, 'I'd better leave the job now, I'm getting old'. 'That's all right Mung Mung', the policemen told him. They closed the police station then.²⁴ They all went away. When Dad went away, all the policemen went away too.

I can remember that a few soldiers came there then, just living there. They were cheeky ones. They were waiting for someone who'd killed someone at Wyndham. They blew up the seven-mile.²⁵ They knocked all the houses. When the (second world) war finished, the soldiers went from here to Wyndham and pulled those houses down...

When all the policemen were still around, Kantaraji²⁶ was chasing Jumpany's (Bob Nyalcas) mother. Kantaraji used to have his camp away from the others, a couple of hundred yards. Kantaraji got up and looked at Jumpany's father, saw he was asleep, and sneaked up on him with a knife. He hit him right on the head, and killed him. He didn't get up again. We were working in Bungle Bungle, shifting cattle. Our mob from Jarlarlu (Tickalara) used to go there for work. Kantaraji picked up Jumpany's mother, and her daughter, my cousin-sister and Jumpany's real sister.

Kantaraji was a really tall and cheeky man. All the policemen bet my father he couldn't find that man. Mung Mung said, 'Well, I'll go and have a try'.²⁷ Mung Mung went south to a Purnululu (Bungle Bungle) hill with a point. My father went and tracked him. He told the sergeant, 'you mob can wait here. I won't be too long, I think'. He told them, and he climbed up the hill, right up to the top, and down the other side. He got Jangajanga, old police station Frank, and a revolver and a 44. If they didn't want to use the 44 they'd use the revolver, in the law for policeman. They used to have the little one loaded.

The old woman was sitting down breaking wood for a fire. When he heard the noise, my father went and peeped round a little rock. 'Ah, he's here'. The man had gone away hunting. There were plenty of kangaroos round that bush, top of the hill. There were plenty of kangaroos round Purnululu. My father went and sang out to the woman, 'this is me. It's your own fault you two ran away. This is me, Mung Mung, I came to pick you two up'. The old woman didn't know how to take off. The little girl pulled her back, 'no, no, mum, we'll stop. That's my cousin-brother', she reckoned. 'Oh, righto'.

²⁵ March 1942.

²⁶ Appears in files as Dilbatue. He was arrested on 3 September 1932, and sentenced ten years for manslaughter.

²⁷ Mung Mung was not a police tracker at this time; he was working for Arthur Muggleton.

They came close. Police Frank came out. Police Frank told her, 'it's all right. It's your fault, you made the trouble'. 'Don't run away', they both told her. 'Let that man finish all his trouble. I don't know why he killed him, because he was too old. Your husband was just like a kartiya, white man brains, he come from Darwin, long way, but he got married here. He didn't know how to look for a fight, that old man. And what for this man just got up and knocked him?'

They waited for him to come out. Police boy went that way, my Dad went back over there, and Frank went this way and they hid. They watched the old woman. 'Hello, he's coming now with a big kangaroo'. He carried a big male kangaroo. The woman told him, 'he came for us two. Two came, uncle and son, to pick us up'. He asked, 'is that true?' She said, 'Yeh it's true'. Mung Mung came out first. He said, 'father, it's your fault, you were looking for trouble'. Dad said, 'don't run away. You have to finish your trouble, I came for you'. Police station Frank came out from here, 'oh, little brother, it's your fault, you were looking for trouble. We came to pick you up. Don't get cheeky. Throw your spear down, and your woomera. We've come to pick you up to finish all your trouble. So you can be man again, no more guilty. You have a feed first'. The old woman had lots of sugarbag in her coolamon. Dad and Frank had a feed. 'Right, we'll go now'. Just at that point *tulpawu* (sound effect), Mung Mung shot. Old sergeant answered from the bottom *tulpawu*. *Tulpawu*, that's two shots - *Tulpawu* again, from the bottom. Finished, they looked, coming down. The old sergeant couldn't believe that he'd got them. Old Mung Mung got them!

They took him down now, right down to the bottom, right down to all the policemen. Three, just the young tracker, old sergeant, two trackers, Tony Jones and young Martin. He was short. The old sergeant was a big man. They shook hands with that old guilty man, 'oh, we're pleased to see you, old man, guilty. We want you in Wyndham. Don't run away, we're doing good for you. We're only trying to help you too'. They did help him, those sergeants. He was too game, he didn't want to run away. He was used to being with white people, but he didn't like that old Jumpany's father because he was from Darwin. A good looking woman he had, Jumpany's mother. But this bloke just got wild, went to their camp and finished him off.

Right, he was already in the bag, that dead one, over there at the police station. They went to get him from Texas, low down on Horse Creek, Yurlu, right at Tarumaru, they got that dead man. They got the dead man and put him in the bag. They took him back to the house, from there to the police station. This one they got from

Bungle Bungle was walking along. We could see Dad bringing him in, with all the trackers and police sergeant. 'Ah, all got him, all got him, Dad got him!' I reckoned. They tied him up to a *kunji* tree, *bauhinia* tree. A straight tree, it's still there. The old woman and girl were walking round free, with no chains. Right, they took him now, north through a gap Welwella. They went on to Ngawalanynyin, then to Warnarpany, Winnama Spring, then to Killarney, and came out at Turkey Creek. They tied him up, and all the policemen sent a telegram from Turkey Creek to Wyndham. The policeman from Wyndham said he'd meet them on the road, at Card Creek or Dunham station. They took the man and his wife to Dunham, and the mob from Wyndham came to Dunham too. They met at Dunham Crossing, by the bridge. The Wyndham policeman took them, and the Turkey Creek policeman came back. They took the man to Wyndham, and all the people at Turkey Creek forgot all about him. He might have gone on the *tima* (steamer, ship). A lot of guilty men went on the boat to Fremantle, and died there. He was there for a lifetime, and dead, till he got big whiskers and everything, or a snake rattling all over him, in the dark room, sometime. Or might be he got out, I don't know. That's what they used to do to all the cheeky people, and they all died down there.

Jack Britten*Work on cattle stations*

My grandpa he bin live like that. No trousers and shirt. Just walking got a brown cock rag... Just bin working for no money, just work for free. Tobacco and clothes and shirt and trousers and things, tea and sugar. That early days. Just bin getting flour and sugar and tea, clothes, blankets. Just bin work for that. They had a good work for them, make a big open country for them kartiya all abat, make them kartiya rich, right through old blackfellas.

George Mung Mung

We should be mates for them. We learnt English and do things for them. Head stockmen never did much work, just read books. We did the work.

George Mung Mung

My wife used to go there [when] this place was dry, two fella old woman. Get a yoke, water for my sister, cook. Fill em up, carry em from long way got (with) a yoke. Sometimes they lined up might be six, four (women).

Ida Milbaria

Talking ... how we bin working la Mabel Downs, and do them cutting (wood), no sawmill, like a man cutting wood. Put em in the truck, cart em.

We bin have em hot work, when stove. Split em (wood), split em, make em short, put em in stove. And rake em out coals from that one (stove), put em in bread. Working there, white man boss, hard labour. And after that, working for missus. All that working, working hard. Lawn, making the garden, digging. Shovel em up (dig a hole), put em in sand again, put em all the rubbish, bone, bullock bone, cover em up again, water em, plant em seed there. Grow em up. Grow em up pumpkin, cabbage, tomato, make em all that grow. This kind tomato grow em like this, cut em long stick, put em in (the ground) like this, tie em up (staking). You can see em tucker all growing rich. Tie em up, grow that much high. Potato, cover em up, shovel em up, pick up ... Go down la courtyard, we used to bring em out la bucket.

This lot little kids, we hunt em away. All the mothers working.

Working. I was working la station, kitchen job. [When] stock camp start, I go out la bush. I used to ride horses. Some fella cooking. For minding bullocks, go for cooking, all that. Go, get mule, load up, roll em swag, all that. Hard work, working longa outside. Riding horse. Later on, bin start up the motor car, truck. Load up the biggest truck, load up everything.

Bob Nyalcas

When we bin young fellas, ah, you tell a man, 'You gotta listen to that one kartiya, one kartiya boss, he's stockman, he's the boss'. He can have em, might be two, three or, might be eight people working for him. He can sing out la you, four o'clock in the morning, just before four. 'Get up, get a horse'. If that man can't get up, boot la bum. Boot la bum, make you do it. If a man can't get up, cold water like this one, just pour him em in la camp. Chuck em la blanket and make em that man get up and get em breakfast. Only dried bread and beef. And one stick tobacco Wednesday, and Saturday. Sunlight tobacco. Well you can't last em that Wednesday and Saturday, one stick of tobacco! But still, man bin gotta take it, you know, frightened long kartiya. Frightened la kartiya. All right, he make you do it, get em horse early, he tell em you, 'get my horse'. You gotta grab his horse, bring em up, put a saddle for him, he can't do it. He gotta make em you to do it. You gotta sing out, 'alright, boss, we got your horse ready'.

'All right, get on your horse, go out muster cattle, bring em back'. Soon as you get back la camp that stockman bloke he just pull his saddle, just make his bed, and sleep gotta book, not looking out. And poor bugger blackfella got his sweating. You gotta watch em them cattle from morning time, right up dinner time, right up three o'clock. Sometimes if you have a big mob, three o'clock you start cutting out. Cutting out - finish. All right, you fellas can hunt em out, now, go back home. That's only one kartiya boss for all the mob. He got to make em do it. He get paid big money - and poor bugger blackfella bin get only bread and beef. Dried bread. Wednesday and Saturday for tobacco. Righto, when tobacco first they know too, walk up la store. Tiny stick of tobacco they give it all abat Wednesday. Come back Saturday your ration day. Get em one stick of tobacco, and little bit of tea, tea and sugar la one tin.

And when your holiday, he give you good bit flour, half a bag, you know, one big bag, for two man, married man, cut em in half. And sugar same way, and tea. In the early days they bin always holidays October. October right up to December. January man go back, work.

David Turner

Mustering

When we was working for station, long time ago, no money. Just for shirt and trousers. We get shirt and trousers every month, that's our pay day. We used to go out muster, and branding. Muster the bullocks. How much bullocks, you've got, 700 or 800 bullocks, for meatworks. Go to Wave Hill for drover, get ready, what month we deliver, bullock and drover, then we go back and muster again. Brand all the free stock, every yard. We muster the bullocks before meatwork again, second meatwork. Send em in four blokes to take the bullocks in the paddock, get ready 500-600 bullocks at a time, that's the horse muster. Not these days...

When I was 18, ah 16, they took me to Ord River... Before the war. Same thing we used to do, muster the cattle. Plant, (houses and equipment) so many thousand head of calf, from bull like, you know. We finish all the country. Every yard. Whatever bullock we get, shove them in the bullock paddocks ready. We don't have to worry, we've got all the bullocks in the paddock. If the meatworks want a bullocks we just go in the bullock paddock and just count it up. Yard it up and count up how many bullocks you want.

All that finished. We got to brand a horse, before closing time, holiday. When we finished that, we go out cut wood for a month, fill up woodheap in the house, for kitchen. Holiday come. Five or six month holiday. Knock off work for Christmas, somewhat before Christmas, roll up go back on March. Start the job again...

From there, we get working. We do everything yard, some of them working before Christmas or after Christmas, before stock start again. Everything yard posts, put them rails, put a wood in rails. Separating the horse paddock, holding paddock, ready for stock start up. They give you one stick tobacco, to keep you a week. That time we have sugar, as small as my fingernail, sacharine, like a tablet. Sweet your tea.

We used to eat sago. We used to living with that. Bit of flour. When we finish all job, we get 22 donkeys yoked up, you know, table-top wagon, cut a posts and rails, make a yard, make a fence. You dig holes from here, three miles each way. You dig em that right, all that count, how many miles you do it, stand the wooden posts. No standards (ready made metal star pickets), just wooden posts. It's hard work for one man.

Sometimes you might run into old fence. We had old posts, no standards. That sort of job we had. These days we got standards. Got how many footsteps, got five, six standards, he got wooden posts. That was single wooden posts. We used to run all of the wooden posts, long time ago.

Hector Chunda

Stock camp

Everywhere I bin working. Moola Bulla, Texas, Rosewood, Auvergne, Bow River, Karungie station. Lissadell, that many I bin work.

I used to get up every morning. Kartiya used to look time, about what, four o'clock, eh, no, three o'clock. He used to sing out, 'up'. If nobody get up by that time, kartiya come over and kick em got a boot, anywhere here (in the ribs), make em cry. Sometimes whip, got a whip block em us. Make em run round, all around, get a bridle, get a horse, saddle em up. Hit the man with the stockwhip, make a man jump on em yawarta (horse). Gallop round. Learn em how to ride em horse.

We bin get a rough time me all abat. We are pensioner today from hiding. Kartiya bin belt em us. Make em do this and that. That's the way we can work, all the old people here. We don't back out from work. [Helen Ross - did they give you pay or rations?] No more pay, nothing. Only one bit of dry beef, one bit of bread, enough for keep em up heart or something, stomach, that's all... Tobacco, chewing tobacco, we didn't have em smoke. Next time they bin give it us pipe. Smoking pipe. We used to smoke and I'd be watching them bullocks. They used to boil em coffee, put em in a big drum like that. We used to drink em all night, no sleep, time to time. Some go back to sleep, cover up, hour might be, then they get up, watch em bullocks. Another lot blokes go sleep. When the rain time, through the rain, lightning, everything, watch em bullocks. Everybody watch. Never have em sleep. And no money. Just for battling for that one bit of bread and one bit of meat, dry one. That's the rough time we bin have em before. When we pensioners we got something to eat, little bit good one. But first time, oh, no wages.

Bob Nyalcas*Horse breaking*

We bin go la Texas now, when I bin man, now. Go up la Texas, we bin work there. Kartiya used to show me fellas how to break em in horse, you know. Anyhow some fellas, old old fellas, boy bin working early (the Aboriginal men who worked long ago), well he know how to break em in horse. All that young man like mefellas when we bin young he bin tell us, 'follow that old man there, he'll show you how to break em in horse'. You go and cut em long stick, tie em up tight la him la hand, take him round that horse, gallop round - soon as he (the horse) might be get little bit weak you know, you got to chuck a rope la him now. Chuck a rope, and bring em in your quiet horse there, just put em next to him. You put a collar rope la him. Whenever he start that collar rope - we bin have em rope, proper rope. Tie em up, pull his leg, tighten em, get em, tackle line, put em on la him.

That kartiya there watching, he tell em you 'all right you gotta do it right way. You gotta put a tackling line, put em that short reins la him, tighten em little bit, just make em come to neck like that, let em go la big yard'. You see em that horse buck all around there. Tackle em there. Bag hanging down la him la side. Buck, round there, you can leave em till-from morning time, you leave em right up dinner time, right through 3 o'clock. You come back bla him, pen him in la little yard, put em old horse la him side, take em off that tackling line, pat him bat, feel him bat all around la horse, bag him and all around.

Next time you come back, next morning, do it same way like. You get long reins, mouthing reins they call em, long ones. Put em on, you gotta a mouth em that horse now. Turn him this way, you gotta pull him this side, he turn this way. You pull em this one he turn this way. You hold em back he stand up. When he get good, right you bring him up la yard again, round yard, put em tack whatsiname, collar rope, chuck your saddle la him. That kartiya watch em you, he tell you 'when you get on, hang on to him'. You got to get on. Doesn't matter you get sling, he tell em you 'go on, get on him again'.

Early day kartiya you got right, right way whip that dog la him. Make you get on em right way well, kartiya can give em blackfella. But these young fellas don't know how to do it now, but early day when we bin learn la all that job. Kartiya can beat you read and write, and he can talk top English, and we can show him how to do it horse-breaking, shoe a horse, muster cattle, throw em bull, throw em anything, we can show em how to do it. We can show em that one now, the bush jobs. Some kartiya

know how to do it but they can't do it right thing. We can show em how to do it. We can give em him 'no, it's too hot, you can't go muster like this time, you wait till late'. But this time they listen to blackfellas now.

But early days we used to follow em *kartiya*, he show em you how to do it anything, tell you what to do, but you can show em how to do it shoe a horse, rise em foot, cleanse em - we call it cleanse em - 'you shorten em nail, we can show em how to do em all that. But he can beat you for read and write, all that, but we can show him how to do this cattle job, and horse breaking and all that. And ride a horse. And when you get sling he tell you 'all right, get on again'. We bin have a rough *kartiya* before you know, early days, but this time all the *kartiya* good now. He can tell you 'get on em that horse', he wait em la you got em la gateway, you know. As soon as you get on em he chuck em this dust down. Oh, horse can get up like this (rear), sling you there, and he tell you 'go on, get on em again'. They bin learn em all abat, oh till we bin used to all that job. *Kartiya* never bin boss a man now.

Frank Budbaria

See before, one year, white people used to belt em them down, people [who] don't work much straight (who don't work well), white men. Sometimes some white blokes from Queensland didn't like it people that bludging round, can't work much down that cattle work and round the house, anyway, in the stock camp, don't liven up, all that. That's why white people didn't like it. That's the way the white people used to give em a hiding. Chase em round the cattle camp and take it back to camp and tie em up and belt em. White people used to do that idea, before. They bin start all over this country, that's what before. We bin see that happen when we was kids. Used to grab a boy in the camp when they sleep, tie em up and take em back to his home, and belt em in the tree, all that. Just only from job, you know, when he losing time on the job. That was the olden time white people.

George Mung Mung

Droving .

Right, come back, sit down there (Texas Downs), work, work there all the way now, droving. Me, *majany* (boss) little bit, one half-caste, old Chunda, that Hector, he's the cook drover. Droving, droving, droving, that thing bin come close, meatworks. That Ord River, Kununurra, we cross over there that point of that hill, we fill em up canteen of water there. We bin still travelling there, got em bullocks. Machine (pump) bin work from that bottom, all the way now. Right up, and we get em water from there, they bin cut em bat, water bin come clean water too, all the way now. We bin still working, bin go right through Lejune (station) now, we bin still droving yet. When he bin come close now. Finish. Close em plant. Only that river there now. No more meatworks. No more droving eh. That thing bin cut off. Big water now that Kununurra way.

Ruby Kilingnyil (translated by Eileen Bray)

Children's work

We grew up at Violet Valley. A white man came from Frog Hollow. He picked me up and took me down to Frog Hollow, my girl friend and me, to milk the goats. Another old man, Tipi, was there, my father's brother. We used to take the goats out to billabongs, taking our lunches with us. We used to bring them back in the afternoon and put them in the yard. We milked them too. The white man used to keep us at Frog Hollow. He left Frog Hollow then, and went back to his country. We shifted to Mabel Downs. We worked there. The boss was Rademy. We used to stay with this white bloke, me and my friends. All my friends have died now, I'm the only one left.

PRIVATE LIFE AND LIVELIHOODS

Work on cattle stations enabled people to get to know their 'country'. The wet-season gave ample opportunity for travel further afield, gathering foods, and participation in ceremonies.

Ruby Kilingnyil (translated by Eileen Bray)

Play

When we were small we used to go playing and swimming in the water. We used to carry paperbark, pretending it was a swag, under our arms. We used to fight each other too. We used to fight and play. We used to be good friends, then enemies for a while. We used to go a long way playing round, pretending we were going camping out, then come back in the afternoon. We used to come back to our parents then and play around near the camp. We didn't go everywhere the way kids do today. When it was getting late in the afternoon we would play in one place near our families. This was at Violet Valley, my country.

George Mung Mung

Ceremonies

See that hill there (near Tickalara). Really camping place. Some people used to come from that way, we mob, travel this way footwalk for corroboree. Dance em corroboree there [till] midnight, go back again. Well old boss reckon 'all you mob can walk. Well, please yourself. Have your supper early, you can keep going.' We used to have em early supper, go back dance em big corroboree there. Really biggest camp there. He got a cave there.

Bob Nyalcas*Holidays*

Oh, walking foot. Carry your swag. Spear there. And old woman like Ruby roll em up big swag like that, you see em (pointing one out). We call em julujem,²⁸ got em swag. Carry em like that, woman, and he can carry em baby la top, travelling like-don't matter hot time. Or might be boy and woman, big mob bin walk la road. Swag. You can carry em big kid, take em to dinner camp, leave em there. Blackfella gotta bottle (spear head). Hunting, looking for kangaroo. Kill em kangaroo. And old woman gotta hunting, looking for sugar bag. Bring em back. When you run out of tea, you got em that sugar bag. That's all we bin live like.

George Mung Mung

And when we used to holiday, no more bin money yet (we weren't paid), our boss he give us plenty tobacco, plenty sugar - well one 50 (pound bag) is good enough for everyone, one, two, three, for holiday mob. Well, me and my mate and my wife, we bin always get em one bag of sugar too. Two, three 50 flour, might be four. Take em down there, la holiday camp.

No money, but our boss, we got really good kind, proper perkmi²⁹ (fly, calico). Proper strong one, rain can't go through. Well, long thin one he cut em, and he sew em up himself. Mend em up and give us this big tent, take em down and rig em up down there.

²⁸ Method of carrying something under the arm, with a string over the shoulder.

²⁹ Speaker's term, derivation and English spelling unclear.

Ruby Kilingnyil (translated by Eileen Bray)*Rations*

That government big man used to be in Violet Valley. He used to bring little dresses and put them on us. We used to go and play around that government man. A long time ago the government man used to be at Violet Valley.

Bob Nyalcas*Dingo Scalping*

We used to come up buy em bat tucker la him,³⁰ buy em bat got a (in exchange for) dog's scalp, dingo scalp and tail. They used to cut em that one, [for] money, you know.

Bring em bat scalp there and just give em, he give you, oh, too much tucker for that. That's the way man bin live la him, and eaglehawk. We bin always pick em up eaglehawk, you know, when they bin poison em. Head and foot, they used to get em that money. We bin always pick em up them eaglehawk and dingo. Kartiya bin want to poison em you know, all around la road. Put em bait belong to eaglehawk and dingo la beef. Poison em that way and dingo come eat em up and die there, and eaglehawk come eat em, he die there. Well we bin always come up find em, and kartiya never bin always think about, you know, why him get dry. We used to cut em earhole now. Cut em earhole and tail. Give it la store, bin there nother side, big store.

That's the way man bin start off. Kartiya bin used to get em dingo too, you know, scalps. We bin always come up, bring em up la store and kartiya count em, you know how much, money. Eaglehawk stop la him, head and foot, get em money from that one, you get a lot of tucker.

³⁰ To Mick Rhatigan, at Turkey Creek - publican house.

Sandy Thomas*Violet Valley*

[Violet Valley was] real good, water all the way along here. Water all the way down from this way - you know that old Spider, me and him bin (young kids here). We bin grow together. We used to go in garden there, pick up the tomatoes, peanuts, of we had a lot of peanuts, garden here. Water melon. Old kartiya (Hector Burness, the manager) used to crack mefellas, put a whip round mefellas... Well, too much stealing tomatoes and things. We used to go round the chook yard, got a (digging stick), we used to go round there, kill a fowl, take em up the creek here, cook em...

I can show you lot of place for old time blackfellas bin camping. Nother camping area here, up the creek here, up the gorge. Nother one down 9 mile side there, biggest mob camped there, bush camp you know. And top side of the 9 mile there, all the blackfellas bin fighting there, two brothers bin fight.

...Kill another bloke, kill him, kill him with a stick. Went up there to pick him up, put him in the cave, no cemetery you know, just put em in the cave, that's what they used to do...

This place was real, you know, Aboriginal bin kill one another but not kartiya. But that was before that station, see (before Violet valley was made a ration depot)...

One, might be two blokes fighting over one woman, you know, all that. This fellow might take off with his wife, that mob there come up here, proper fighting here, you know. Ran right out, that way behind this hill here (just where the road enters the community area). Fighting round there, see. They used to fight there, every afternoon, every morning, some from this side and some from that side. Fighting one another. Throw a spear. I seen you (showed you) that wire stuck in the tree there.

They had one (fighting) place up here, behind this hill. Special place but when they come back to camp, this fella start talking, might be from this side or might be from that side: 'I'll see you in the morning' this fella sing out. That fella answer him, see. That's the way. They used to get up early and start throwing boomerang and spear. They start fighting all the time.

...From everywhere visiting relations, big camp each side of the creek, this side and that side. You know, biggest mob come from Springvale, Bedford, Greenvale, Mable Downs, Texas, Turkey Creek, Tickalara, all come up here. Wasn't really ration camp, but you know. They bin feeding all the people just got a bullock. That's all. [and] tobacco...Christmas time they come up here for foot race, we had a foot race, get what they want, razor, handkerchief, everything they want, clothes and things, blankets. We used to have a foot race...From the house that way. They used to start from that end, run this way (west), we had the winning post there. That big gum tree there, hundred yards away, you know. They used to - winner collect the things, what he want, handkerchief, pipe and tobacco.

Ruby Kilingnyil (translated by Eileen Bray)

Mobility

When we were at Frog Hollow, the boss got a telegram to say his niece was sick. He went back to his country. We shifted to Bungle Bungle. We were all young girls then. My sister and I went cutting sugarbag at Corkwood. Griffiths and my brother came galloping up on horses. They came to get me, and took me back to Mabel Downs, because my friend, Dotty (Putparriyal), Darkie Green's mother, was along there. All the others had pulled out from Mabel Downs to go to Springvale (1914). My brother called out, 'you gotta come back, because your mate has nobody to talk to'. Griffiths and I were on one horse, with me hanging on behind. Coming down the jump-up (steep route over a range or hill), I saw one old kartiya sitting with my friend. He was a cook. Griffiths told me the cook had a mate now to talk with. The cook and my friend came to meet me. We had dinner when the cook was ready. The old lady stayed with us, our auntie. We used to go up and work at the house. Later on everyone came up, a big mob. That's the place where we grew up, and found all our kids. Ivy, we had all our kids there.

Only one lame old woman, and Darkie Green's mother had stayed behind to clean up. Joe Bridge took all the others away, Ernie Bridge, Frank Bridge, Norman Bridge, to give them to his daughters. Kitty Purul and that mob all went to Springvale.

I was married to Rademy and Ivy is our daughter. She lives in Wyndham. I've got a lot of grandchildren.

RACE RELATIONS

The story tellers emphasise that there were both 'good' and 'bad' *kartiya*, people who treated them with consideration, as well as people known for violent behaviour. 'Bad *kartiya*' evidently had little risk of being found out. Police were represented in both categories, some intervening on Aborigines' behalfs, others killing Aboriginal people on occasions.

Bad Kartiya

Ruby Kilingnyil (translated by Eileen Bray)

See that graveyard on the other side (of Turkey Creek), inside the gymkana ground? That's for a cheeky *kartiya*. The bloke in the grave used to jealous all the women. He used to chase the women.

They used to shoot the Aboriginal husbands for the women. We were only small kids then, we didn't know. Only one, later on, we knew about, a bloke at Alice Downs.

One little boy was throwing stones at a crow in a tree. Charlie Newman came up with a rifle, pretending he was going to shoot the crow. He shot the little boy instead. This was at Bedford Downs. An aeroplane came to pick up Charlie Newman to go to Ord River station. The plane crashed³¹ and he died, because he killed that little boy.³²

Rademy, Griffiths and Macnamara from Lissadell were never jealous. They were good bosses. We used to work for them, but they were never jealous for us. Anyway, we used to go and sit around, but they never went for us.

³¹ Translator's interpretation. Language is unclear.

³² Someone else said this was Charlie Bates, and the case went to court.

David Turner

Bert [unclear - sounds like Lawford] . He was a cheeky kartiya, shooting all the blackfellas. Take all the women away, and he was learn about what skin oughta get woman, what skin oughta get man.³³ He listen properly. He used to take all the women, ask em 'what's your skin?' Might be nangari, nyawarru. He asked them girls 'what's that boy's skin?'

'Oh my brother, brother-in-law. Cousin. Uncle.'

'Well your brother-in-law can take the rope.' He used to tell them women, you know, for that skin, straight one for that women what he got em all the women there, la bush, la station. He follow that man with a rifle, he shoot em la bush. That's how bad he was.³⁴

³³ Refers to the classificatory kinship or subsection system, in which each person has a classificatory kinship name (skin name). People of the classification ('skin') one should marry are known as 'straight' for one (see Kaberry 1939, or Ross 1987).

³⁴ David says this was when he was a little boy.

Queenie McKenzie*Police behaviour*

Two women - policemen bin take it away from Turkey Creek and to shoot em after. One (woman), two fella bin shoot em. Nother one bin run away.

That two girls used to run away got a man from every station, you know. Policeman bin call em down here (Turkey Creek). Nother lot a blackfella bin take em here, big mob. They bin keep em, work em for a coupla months, then after them policemen bin start walk em, bring em here (Yinawanyji creek, a few kilometres east of Turkey Creek) to shoot em, got a chain.

That nother woman got nother policeman bin take em up. And this nother one, 'I have a sleep here', he reckon. He got a dog, that police.

He was snoring (in a drunken sleep) and this girl named Gypsy said to the dog (whispered), 'Hey, here dog!' and dog bin come.

'You get that key out of the hat for me, please!'

And that dog bin go get that key, bring em, give it him.

Pull em out two handcuff, pull em out two chain, put em down.

'Take this key back. Don't barkin' [she] talk la him.

That dog bin take em back key, leave em, and he bin go to sleep. That lubra bin run away.

Police got up. He bin hear em shot. That girl bin hear em shot when he bin running along you know. He heard that shot for his mate got shot.

That woman bin run away, he bin get away.

Policeman bin get up, and look, nothing - dog and him. He seen this dog snoring.

But that dog known, that's the dog bin give him that key.

That lubra bin get away right down to Lissadell station and he still bin safe, I tell ya. Nother one bin get shot, poor bugger.

Bob Nyalcas*Bedford Downs*

This nother mob here la Bedford. Old old people bin camping ration camp... And this milker bullock they bin have em, big calf one bullock.

And this old *Kartiya* him name Paddy Quilty³⁵, and this old man bin cheeky (aggressive) one there before. He bin count em all this cow, and oh, nothing for that bullock. He bin missing that bullock. This Paddy Quilty reckon 'ah, might be someone bin kill em that bullock'. He did, they bin kill em all right, fat one bullock, big one.

He bin tell em one boy name Doctor³⁶, this *Jumungee* bla father. He bin tell em 'get em horse morning time'. He bin get a horse, that old *kartiya* bin saddle em up horse, he bin take a ride round la paddock, you know. He can see these crows all abat flying round, hawks, everything. He bin gallop up look. See that calf-one bullock gone there, all bin kill em, take it away beef. Ah, that *kartiya* bin very sorry. Lose em his good bullock, fat milker bullock.

He bin go back, and he bin ring for police. Policeman bin come up. Big mob (of Aboriginal men) he bin pick em up, send em away longa police station. And that policeman bin put a notice la Paddy Quilty (gave him a note). He bin tell em (the men) 'ya, I give you all abat ticket. Only liar. He bin tell em all up to your care' (you can do what you like with them), he bin tell em old Paddy Quilty.

This lot (the men) bin come up night time now, all this old man bin come back from jail. Long come up la old Doctor.

'Hey, we got em ticket here, we got to get em rations tomorrow'³⁷. And Doctor bin tell em 'no, no, that's not a licence to get all abat tucker, you all abat ought to get going' he bin tell all abat.

'No, no, we can't. We got to go la boss tomorrow get a rations'.

³⁵ Other accounts suggest that one of Quilty's workers, acting alone, was responsible for these killings. Indications given in the various accounts suggest that this happened in or about 1924.

³⁶ Aboriginal name *Julkurrji*.

³⁷ Winnie Budbaria says the suspects were returned from Wyndham with the 'ticket' because they couldn't understand court.

'No no,' he bin talk, 'you don't know what that one licence la neck'.

And Doctor bin try his best, try tell em all abat to go away, no they couldn't take notice.

'Righto' he bin say, 'all up to you fellas'.

And next morning all along walk up la old Paddy Quilty. 'Boss, hey, we got a ticket here, we want to get a rations.' And Paddy Quilty, he bin look that ticket. He bin look 'ah, all up to you, you can do what you like, kill them fellas' he reckon the policemen bin put a word. Paddy Quilty bin 'ah good, you come up la store, get a rations. 'Not today' (not now), he bin reckon, 'afternoon time.'

'Righto boss, all right.'

'Today all abat get em dray'. He tell em 'you all abat go muster donkey'.

All go muster em. Donkey used to pull em that dray, you know. Get em axe. Chuck em on (loaded up) all the tucker, everything. Go up, carting wood.

And this one cook making a dinner for them, you know. Oh, big saucepan, like that one, soup. And got em *mawiya*, strychnine, you know. Stir em up la that soup, bla them old old people. Stir em up, make em good tucker, jam and butter, and strychnine there inside. All along look, oh, all along see em all that nother lot *kartiya*, murderer again. Scotty Saddler. And Scotty Salmond and Jack Carey, and Jack Callaghan, and that old Paddy Quilty himself he bin settle em.

All bin have em dinner, and they bin put a high one la that lot (shot them). Old people bin hungry you know, that much hungry. All bin reckon good tucker, but got a (it had) strychnine.

One young boy he bin have this feeling, you know, 'might be they gotta kill em we'. Well you might hardly believe this - he bin get up Wurpilirri, when they bin kill em that one. They never kill him, he bin run away. He bin go down la creek, he bin run away.

This lot eating em, tucker, tucker. You can see one man, this one now, everyone do this one now, drunk (shaking). Like a dog. Finish em all em bullock (men) and old women BANG, BANG, BANG. Just one young fella bin run away³⁸. He bin run away. His name Major again, Lalarji him name. Kartiya name Major. He bin run away up la hill, he bin look. He see em pull em out one donkey. Put em chain, tie em up all that old old people, drag em now longa that fireplace. Drag em there, and this old Doctor here, father belong this Jumungee, he bin have a feeling already.

'Where all them go?', all the kajikajirrem (all the old women asked).

'The kartiya bin shoot em all abat' he bin tell all the people. 'Well look, see em that black smoke getting up long aside of the big hill. 'There all finish' he bin tell all abat.

All along. Come back now. Finish, all them burn em up.

38 Another version by Hector Chunda says two men escaped,, Nangnangji, father of Paddy Bedford, and Walampany, father of Peggy Patrick.

Dotty Whatebee's version blames the Bedford Downs killings on Aboriginal women two-timing white and Aboriginal men.

Dotty Whatebee (Kija and Kriol translated by Eileen Bray)

Killings on Bedford Downs

They killed them with poison at Bedford Downs.
They all went mad.
Right in front of the big Mount King he killed them.

They were just working.
Some kartiya were married to girls, and the kartiya were jealous then.
Another girl ran away from Adavale, where she was living with a kartiya, right through to Bedford.
Old lady Jarnamil, when she was young. She went for her boyfriend.
All the kartiya told each other she'd got away.
'She left, she's got a boyfriend there somewhere in the bush, at Bedford.'

Old man Markatiny³⁹ sent a letter down.
He was married to her, and this girl got away from him, went to Bedford.
But trouble was coming to those boys.
They killed all the boys that the girls were making trouble with.
Not too long ago. I was small, living at Violet Valley.
Some people came from Bedford Downs for a holiday and said this lot got shot behind.

He picked up a rifle, heaved up all the donkeys.
They drove them back now, the whole lot were there in the wagon.
Scotty Sadler came from Tableland, Scotty Salmond, Paddy 'Minduruw' (Menmuir) they were from outstations, from Tableland and Karunjie stations.
This lot of kartiya came, and met each other at Mount King.
They all stayed there with horses, and their boss old Paddy Quilty.
They waited for the other mob who were pulling the wagon along.
They were pulling it until they reached Mount King, and they told each other, 'we'd better have dinner here'.

³⁹ This could be the Kija pronunciation of a white name, origin unidentified, or the Aboriginal name given to a white man, possibly Bob Beattie.

This lot made the biggest fire now. That much wood.
 'This lot, old Paddy Quilty, Scotty Salmond, Paddy
 'Minduruw', Scotty Sadler started to heap up that fire.
 This *kartiya* brought them, old Smithy.
 Smithy told them, 'we'll have dinner here. You've got to
 look around, get timber now'.

From that way they were cutting timber, leave it heap,
 heap, heap.
 They told each other, 'we'll have dinner here now'.
 They put poison in the treacle, on the bread.
 They ate the tucker now.
 They sat down and ate.
 That's the place they killed them.

In the late afternoon, the wagon came back. That *kartiya*
 old Smith brought it. He brought back the cart with a
 donkey.
 My uncle found that wagon coming now, he's clever, he's a
 doctor.⁴⁰
 That's why *kartiya* called him Doctor, because he was
 clever.
 Old Doctor told all the women, 'those men they took out,
 they killed them'.
 They watched for all the men to come back, but nothing.
 All the girls went now, round the wagon.
 They all asked that old *kartiya*, old Smith, 'where are
 all the boys?'
 He said, 'They ran away from us'.
 'I don't think so', all the girls told him straight off.
 'Might be you fellas bin kill em.'

From there, three girls went at night time, walking,
 looking, all the way. They saw a fire.
 'Oh, fire there. Might be this one, this one, all bin
 kill em. Might be all bin kill em, this lot of men.'
 They went straight up to that fire. They walked slowly,
 slowly, towards that fire. They saw that all the people
 had been burnt.
 They turned them all round and counted the bodies.
 'Ah, they're all here, the whole lot.'
 From there they went straight back.
 Old woman Muyurlul and old woman Yarntiril and old woman
 Julamanal, mother of Jumungee⁴¹, all counted that lot of
 people.
 'Oh, all here, them people.'
 Straight back, go back.

⁴⁰ He was a *maparn*, a 'medicine-man' or 'clever man'.

⁴¹ Paddy Jumungee.

They told the others, 'they killed them all, they're all dead'.

They rolled up their swags.

All right, everyone was crying.

This boss for Bedford Downs, he never took notice of them.

He just stopped quiet.

They were all crying, finish.

Earlyfella they had breakfast.

Just go out from that kartiya. They just walked up to that kartiya.

'Ah, that's what you've done.'

'How do you fellas know I killed all the people?'

'Yeh, we followed your tracks right back to where you killed all the people. They're dead there now, we've seen them', they told him.

'Well, we drop the job today and we're going.'

Well that's finished, they were just talking to him.

'Now, I'll give you tucker and beef', he told them and they said, 'no, you can have it. We don't want tucker from you'.

Just rolled up their swags and got going.

Only old man uncle he stayed there.

All right, straight back from Bedford Downs to Violet Valley.

Everybody was already waiting for those girls, who gave trouble to those men.

They were waiting with sticks for them.

'Ah, all the Bedford Downs mob here', they came out.

They went and gave them a hiding.

Old Freddy Timms' granny, they belted her up, until she was lying on the ground.

And my old auntie, Pungurawayi⁴², they did the same with her.

From there, that Kurijil, our daughter-in-law Langul, they belted them all, for giving trouble.

All the girls gave the trouble to those men. That's why the kartiya killed them.

When Jarnamil ran away from Adavale, from old Markatiny.

See, they were married with kartiya, and should have been satisfied and stopped with the kartiya.

This lot came back making friends with all the man now, blackfellas.

They were like mad women, chasing after all the blackfellas.

⁴² Mother of Paddy Jumungee, and the late Tropper Bedford.

They gave them trouble, and they got killed, those boys.
 Old woman Jurnal, she gave trouble to her husband who
 used to stay there.⁴³
 And Jarnamil gave it trouble to old man Mangarnany.
 Our mother Parlul, she gave trouble to my uncle.
 That's the mob who had all the kartiya friends, that's
 why all the mob were killed.
 All the white men got to be a murderer and killed all the
 Aboriginal men right there.
 Got the biggest hiding, proper flatten em.⁴⁴

⁴³ Others differ as to which women were responsible. Some say Jurnal lost a brother, and that Jarnamil wasn't married.

⁴⁴ I was shown the burning site, and the small hills from which the group of women looked at the fire at night. Burnt earth and tree stumps where wood was cut for the fire remain.

Sally Malay of Halls Creek, who was a small boy present at the time, says that no one knows for sure what happened. Only the cook, Smith, was at the homestead, Quilty and other white men being away. Smith took the men out with the donkey and dray in the morning, and returned alone about 4 o'clock. The men were never seen again. The women accused Smith, and he locked them up. Years later Jack Carey, who had been friendly with one of the men, claimed at the Fitzroy races that they had been murdered (interview September 1988).

Good Kartiya

The non-Aborigines who treated Aboriginal people well, and especially those who were willing to intervene on their behalf, are remembered with special affection.

Bob Nyalcas

Jimmy Klein

I want to tell you a story about this old Jimmy Klein (extended story continues about an Aboriginal worker, Jimmy, and a white stockman, Tom Wilson, having a fight. Wilson eventually surprised Jimmy at night, tied him up and belted him with a hose)....

They bin make arrangement, something. They were going to shoot some fellas. Shoot em la dry gully.

And this old man here, my boss, old Jimmy, he bin go up la all abat.

He bin tell em 'hey, what you fellas talk about? You can't do that', he bin talk. 'None of you fellas bookkeeper or manager, got no right to do that'. He's just a stockman. He bin tell em all abat 'you fellas blue-top policeman?' He bin tell em all abat.

All right, after that he bin hit anyone 'you fellas got to shoot that young fella', he bin say, 'I'll blow you fellas got em this one'. He bin have a 45 revolver himself, this old man, white man.

'You fellas might follow em same way. I can do that, I'll fight it out for blackfellas too', he bin talk. Anytime, old Jimmy Klein. Him down la Wyndham, old man now, pensioner.

All right, he bin tell em all abat 'run', leave it to him.

Bob Nyalcas*Violet Valley walkout*⁴⁵

Oh, that old man bin good helper, old Jimmy Klein. Even this mob from Old Station here, Violet Valley you know - when Alf George bin cut em bat (cut them out - a mustering term implying 'remove') from there. They bin have em two half-caste girls there, that old man (Alf George) look like he bin jealous.

Well one boy named Daylight - well, this old man belong to Ruby (Ruby Nalgoo's father) bin tell him 'hey, chuck a one over la you, *wartu*', they bin call him, you know, *wartu*, brother-in-law. And old man Jack he bin tell him 'hey, this lot *kartiya* got one over la you', put a high one la him. *Mangarta* they call em, *mangarta*, revolver. Little one, automatic. 'There in the pocket', he bin tell em. 'Him got em la pocket'. Him bin talk gotta language la him, 'wankilka', he bin call em, *wankilka* revolver. *Wanyakel*, little one. He bin talk 'you look at him, 'watch em, (he might) put a high one la you'.

Well that old man did. And this one, when he bin go out that way, this old Daylight bin take off, straight off la all the boys, straight down, run away. And that *kartiya* bin pull em out that automatic *tu tu tu tu tu tu tu tu* finish. That old man bin finish, go down longa water, something. He bin go down la water, he bin sneak. He bin take off la hill. And silly one never bin go la that rough place, he bin go longa this one place like-a-that la Violet Valley. Sleeping la *minyjiwarrany* tree, you know that black plum tree. Sleeping there, and these two fella *kartiya* bin get em horse, looking. Alf George bin go round that side, Fred Roney⁴⁶ bin go round this side. Alf George bin know that tree. He bin go la good side of tree, he might be there. But he did, he bin sleeping that old man, fast asleep now. This old *kartiya* bin go 'get up. DAYLIGHT!' he bin talk. 'Alf George right here', he bin talk.

Ah, that old man bin get up. Put a chain la him la neck. Take him back long Old Station Violet Valley. Tie him up la tree. Twofella bin have em supper. After supper, twofella bin go back belt em bat got a pick handle.

⁴⁵ This happened in early 1940.

⁴⁶ According to Mrs M. Lilly, this was Aborigines' name for Terone (Cathie Clement, p.c.).

And this lot bin take off now, frightened. Ruby's (Nalgoo) father and all his family bla Ruby, and Madigan's (Thomas) family. All along take off, camp, and old granny belong all abat, blind one, Ruby mob, but all along bring em right up to Mabel Downs, leave em there. And another old woman, leave em, can't hardly walk, he bin die himself, la bush. This lot bin go right up Texas, tell em old Jimmy.

Old Jimmy Klein all along telling him, put em down all that. Policeman bin come up after this mob. And old Jimmy bin tell em. Old Bill Bunt, he might be policeman bin here. He bin come up follow em this mob, catch em up all abat. Jimmy bin meet him, all abat, he bin tell em.

'No, you not take em back this lot, all abat stop here, that Alf George might get into all abat.'

He bin stop em this lot there, now, la Texas. Nobody bin go jail from when they bin run away there.

That old man (Daylight) now, all along taken him next morning, they bin want to shoot em him somewhere la bush. They bin tie him up lead em him got a horse, you know. Nother man lead em him. He bin have em strap, like-a-that (arms tied behind his back), just like a handcuffs, early days. Take em one fella bin lead em him.

And all go round this kind big rock, like that juwurlinyji we call em, big (fat) rock. And they bin sort of come round this side. That two kartiya bin already la front now, two fella go round. This old man (Madigan Thomas' father) bin tell him (softly)

'You get off, get off.'

He bin get off this side, now he bin take off. This old man gammon (pretending) lead em this horse, liar, you know, he bin tell em this old man to get off.

'Hey, where that boy there', two fella reckon.

'Ah, where him?'

And liar, old man bin tell him 'get off and run away.'

He bin run away - this old man now - two fella don't know.

'He not there, where he bin go?'

'I don't know. Somewhere he bin get away, I'll have a look' he reckon, liar old man, father bla Madigan. 'He gone!'

All around look around there, nothing, old man bin take off, now, got em hands (tied) like that.

Till today he bin live still la Halls Creek.⁴⁷ Finish.

Old Alf George bin bad man. And that one young fella bin belt em him got a stick. Everybody bin cut off from Old Station, nobody bin live there now. Everybody bin go away from Violet Valley. Only old Madigan and his father bin live there.

And this lot bin come la Mabel Downs now all around see em that two kartiya following, hill there straight up like that from Mabel Downs. What for all abat up here? Shoot anyway, longa that hill. Some fella bin la cave, listening that shot. Fire, fire, there, fire, fire, fire, nothing. Two fella go back. After that one this lot go working la Texas for ever now... All bin working la Texas now, right through today.

⁴⁷ This is not Dick 'Daylight' Taylor of Halls Creek. Others say he is in Fitzroy Crossing. Archives show that Daylight and others were returned to Violet Valley by police in December 1940.

Madigan Thomas*Naughton*

This lot bin going la jail. Work time, from road they bin pick em up, five blokes, they bin fighting got all the *kartiya*. *Kartiya* bin get wild and fight la all abat. Five altogether and two white blokes. All right, they bin get em this lot in jail, Halls Creek, and *kartiya* said, 'oh, they'll be in for six months'.

Right then, they bin must be ring em up, that John Naughton, he's owner bloke. Four stations he bin own there, Mabel Downs, Lissadell Downs, Texas Downs, Alice Downs. And he was in Mabel Downs, coming up la plane. Them *kartiya* bin get ready now to go to Halls Creek for court. And he bin with them mob, got a car. Come down asking how many blokes in the jail. 'Oh, five altogether.' 'Allright, no worries', he reckoned. He went to Halls Creek, get them out of the jailhouse, they bin come back home. And that *kartiya* was gonna still looking for fight la them. John Naughton bin tell em (the white men responsible) 'oh, you can't say Aboriginals the bad people. Aboriginal bin work for station from many many years, you know. They bin make cattle. I like Aboriginal more than white people. White people only here for little while then they gone again, Aboriginal belong to this place', he bin tell em. Make them *kartiya* real think about it a lot, you know.

He used to like em blackfellas, they bin always make (look after) cattle for him, all the time.

Immigrant Aborigines

Aborigines from the Northern Territory and Queensland, brought in by the early white settlers, added another dimension to race relations. Some integrated successfully, others were unpopular, or made trouble for whites or local Aborigines.

Winnie Budbaria

Olden day blackfellas didn't like different language. They used to say, 'he got em different language, we'll have to kill em, he's not our countryman'. They bin kill two. One they bin kill em up there alonga Turkey Creek. He was working for Mick Rhatigan. Kill him there, take him up alonga that hill (just across the road, west of Warmun) alonga Kurnany, that big hill and hide him there.

And Mick Rhatigan said, 'oh, he must have bin get away, he must be worried about to go back to Darwin. He must be walk foot this way'.

But man was there. Some other young people bin go up there long time, and go find his skeleton. They bin find em there.

Bob Nyalcas

Major

Right, after that he (Jack Kelly) bin clean em up that lot⁴⁸, go back, he bin tell em, him pijiringka⁴⁹ now, he bin tell em. 'What about you make em bat money belong me.' One bloke, name Major. Boy from that country, Darwin side. Blackfella you know, flash one, all along catch em up them kartiya. He bin tell em 'I give you rifle, you go shoot em and take em away money from all abat, we try to make em (get) rich' Jack Kelly bin tell em.

'All right', that boy bin talk la him. Get em rifle, he bin go right up, place called Growler's Gully. One kartiya bin there. He bin there got a one woman. He bin get up early that old Major, he bin look. He bin see one fella kartiya, and this old woman bin go milk em goat. Milk em, this boy bin wait now. That kartiya word 'come on, bring em milk, hurry up' he bin talk.

Major bin load em up 44, BANG, knock em that kartiya there. Pick em up that old woman from there. All bin travelling come out this side now. Old station (homestead) they bin have em, this Blackfellow Creek.⁵⁰

And he bin start travelling, and looking up road - I'll show you Manjalji hill there longa Blackfellow Creek. He bin get em all abat there looking out, all that hill, tutut, tutut, tutut (trotting noise). Manager bin just come up from ride abat, you know. 'Jajaja' (a scarcely voiced warning signal). All (Major and his hostage) bin lay down now. Watch em that old manager bin go quiet, get off. Watch man bin pull up gateway, pull em off saddle, hang em up saddle bla him la gate, he bin get a water, water em that horse, sweat, let him go away, go back la camp, house, get in.

When he bin sitting down, old Major bin sneak up now, la house. He bin look. He bin hear em tung, tung, tung, tung, bell. Blackfella bin go get em supper. Take em back supper he bin look, this old cook bin cook em tucker for that manager, now, boss. Cook em bat that tucker bla him, 'supper' he bin talk, 'Come on boss, have your supper'. 'Tea time'. That old Major bin look through la window, and [saw] two kartiya. That manager bin sit down

⁴⁸ See Lajipany story above.

⁴⁹ Pijiringka, derives from bushranger.

⁵⁰ See Clement's entry on Texas Downs for the names of those killed.

la table. Till he bin face em straight up la that Pijiringka. Pijiringka bin have em one bullet again. Only one he bin have em. Soon as he had that manager right la sights there he bin give it him right la heart BANG. And this cook, silly fella bin run la that same door. And that Pijiringka bin have em shovel. [Correction by Paddy Rhatigan - axe]. Soon as that cook bin come out he bin chop this neck bla him clean off.

And when that lot bin listen that shot, you know, all the boys (Aboriginal) bin all run up 'whay!'

'Stop quiet nother way, I might shoot you fellas.' And all bin stop quiet. Two kartiyas he bin kill em there. One grave two fellas still in, la Blackfellow Creek.

Next morning he bin get em everything, take it away that lot from there. This Timmy Timms, mother bla him bin working there. And him old father, he bin working there. And one old woman still alive there, Kitty Larjil, down here (Warmun) la bottom camp. He bin young then. All right, take em up, he bin take em all abat walking, have em dinner. And one boy there, he bin know all abat. That boy bin start thinking about must be that fella he'll shoot a man. And all around have em dinner, that's all. Boy bin slip down la creek, and this pijiringka bin eating dinner, he never think about that boy bin run away.

He bin take em up and he bin look back and 'ah, where's that boy gone?'

'He bin go down have a toilet' whole lot got em (said).

He bin look la creek, nothing. Already that old man bin get up la hill now. BANG, missed em him. BANG missed em him. BANG, missed em him. Next one he bin give it him here la leg, but still that old man bin travelling. He bin camping all the way la road here he bin come up here la police station. Report. 'What's wrong?'

'No, two kartiya bin get shot, he bin wanted em boy from Texas', he bin tell em.

'Oh yeh.'

Policeman bin catch em all the horses, muster, biggest mob policeman, Wyndham, Halls Creek [Paddy Rhatigan - Fletcher].

Muster, all along go look around after em that pijiringka. He bin take it away big mob from here, all the Kajikajirrem and boys. All the women and boys. Working boys bla that kartiya now what bin get shot. Belong follow em now this side Old Texas way. All along follow em (look for) track, couldn't find him, all abat never find em track. All along just go anywhere now. All along go pull up la Red Butte, place called Red Butte near Ord River. And blackfella name Wertem, big river, Ord River.

And all the boys bin water em horse, you know. They bin go, water em horse all around. See this track la big sand, right across. 'Hey what bin walking that one there, we look, might be something, alligator all abat'.

One police boy bin come up, look, 'no, look like a bushes track this one. And that pijiringka bin drag em big one bushes, you know, behind, wipe em out tracks. He bin put all his mob front, he bin pull em bushes behind, wash em out tracks. All along follow em. Look 'oh here, fresh ones this bushes, must be him now.' All along go tell em policeman. 'Righto, good, thank you', make em policeman. All along go la 9 mile.

He bin tell em all abat, blackfella way. 'We smell em fire', all along tell him. 'Stop here, we'll sneak up' all the boys bin talk, police boys.

All along go sneak up, look there, they bin see smoke, that's all. All along look around everywhere, nobody moving. All along go look, 'oh fresh one tea, he bin chuck it away tea leaf.'

'Ah fresh one this one, sing out la that nother lot.'

'Stop here, we'll follow em footwalk'. All along follow em footwalk, and that silly fella bin sit down la little ridges. And little ridges and big nutwood tree bin there, big one. All along see em this girl coming down, got a white dress. 'Oh, pull up, pull up, there, there, might be.'

They bin see em that girl bin go have a toilet all abat. Policeman and police boy bin there. They watch em go back. All along look la that tree, they bin see that Major standing up got a rifle.

'Ah there him' (whispered).

All along sneak em up - right round all around sneak em up. Old man hear em BANG. Policeman bin start, bang, longa him, and that fella bin sit down behind la nutwood tree. BANG. Lucky he bin have not many bullets. Next one again he bin - and that policeman from here, what's his name, Taylor? [Paddy Rhatigan - Baker]. Policeman

bin here. He bin sticking out la ant bed, he bin just blow him in here, la head (across the scalp). Lucky he never get him la brains. Straight up like that, knock em off that police hat la him. And one bloke bin passed away la Moola Bulla station, well him and police boy bin load em up rifle, BANG, he bin get em (Major) right here look la arm (demonstrates).

'You fella got me' he bin tell em, swear em all abat now. All the policeman bin come out, he bin chuck it away rifle. All along come up la him, shoot him that pijiringka, from foot right up to head, right back to foot, right back to head, finish! Make a big fire there, burn him up. (Paddy laughs).

That girl now, Tim's (Timms') mother, old Nancy him name, and this old Kitty Larjil, and one old man named Toby, father belong to old Tim's mob. (genealogical details continued).

After that one, finished. All along take em all that lot la Old Texas, now, working.

Well Jack Kelly bin kill em all abat now, him bin lose his bloke bin want to try and make em up money.

Shaw (1983) gives other versions including a police report of these events in 1908.

Bob Nyalcas with Paddy Rhatigan⁵¹*Mistake Creek*

Two boys bin going ride abat from here. Old Reserve bin that way, la Mistake Creek. Old old people bin there. And dog bin knock em old cow. He (the cow) bin fall himself and dog bin bite em, and the old people bin have to kill em, and cut a meat la him. Take em back, have a feed. [Paddy Rhatigan - working boys too].

Right, this two boys, two fellas bin go ride abat 'hey, you fellas got a beef. Why you bin kill em?'

'No, he bin fall down and dog bin bite em'.

'Ah well, we'll have a feed'. These two boys bin have a meat, and put em one raw meat la pocket. One boy, he's the flash one, he come from Queensland. You know, skin the *kartiya* way. Come out there, show em la that Mick Rhatigan, show him that meat.

'You look boss, they bin kill em killer, them old old people'.

'Yeh', he bin tell em 'I'll get a horse tomorrow, and I'll go out there.'

And all old people bin there. 'What you bin shoot em all abat?' [Paddy Rhatigan - Shoot em. Not shoot em, come back for a long time. One bloke bin run away. He bin come back other side, they bin shoot him (demonstrates how shot through the forehead)].

And one girl bin run away, he bin make it (get away), come up call em up police. And when this old Mick Rhatigan round em up young young girls, now he bin take em further down. Right la this place, now, one side the bottle (boab) tree, him la movie⁵², I bin put report already, me and him.

Right he bin take some young girl, he bin waiting got a rifle. All bin cart em bat fire now, firewood. Policeman already there. Well Mick Rhatigan he got no ears, you know, he couldn't listen. Policeman tie em up. Now he bin get off and walk up la old Mick Rhatigan... Poke him got a gun barrel longa back. When he bin look back, see em policeman. Drop em gun (laughs).

⁵¹ Paddy Rhatigan was named for his old boss, Jack Rhatigan, who was Mick Rhatigan's son.

⁵² A video relating this story.

And that police boy, now, offsider belong to Mick Rhatigan, he bin take off got a horse. *Patata patata patata*, and all the police boys, nother lot bin get into em behind. *Patata patata patata*, that fella bin make it. He bin leave his horse, la bottom la hill, he bin take off footwalk. And this lot of police boys bin get off. BANG, missed em him, BANG, next time soon as he bin get up la top they bin get him back of the neck. Cut em off neck longa him. Bring em back policeman bin catch em old Mick Rhatigan, tie him up, pull em out clothes la him, bring him back naked.

They bin take him for court. They carried that boss belong to him offsider head part. Mick Rhatigan bin carry em (the head) stinking one all around the country. Because he's the one bin put a report like that beef, and his boss bin doing cruel. Old Mick Rhatigan ... [Helen Ross - And after Mick Rhatigan went to court, what happened? They put him la jail or?]

They bin put him (Mick Rhatigan) la jail. [Paddy Rhatigan - Mrs Rhatigan bailed him out. He was lucky].

This occurred on March 1915: see Clement for archival details. Idriess (1961) gives a more sanitised version of this story (from Rhatigan's position) in *Tracks of Destiny*.

Winnie Budbaria

They bin kill three Darwin boys. One longa Spring Creek, this one longa top of hill longa Turkey Creek, and this one la this Mistake Creek.

He was working for Mick Rhatigan, and he had his girlfriend, he wanted to live with that girl. And all this other mob went in longa Turkey Creek and get the wife of him and take him away alonga Mistake Creek. And they bin cook lot of kangaroos. He came out there with the horses and he went and tell Mick Rhatigan.

'You know what boss, them bushmen, they bin kill milking cow for us mob. They bin kill em. They bin cook em that way.'

But they didn't kill em. He just want to make that old Mick Rhatigan kill that blackfella bin take em away his girlfriend.

Anyway, they shoot em down, shoot em down, and one old man Parnji, they reckon he went back there - my mother was working - went back there alonga this old Maria and Thomas, la police station. Tell them, 'Mick Rhatigan killing them people there'. Tommy and them bin saddle the horses from this side (of) Jumpany's camp (Bob Nyalcas' present house site) they galloping here.

Coming daybreak now, they look there. Finished some of them. And old lady got shot this way (through pelvis) and he bin pull through, never died till we bin grow up.

Anyway, policeman said to some police boy, not my father (Frank), them two old ones, 'don't give him chance'...

They all had a race now, police boy and one public house man (Rhatigan). This murderer he bin want to try beat this police boy, they bin gonna give him running shot with the 44. (Shot him in the back). Fall down and hanging up longa one hole. They bin catch that chestnut mare after. Anyhow I don't know what they was doing there now. They must have bin just fall off the horses.

They bin getting all the wood, burn em up, where two fella bin finish em all them fellas. Bring em in that what bin shot them too, that Darwin boy. Burn em all his enemies, burn em whole lot. That lot where he bin shot em and that one, two police boys bin shoot em.

All the Aborigines they bin shoot em one another. They didn't like that Darwin boy because he might do that all the time, shoot em this country, you know, all got no rifle. Finish em there now, la Mistake Creek.

LEAVING STATIONS, STARTING AGAIN

The introduction of award wages was used as a rationalisation by many of the cattle stations in this area for evicting resident Aboriginal communities. Some workers were permitted to remain, but many chose to leave with their extended families. The pastoral industry's miscalculation that the workers they required would remain without their relations caused the loss of its stable workforce.

People moved to Halls Creek, Wyndham, and Turkey Creek (many Miriwoong and Gajirrawoong people were already in Kununurra following the flooding of Lake Argyle in the 1960s).

Shirley Drill

When Marshall (her former husband) used to working at Mabel Downs I used to stay there with my cousin. Uncle Raymond (Wallaby) used to stay here (Turkey Creek). And then after that, then the Manager didn't want everybody to stay out la station so we all move in here, find this place up here. Settlement, for everybody.

They didn't want big mob to stay in the station, only six or seven, that's all, because the pay, they didn't want to pay everybody that much.

Then everybody was start, some bin go up la 9 mile (Guda Guda) out la Wyndham.

That's all the Mabel Downs mob. Then we had to come and stay with Old Raymond here. He was over in the Post Office, the other side. He used to work for the postmaster. Going out fixing the line on the road. Telephone line. And any telephone he used to run from Ord River and back, from here to - I think, far as Doon Doon or somewhere round there, Wyndham, Halls Creek too.

Then everybody said it's better for everybody to stay here. Might be get a school for the kids to stay here. See my kids used to go in Halls Creek school, from here. Old Jimmy Klein used to take them. Old Jimmy Klein had his house over here.

Texas Downs was abandoned voluntarily, when the management changed.

Queenie McKenzie

Young Macnamara. They didn't like to stop (and) work la him when Jimmy Klein bin leave that place (Texas Downs, in 1973). They didn't like to stop there. Only me, oh couple of people, we bin stop. All the stock boys. But old people all bin leave. Winnie (Budbaria), Julama, all that mob, all bin leave one time. Same time when Jimmy Klein bin leave that place. All bin shift. All bin go up la Mabel Downs. Only me, old Liddy (Walagil), old Buttercup (Leringery), that's all we bin stop there now. We bin stopping there working. And these two feller bin talk, Macnamara too, he bin tell em them two feller 'Queenie got to go for holiday, now, poor bugger, he never holiday for two-three years now.' He bin tell Georgie and Liddy husband. 'When he come back, Buttercup and Liddy can go for holiday.'

Right, twofella bin come up. 'You want to go away in't it? Well we can't stop, we've got to go too', twofella reckoned. Ah well, we bin sit down. Sit down. He bin bring em out me for holiday. That time I came out for holiday, I didn't go back any more. I bin come for holiday. And these twofella bin tell Macnamara - we're not stopping, we're going for holiday too'. Well Macnamara bin think 'I don't know, maybe they don't like to work for me Queenie,' he reckoned. 'Must be', I bin talk. 'Up to them, not me', I bin tell him. 'They want to go, they go' I said. When they bin get a long lead, we all bin come here. Reckoned they don't go back to Texas any more. Everybody from that Texas, nobody (stayed there). Some bin work la Lissadell, some bin work la Mabel Downs ...

All right, I bin come up, I bin stop here, and everybody bin getting holidays now from every side, every station, Mabel Downs and Lissadell all bin come here holiday time. Stop here now, not going back to jobs. All bin stopping here. They bin stop with us.

We bin sit down. Everybody bin come now, no more little mob. I tell you every people bin here. Big mob. More than today well we were. This lot Texas mob when they bin go Mabel Downs all bin come holidays, they bin come stop here. Lissadell bin come stop here. Well all the Texas, anyhow, bin come stop here. We bin all holidays here.

David Turner

When we finished all that, Vesteys sold that country (Ord River station) sell em to all this Naughton. These Naughton stations Lissadell, Texas, Mabel Downs, this west side. And east side, Ord River, Turner, Flora Valley, Nicholson, Gordon Downs, Sturt Creek, Limbunya, Waterloo, and all that sold. Everyone didn't want to stay now. Different company. Different owners.

So, remember I said yesterday I had a camp Turkey Creek way. I was start talking about my land, '71-'72. I went to Nicholson working for - lately Vesteys sold Nicholson. Len Hill was Manager. When they sold that, same time I get the girl to send letter for Ringer Soak mob. Banana Springs, used to be. But they shifted in to Gordon Downs way.⁵³ Be more closer. That was too far up, east. Nearly 20-30 miles I think. They got answer for Gordon Downs. I didn't get no answer for Turner. Sent from '72.

⁵³ The Jaru people of Gordon Downs station first sought land at Banana Springs, then were granted a lease at Ringer Soak after they were evicted from the station in 1980 by the incoming Sherwin management.

Sandy Thomas*Leaving Mabel Downs*

Them boys (his children) didn't want to go back to Beagle Bay, and manager want em to go back all the time. And we finish up, take the kids away and take em to Wyndham school. We did. We told the manager we finished, finishing up. Take our kids into Wyndham school because not worth send em back to Beagle Bay. Get homesick all the time. We did take em to Wyndham.

Helen Ross: Was that before award wages, or after?

No, before. we bin finished now, we bin stay around Wyndham now, everybody bin growing up. They said 'they closing down now, this place (Violet Valley)'. I said 'I'll go back, I think, and talk about that place'. I did come back and talk about it (when the lease to a pastoral company ran out). Anyway, I come back and I told em I got to go back to my own country, you know...

Helen Ross: So what did you do to get this place back?

Well, I had to bring em up in a meeting. You know, talk about in a meeting. Gilbo McAdam wanted to take over this place. I said 'no way', you know, 'my mother country'. He from different country, his mother from different country. Anyway, I rang up to lawyer, Philip Vincent, and Ken Colbung (Chairman of WA Aboriginal Lands Trust). They come over then, we had a big argument. Anyway, didn't argument much, but, er, he told him. He said to me 'you can't ride a horse any more, you pensioner now', Gilbo McAdam. I said 'I can ride'. I told him 'I still can ride a horse'. 'Oh well', Ken told him then. 'This boy, he not looking backward, he looking forward. You know. He got to go back to his own country. He bin bred and born there, and his mother country'. Ah, we was all right. Forget about it now and we bin 'pologise, and bin all right, bin talking good now. Tom Stevens (MLA) come up after a while, he said 'oh, that's good, you know, you've got the place back'. Ernie Bridge (WA Minister for Aboriginal Affairs) come up and bring the book (lease) up here now. Got the 99 lease. We got it, we're right now.

Joe Thomas

We got pushed out from station (Bow River), they didn't like Aboriginal people hanging out there, too much trouble ...

We had idea to work on stations. We went back to Bedford, moved around a lot. Then we had trouble, went to Wyndham community and settled there. Government Department and DCW (Department for Community Welfare) looked after us for a while.

We thought about it a lot, and with Jumpany (Bob Nyalcas) we asked for Turkey Creek. He pushed it through the government. As soon as we got Turkey Creek, we started pulling out, we didn't like working on the stations after all the problems we had and after we made *kartiya* a millionaire.

Government bought this place (Turkey Creek). All the station fellas came in because they knew the government bought this place.

We was very happy. We had too much trouble from all the *kartiya*. They couldn't let us in our own place to stop. So we bin break through, just like wild cattle.

The safest place we came in to Warmun. We want to go back to our own country, and we're pushing the government very hard if they can give us a block.

We done that. Now we came into Turkey Creek to save this place, because government bought it for us.

We was happy when the government came in, to put us in the safest place. Without trouble, because they shooting and poisoning people, most of the people got killed from the *kartiya*.

The Bedford Downs people were not evicted. They remained on the station until about 1976, until a conflict with the manager who they believed had encouraged the police to come to the station to shoot their dogs.

Topsy Wungul

Leaving Bedford Downs

We bin pull out from dogs, manager bin put a police la me all abat (on to us). Bla dogs.

Well, we bin have em breakfast, policeman bin come up very early from Halls Creek. All right, all my tucker dogs, all bin like a (in) chains. Right, we don't know what *kartiya* bin say, what those *kartiya* talk, bla Halls Creek. 'Right, this one tucker dog, don't touch em, you tell em policeman, we'll tell em policeman too.' Paddy (Bedford her husband) bin tell em (the manager). 'Ah, all right, all right, I'll tell em.' Liar, liar, him bin talk, liar. 'You fellas go that way la creek.' He bin tell all abat, 'stop there'. 'All right'.

We bin go la that road, la Thunpi road, sit down there. We bin hear em shots bin onto something. He bin shoot em, shoot em, shoot em, shoot em, shoot em, shoot em all the dogs, tucker dogs bla me, goanna dogs, kangaroo dogs, finish. He bin finish em lot. Policeman bin finish em up. And that man too (the manager), he bin help em.

All right, *kartiya* bin go footwalk now, look around for some fella dog what bin get away. He bin look around, look around, look around, look around, and dingo, you know, bushman dingo, he quiet one too, slat (female), my brother bin have em, that dog bin get away. He look around, look around, look around, dog bin get away, two of mine. He bin look around la creek, la river. He bin look around, nothing, he couldn't find em. Only some fella bin get shot, all the dogs bin get shot. This one mine, goanna dog properly, he bin go back. I bin hunt em back. I bin get silly like, I bin hunt em back then. That dog bin go back then, right back la camp. He bin get shot. Ooh, he bin finish em lot.

Mefellas bin go back now. Walking round, just laying in the camp. Inside paddock, la horse paddock, all bin sit down. Dogs bla mefellas everywhere la house. All right, that boss bin come back, he bin come back from house. See em my brother 'don't worry now, you fellas can go bush, walk around, plenty room bla you all abat, you fellas can stop em bat la bush. You fellas can come back for work anytime ... You fellas can come up. You all abat know what job.'

'Look here, Basil (Quilty)' my brother bin talk. 'Look here. You can pick em up man at first, at six mile all the boys, you can't have em boys. And all the girls, I take em.'...

Two fellas bin row, row, row, my brother and Basil, twofella bin row, row, row. 'He's right, he's right, don't worry about that now, plenty room. You fellas can walk around, stop over there. You fellas can come back for rations any time.'

'We drop em job belonga you now, we finished!' Right, my father and that girl there (Dotty Whatebee), two fella bin talking la that boss. 'We're drop em job bla you right here'. Me twofellas never say, me and Paddy. Just listen la that twofellas. 'We finish up now. Goodnight.' All the boys bla me all abat (us), and policeman, and nother man, that kid there he bin go ask em all abat - Patrick. He bin talk to all abat policeman and boss bla mefellas. 'Look here, you fellas bin smart in't it. You bin put em police la me all abat', we talk la him. 'Well, we drop em job belonga you. We can't measure em bullock, we can't measure em horses, brand em, no. You can get all the man and ask us.' Get away now. We bin straight out now. Go away from that station.

My brother bin come this way (Turkey Creek). I bin go Lansdowne, somefellas bin longa Halls Creek. Finished. All bin look around for man now. He bin get em boy from Halls Creek, and boy never know that country, you know, for cattle. Nothing. You know, he couldn't know em that country properly.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ The account goes on to say that ... one young member of the Bedford Downs mob, Patrick, later returned to work there for a couple of seasons, but pulled out after trouble with a new manager.

The impacts of leaving

Sam Butters

Well, the biggest change I've seen with Aboriginal people is when they told them they allowed to go in the pub and have a drink, that was one big downfall. And when they left their stations, where they grew up. The reason why they left the stations was because the manager couldn't pay them award wages, pay them the right wages, there was far too many. They was told they had to pay the same wages as they pay a white man. They couldn't afford to do that, so they let them go. That was one of the biggest biggest problems for Aboriginal people.

Helen Ross: What effect did that have on them?

Sam Butters: Well their morale, their inside, feel all down and out. They just like, where they bin moved, just like somebody's back yard, just like a concentration camp to them. It's not the same as being in their own place, where they've been bred and born. You can tell just by looking at them, just by talking, they're not there altogether. Part of them is missing somewhere. That's the reason why, because there's nothing much they can do or say, they're like strangers. They're frightened to do this, they're frightened to do that, you know, they're frightened of going and ask for this, they're frightened to walk over here, somebody might say something. They just stay in a little group together ...

The reduced and uncertain access to country has threatened the peoples' ability to maintain and pass on their detailed knowledge of their own 'country'.

Sam Butters

I think they have more culture than anything else, on stations. They didn't have to take em away and show em. Everywhere they went the kids was there with them. They might show em or they ask questions. You pick it up yourself. But really, Aborigines, they sort of pick things up automatically. Teach one another anything, they don't sit down and take class. They've been told by their grandparents. Ask any one of these old people here, from forty upwards, these old people. You can ask em, 'ah, now what bin happen over there, long time ago, *ngarrangkani* (dreaming) time.' They tell you exactly, tell you the story. You go up and ask the next person, tell you exactly the same thing. Right through all this places they call sacred place. Not only one, two, three people know that. The whole of these old people can tell you exactly the same story in the same way.

Those who live in the Turkey Creek area have probably been less affected than those who moved to towns, because extended families were able to remain together near their country. Warmun community is on the country of some of the families.

Sam Butters

Well, you see, they're more or less, these fellas, they're still all together, see. What left Texas, they're still here. And this is part of their country. That mob from Moola Bulla, they're all scattered everywhere, some are in Kununurra, Fitzroy, Derby, right through Vestseys. That was the real split-up, relations. Really, really, something hard to get through. I reckon myself ...

Well, kids sometimes they grow up with their grandparents, they're supposed to have all the time, they can't have all together so they have to split up somehow. They start worry about em. Sometimes they make themselves sick (the grandparents).

(Grandparents and grandchildren) they're really level, they really get them inside in their heart ...

Grandparents are the only really storytellers. You want to sit down they tell you *ngarrangkani* (dreaming) stories, lot of things what happened. You find out everything these young fellas stories they heard about something they got from their grandparents. Not from their mother or father.

Developing Warmun community

Uncertainty about the future turned to pride as people faced the challenges of securing rights to remain at Turkey Creek, and building up the community with minimal resources. This was the first time many of the older people had had cash incomes of their own.

Shirley Drill

Then all the old people used to grow garden down there, where Bob (Nyalcas) stays, on the flat. They used to carry water with yoke.

Then we had this old Harry, that old man for the Roadhouse.⁵⁵ We used to get tucker from old Billy Lee Tong,⁵⁶ from Wyndham to here. Jimmy Lee Tong. Old Harry reckoned, 'oh well, I might as well make a store here, a roadhouse for you mob to buy tucker'. That place was only small, he used to sell tucker from caravan. He used to sell tinned meat and things like that for 50 cents.

We used to go Halls Creek or Wyndham, buy a lot of cool drink and tinned meat, bring it back. This place used to be really starving, you know. We used to be starving, when rain season time. And that old man used to go into town. We used to buy some tucker la him over there, so he made that place bigger and bigger now.

They bin start up school. Little school, they had it down by that white tree down there (near the river crossing). Eileen (Bray) was one of them. Sister Clare, Sister Theresa. Then my father, Paddy Springvale, my cousin, Rusty (Peters) they had to make a school up here now, make that bough shed. They used to have their school up there. They had a little house for sisters, caravan. Sister used to stay in caravan. And them old people bin move to Chinaman's Garden then (to start Yarrunga community) after that.

Once we had a few houses growing here, now, we had one house over there, another one over there that my house, and this other house here for Phyllis and Joe (Thomas).

⁵⁵ Harry started Turkey Creek road-house.

⁵⁶ A Wyndham shopkeeper.

That house for Raymond (Wallaby). And that house for old Kurmji (Paddy Bedford) over there, that house what old Joe (Thomas) stayed at. Old Bob (Nyalcas) and this other house for Ralphie Yallanga, what Dallas (Purdie) mob staying in. Four I think, middle camp, and down la windmill four again. Two other side, Queenie (McKenzie) and this mob down there.

Rammel Peters

They gave us land this side (at Turkey Creek), 780 or 1800 hectares, about 15 miles round. I don't know how we got the land. Some people reckon it was Sister Joan. She found out people had no job and no place to live. Ken Colbung was working at the Lands Trust, he came to talk to us. The Lands Trust backed us up to get the place, and Lands and Surveys pegged it. We got the adviser's house.

We got UB money (unemployment benefit), and rations from Jimmy Lee Tong, who brought us our checks. Ted Beard, from the DAA (Department of Aboriginal Affairs) area office, got sick of this. He stopped us dealing with Jimmy Lee Tong, so he brought the money.

They gave us four thousand dollars from head office to start off. We got a chuck-in going, for a quarter of our money. We were independent with that money. We came up, and got more and more money, till Ashton came. (Ashton Joint Venture, developers of the Argyle Diamond Mine). They gave us tents first, then houses. Then we started to argue with the diamond mine. That's why all this is coming through now (the Good Neighbour money).

Someone, John Toby and Bob Nyalcas, went fishing at Flying Fox. They found an eight or nine foot drain, nearly ran into it. After that we started arguing and arguing, trying to stop them, but we couldn't do it. We tried the Museum, asked them to help, but they couldn't do anything because the Liberals were in Government, so we could do nothing. We tried and tried.

Then some kartiya told John Toby, 'we'll make a deal. If you sign an agreement with us we'll help you, we'll give you anything you want'. He picked up Tim Timms, his daughter Mona Ramsey, his brother George Dixon, and his sisters Evelyn (Hall) and Patsy (Hall), and they went to Perth to sign the agreement. He bin all buggered up. We couldn't do nothing.

We had a meeting with ADM, till they gave us a hundred thousand dollars. We asked for proper royalties, but they wanted [to give us] Good Neighbour money. We tried all sorts of angles but we could get it. We had to take what was given.

Bit by bit we started building up, shop, garage, kitchen. ADC (the Aboriginal Development Commission) helped us for all these houses and things, lighting plant, street lights. They've done many things.

We fought for Nine Mile (Guda Guda community), shifted school (the school children) from there. One died crossing the road, hit by a car going to Doon Doon. I brought my two kids back, and my sister's kids. We asked Jumpany (Bob Nyalcas) to get a school. We asked the Bishop. Sister Clare and Sister Theresa came first, they were schooling down by the creek. After we built a bough shed for them. Then we got the big building from Beagle Bay. The Bishop wanted the block⁵⁷ but we told him 'no, it was the community's school'. Lucky I was there, the others would have given it. Same with the clinic, I stopped them getting a 99-year lease. Queenie fought for her land, too.

Then the money started changing. I went to Broome for an ADC meeting. I spoke up for Bow River to be bought, and was told to write out details of the main mob. I got Alan Tegg (community adviser) to. Another kartiya bought it, and then some brothers bought it. ADC bought it then. I think Freedom from Hunger backed them up with money. We got Doon Doon (station) first, I helped them too.

Steve Waddell,⁵⁸ 2 on election day, brought a 44 gallon drum. He filled it with every grog in the gallon licence, mixed. He pulled up at bottom camp, and offered to sell flagons, buckets full, jerry cans full. The people never got drunk really. They drank half the night but got sober next day. Then next morning they came to the creek crossing. They (Waddell and others) were trying to stop the people voting, but we knew what they were doing. Mike Dillon advised us to do something. The police locked them up but nothing happened. We rang the discrimination mob,

⁵⁷ Title to the land the school stood on.

⁵⁸ This was an attempt to interfere with Aboriginal voting in the 1977 State election, when an Aboriginal candidate, Ernie Bridge, was standing for the first time. A court of disputed returns was held into other irregularities in the election procedures, and another election held. Bridge failed at this attempt, but was elected in 1980.

they came up and talked to us. A judge and jury, one came from Melbourne. We had a boughshed court near the creek. Paul Seaman (Q.C.) fetched me back from Mabel Downs for it. They took the *kartiya* to Kununurra for proper court. We got \$1,000 compensation. We used it to build the basketball court.

Queenie McKenzie

I never tell you really how this Turkey Creek bin start, too, you know. When we bin come, we bin live here la Turkey Creek. Big mob bin here all right, but, when they bin la station this Jumpany (Bob Nyalcas), that Lena (Nadbi) husband (Ben Bandy) and little Ralphie (Yallunga). Ralphie only bin little boy that time.

Well my brother (a former National Aboriginal Consultative Committee member) bin working la NAC that time. He was come here one time and he bin tell em us 'hey, this Turkey Creek, I bin see em la Canberra in a paper', he said, 'la wall. If a blackfella want to get it back, he'll get it back', he reckon. 'What you fellas reckon?' he bin ask em me.

I bin talk, 'well, I got no right, I bin talk, I wasn't here before, I not bla this place'.

'What about you, Jumpany (Bob Nyalcas)?' he bin talk la him.

'Yah, we'll ask for it anyhow'...

Well, twofella bin go down la Kununurra meet em all the head blokes *kartiya* there. They bin have a talk about it. They didn't want to get em or something. And this Ralphie he was a kid then, and he bin talking la him father. 'Yes, we want em Turkey Creek, it's a good country for us', he bin talk. He was a little boy, see. He didn't know what he was talking about. Well they reckon final word he was winner, young Ralphie. We did get em that answer back. Turkey Creek going to be for natives. That's the way we bin get this ground really, you know. Through that two now. But really my brother bin bring em up. He know everybody bin here all the time.

Hector Chunda

...We bin have em good manager after, Jimmy Klein. My wartu that one. He married to my sister... We got that old man, and then when he bit old now, he bin start to go away from Texas. Everybody bin go away then. We didn't like to stop there. That's all the good kartiya we bin find em.

We bin camping here (the 'other side' of the river), old man bin camping over there. Old Jimmy Klein... Soon as he bin finish from that place there, Texas Downs station, we all bin pull out. Not pull out, just run away.

And then some welfare bin come here, asking us for thing, you know. We never get em this whatsaname, 'unemployment' (unemployment benefit) yet. And this one kartiya, welfare, his name Mr Howard, he used to come around here, ask mefellas, 'what you gotta do'. 'This we holiday camp', we used to tell him, 'this the holiday camp'.

Anyhow, we used to go back work, till we bin have em those little little ones (children). And they bin asking me all abat (us) to send em away la school. We had to send em away la Beagle Bay that lot of kids. They bin learning things, now, school. Then next thing that welfare bin thinking something else, then they might be can work it out theyself, you know, in the Government way. Then they bin give us thing, this unemployment wages. For sitting down. There now they bin bring em la me all abat, la that fig tree. Silly question I bin ask em, 'what's this?' 'No, this the sitting down money', he bin tell me and Left Hand George (George Dingmary). Only seven dollars. We bin start off got a seven dollars.

Then after, little bit big money bin come now, might be about \$50, or \$60, and we used to get em, that welfare used to get em for our sugar and tea. Bring em up here from Wyndham. Got money what we bin given him from the Government, he used to go buy things now, bring em up clothes and blankets and calico, bring em here. And they used to give us. We didn't know how to buy em bat. Anyhow we got those things now, from the Government.

Then after that we got proper unemployment. Big money now after. Government bin send us big money, little bit of things. After that we got pension. Now already, all the old people have that pension, eh. Already the pensioners bin have that pension from nother welfare. Then when Mr Howard (of Department for Community Welfare, Wyndham) bin come now he bin proper give us pension money, sitting down money. Then we bin all right. Then

some of those Aboriginal departments ask em the Government, you know, they give us housing now, after. Not too long now. Might be about 100 years past now (joke).

Then we went to Kununurra for talk to the Government, that's the first meeting we had, Aboriginal meeting, for housing. Anyhow, whoever Turkey Creek bloke bin (can) come, they said. Anyhow, me and Bob (Nyalcas), that Chairman bloke, well we bin born here, and one bloke died in Kununurra, his brother... Thats all the Turkey Creek boy. Anyhow we bin go meeting with that one white woman, cheeky one. He never let em us have em tea.

And then Mrs Burridge, he was a welfare officer in Kununurra. And anyhow, all the doctors, Dr Holman... an all that doctors, we bin have em to help us, and all the sisters, and that one welfare now, Mrs Burridge. She was stand for black people, fight for this reserve, till we bin ask em, that lady bin ask now, to give em us things you know. Bit of a house, things like that. We bin have em humpy all around here. Anyhow, he bin fight for us. We got that tents, we never get em these houses yet. Nothing that government bloke bin cheeky one. He didn't let em us have em housing like that now. Anyhow all the Aboriginal departments, all the Government still asked for things, ask, ask, ask, ask, till, all them kartiya now, Mike Dillon, Ted Beard. Them kartiya now, they bin keep fighting. And that chairman alonga Perth - not Ernie Bridge yet - we never put him in the chair yet. One kartiya. They bin fighting, fighting, fighting, fighting, till they bin get this place for us. Then we bin have em committee, and Chairman of Warrmany. And then we bin make up little by little, make em garden there. Cart em up buckets of water got a yoke, water em bat garden. Oh, I bin have em sore shoulders from doing that.

Then after that we got school house. We bin ask bishop for school. That house now. We bin have em humpy all around, and we only bin have em one little house for school. Then we bin make em that humpy now, that grass house (bough shed), for school you know. And Sister Clare and Sister Theresa - we bin ask if we can have em quiet lady to school em kids for us. Then they bin give us that two ladies now. Then we bin grow up, grow up, all the way now. Grow up all the way, oh, too many kartiya bin come talk, to our place here. We bin understand now what to do.

Work around. I bin work around too. I bin work longa all the houses there. I was a little bit smart then. We used to [lay] that toilet cement. We used to lift em up that big one (bag), put em la truck. And lift em down. Ooh, it bin bust my heart. I bin go longa hospital for that many times. I bin drinking grog. Make me more weak and weak for work. Anyhow doctor bin pension off me then, invalid pension he bin give it me. Because I bin have em no good lung from grog and lifting heavy everything. Then we got houses.

Queenie McKenzie

We bin live here now, we bin live right through, till we bin get a Government to help us now. You know, make us come good now really. We bin start by that garden, across the river. Used to water em garden there, grow we tucker up. Vegetables and everything, tomatoes, and melons and all that. We bin start by that. Used to get em mail. Chuck in we own money, for what we want em, axe, saw, anything like that. We bin start that way. Keep going, keep going, keep going, keep going. We reckon, 'oh well we'll have to ask Government for school for we kids. No good we send em down to Beagle Bay all the time. Too far.' We start thinking that, you know, that's the first one we bin thinking. Then we bin start. Because this lot (of children) used to go Beagle Bay school all the time, very risky you know with the plane every time, poor fella, we bin getting nervous. Well we bin talk, we'll get we own school, we'll ask em schoolmaster. Who's that one we bin ask em? John [name unclear - may have been a State Education Department official]. Make em Mike Dillon ask. He bin ask em. And he bin tell em, 'You fellas know any?'. 'I got good news from Bishop', he (Mike Dillon) reckoned.

'I got answer from Bishop here', he reckoned. 'He reckon he'll help you for school. He'll help you quick and lively.' That's good, you know, we bin very pleased about that. Then all abat, we bin sit down, they bin ask em us, 'What you fellas got to do? What sisters you fellas got to get em? Kartiya?' 'No, we want a sisters', we said. All right, we bin get a bough shed going up. That bough shed now they bin start work on em, make him schoolhouse. We never have em house. We just have all the tents yet, rigged up everywhere...

Ah, we bin sit down we bin have a meeting again, meeting. They reckon, 'ah, you fellas got to get a house, couple of months time'. Then this lot house bin come. We bin sit down again. 'Oh, old Beagle Bay school (the former building) got to come for kids' they reckon. Already they bin pull em out but they bin only just give it us answer. Finish. That school bin getting up now ...

Helen Ross: I thought there was some argument in the beginning about whether you should have the bishop's school, or just community school of your own kind.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ There was considerable conflict over this issue in 1980.

Queenie: We bin talking about that, but some bin tell us 'look', they reckoned, 'we're all Catholic, what about we get em Catholic school teachers, you know, sisters'. 'More better sisters' they reckoned, you know... Some bin a bit hard there for that now, you know. Well we bin believe that too, you know, we bin like sisters. Because we was all Catholic.

Well first Catholics, three (sic) fellas bin come out, Sister Clare, Sister Theresa. That's the two first ones. They bin living la caravan, when they bin start that school...

That's the way we bin start. We never have em office and all them house there, nothing we sit down like that. We used to have meetings down here nother side. Just across the river, cement, they bin take em out now. One bough shed bin there.

All right, we bin sit down. Ah, everything bin come up now, office, all them buildings now. Community now, you know. This lot house. We had a house now. Just a house for the rain little bit, pull em out all the tin house and chuck it away. We used to have em tin houses, you know, rubbish. Old iron and put a fly over la him. We had that sort. Everyone bin get em. That side all right, me last one. Mine bin come last this side.

Gaining confidence

This was a period in which individuals began to assert themselves publicly.

David Turner

Ngoonjuwah Council

I went to Halls Creek, holiday. I said '74 'oh, we want Council, want strong Council.' We need a Council for Ngoonjuwah. Old Wilbilin (Charlie) was Chairman. I was a leader, Council. When I was a Councillor, when we go to pub we standing up on the gateway, just watching how drunkards getting on, and see how the police doing their duty. You know, watching em from the gateway. They had a party on Saturday. Aboriginal, they arrest em, he was dancing. I wait on the gate. I said to (police) 'I'm David Turner. I'll control my colour.'

'Oh. Oh good.'

But these days, anybody arrest he haven't got no sense. That day it was a really strong job. The Council to do your own colour, to help. They always see that, and they listen too, coppers. They won't listen today, but that day was good. I used to grab man from policeman's arrest.

'Can I control my colour? Can I take my people back?'

'Yeh, yeh, yeh.'

That was a good job all that. But these days everybody stopping you know. Police do all the job for us Council, in community now ...

[Helen Ross - why do you reckon that's happened?]

What I think is, weakness. No power. You can see police. He can pick me up here. He got power. But I have no power. If we would have that power all the way this man would have the power till today.

Queenie McKenzie

Keeping the other side of the river

Asserting rights required not only confidence but advice and access to an unfamiliar administrative system. Aboriginal people have often used their personal relationships with sympathetic whites to obtain this access. Such helpers have frequently and unfairly been portrayed as 'manipulating' the communities.

One day we bin have this gymkana (a gymkana ground was built next to where the people were camping). We bin sit down. This gymkana bin on, we bin go. We used to get water from that gymkana (ground) too, see that tank. They used to carry em up water with a bucket. They bin do em every year, you know. But I don't know what happened after this gymkana. Kartiya bin get jealous or something. Well not everybody, just this old man now this old Eric Purdy here. Well we bin sitting down playing cards that way la camp, he let em go all the taps out of the tank, let the tank go dry. And one couple of women bin go got a bucket for water, they bin look, no water. They bin singing out, singing out. They bin tell em me. I bin go see em this kartiya up here la house, used to be, linesman. I bin go see em him.

'Well we can't get a water la gymkana'. I bin tell him, 'I don't know what all these pensioners got to do.'

'Oh, come get a water here, plenty water here. There la that tank there' (from his house).

'What they bin do that for?' he reckon.

'I don't know, we don't know', we bin talk. 'Never let us know anything.'

He bin run down all abat cart em some water got a drum. Drum with a lid. 'Right,' he bin tell me, he bin ask em bat me, he bin talk la me, 'Queenie, you fellas supposed to report this lot. Queenie, you fellas supposed to write this letter down to government. I can do it for you fellas long as you tell me what to do.' 'All right.' We bin sit down and give him what statement. Well, I bin talk la him this way, look. 'Look, this way, if that kartiya bin ask em us for that water, but he bin shut em off without a reason,' I bin talk. 'We don't know what happened. And we don't blame anybody, I don't know who done it.' That day I bin talking la him.

Next morning, this old man (a non-Aboriginal resident of Turkey Creek) bin come up, get into this lot down there la bottom camp. I bin here, me. He bin tell em, 'you fellas got to roll your swags and get out of here. This the gymkana ground. This not your land', he said. 'Roll your swag and go down to creek', he said. 'We can't camp la the creek.' 'Never mind. Go and pack your things up and go before I get a grader to grade you fellas down', he reckoned.

Oh, they (the other members of the community) bin roll up (their swags) now. They bin go cross the river. Bin make em camp across the river there everywhere.

Then that Maria bin come back tell em that *kartiya*. I bin tell em 'what now really', I bin talk. 'Not them station managers', I bin talk. 'This is the *kartiya* bin shut that water and he bin tell em me all abat (us) to shift across the river. That's the way he bin frighten em that lot across the river. Poor buggers, where they getting water now? They making a soak down the river.' He (the linesman) bin help em all abat, take em down drums like this one. Put em la soak for water (to line the sides of the soak). But this water he no good one. He got something little little like a worm, isn't it. White thing, he no good. I never used that water, I bin still stopping here for this water.

Then, all bin sit down, everyone bin moved now across the river. We bin write that letter, then they bin ask me to go down. Can I go down and take that statement down. I did. Mike Dillon bin running the show then (as book-keeper/adviser) that time, we bin start getting a man to help us. Him and Ted Beard (of Department of Aboriginal Affairs). I bin take a flight down long all the Ministers down la Perth. And I bin tell them what happened really. I tell you. And that he trying to tell us this is the gymkana ground, he not a blackfella ground. But before that he was a blackfella ground, I told them really in the face. 'And he's the biggest reserve', I said. 'That's the way blackfellas used to start, and you can read that letter.' I bin chuck em letter like that la table, from that *kartiya* now. He was a good helper that fellow (the linesman). Used to give it all about rations.⁶¹ He bin always get a rations from la store. Every Saturday rations. He bin make it himself, that, but he bin asking welfare to do it, see. He was a really good *kartiya*.

⁶¹ This was actually an official duty, to run the ration depot (see Clement's entry on Turkey Creek).

I bin talk talk (in Perth). I bin tell em, 'I'm going to ask you something about that across-the-river', I bin talk. 'Can I get a house there? Across the river?' I said. 'What's wrong with this side of the river', they said. 'Well I don't like across the river, because I got fowls, I got goats, I take a goat there la mob of dogs and everybody camping, I'll lose everything. I like to stop where I are.'

They bin stop, both the Ministers, they bin talking one another. This Mike Dillon bin talk la me 'give me map'. I bin have em bat la bottom my bag, bin pull em out got a foot. And showing me, telling me to chuck that map la table. They bin reading map now. They bin read em bat map, everywhere. 'Gymkana', they reckon 'really gymkana ground, can't get a house there'. All right. I bin pull em out. They bin tell me, 'I don't think you'll get it', they reckon, 'because they say in the map it really gymkana.' I bin pull em out (another map). 'You can read that map,' I bin talk la them. They bin get that map and read it. They bin look me la face. I bin look them too. 'Now there's the truth', I bin talk. 'It's true all right', they said. They bin read em that map, from that gymkana over here la one-mile bottle tree up there, one mile flat or something, two-mile. Just up here. That's where that racecourse used to be. And this one they bin all blackfella. Right up la that yard that way. That used to be blackfella camp. Yard bin up there, stock camp yard. (The gymkana ground had been built in the wrong place). They bin look la that map now, they bin find from that. 'No not really', they reckon. They bin look date, what time that map bin made. They bin find out what date and everything. It bin before them (their) map.

'Ah well, old woman', all abat reckon, 'I think you're going to win this', they reckon. Two-three Ministers. 'Anyhow' he bin talk, 'when we finish here, you go la Ernie Bridge office, you find that and you gotta come round to that Parliament place, eh?' You know that Parliament place where they have a talk?

'You gotta come up listen there', they reckon. We bin walk, everything, we got to go way long way, but we bin follow that house all the way la top, we bin come out la Ernie Bridge. There now I bin get into Ernie Bridge, too, I bin get wild la him meself. I bin have em that kula bla him you know, not bin helping me for this ground, you know. Make em him cry, he get sorry for me now. I bin tell him, 'fancy we got to come down to see you here and we bin set em up you the seat (his parliamentary seat) and you can't help us'. I bin talk la him straight out. Mike Dillon bin there listening.

Right, we bin go right up la that Parliament place, now all abat I bin ask em for this gymkana, and I bin listen all abat. They bin talking about that two *kartiya* Ministers, three Ministers bin read that map. Everyone bin read him out now. Ernie Bridge bin come on, he bin say, 'that's right. I know that meself' he said. 'And that old woman, he's older than me', he said, 'I only kid bla him', he said. And they bin have em argument then, two of them, you know. Me all abat (we) listen. I bin sit down, finish. I bin see em this Minister coming up got em paper. Come upstairs and bring it la me. 'There your paper. I think you're gotta get a letter two weeks. You'll know what happened. You'll get your house.'

Argyle Diamond Mine

In 1979-80 the new community was confronted with the imminent development of the Argyle Diamond Mine. Sacred sites were damaged, and the people feared the effects of a large mining town nearby. Their attempts to use legislative rights were unsuccessful, the State Government of the day being firmly behind the mining company (see Dixon and Dillon forthcoming). This was a traumatic and divisive period.

Nowadays members of the community prefer to emphasise their limited gains in negotiating protection of some of the sacred sites and obtaining some recompense from the Company (see Community SIA paper). They recognise that they had no hope of stopping the mine, and are relieved that many of the potential effects have been contained by ADM's avoidance of a town and control of its workers.

Paddy Jumungee (translated by Eileen Bray)

Arguing for Argyle

That place they dug up is where all the women in the dreamtime were trying to catch the barramundi with spinifex. When they were pushing the spinifex along, the barramundi jumped straight over them, right over to Mount Pitt. The women went away then, to Kawinji (Cattle Creek), where you can see them standing up as stones. We were giving the miners a chance, then one got wild in the end and told them off. They had made the place very bad, making wells and holes and things. They damaged the barramundi's eggs. Frank Hughes (manager of CRA Exploration) always came here visiting us. We told him off, 'you don't want to do that. That's for us'. They've flattened that place down now, that barramundi gap. We cut them off from going to another place, the Kilkany River where the barramundi went through. We knocked them back, they don't use it now. We told them off, Frank Hughes and his mob, right here at Bob Nyalcas' place. We told them off, and they told their workers.

We went to Mandangala⁶², and talked, and talked, and talked. There was a big mob of people there, John Toby's mob, and Frank Hughes. We were talking opposite ways. John Toby's mob were talking wrong, but we were too strong for them, Bob Nyalcas and Mike Dillon and me. We cut John Toby off. He's got nothing to do with this place now.

⁶² The outstation community John Toby was trying to establish.

We talked, with Mike Dillon. We told Frank Hughes, 'stop, no more mining'. He came down to Turkey Creek, all day. We told him off here again, at Turkey Creek. We kept talking.

We didn't have any more meetings with John Toby. He buggered up that place. He got Mandangala, and he's living there now.

Frank Hughes came here for lots of meetings, and we always talked to him about *tayiwul*, the barramundi place. Now they give us buildings and things all the time, because they dug up that dreaming place.⁶³

We told John Toby off because he was trying to go over the top of us. You can't separate Aboriginal people. This is our country, Aboriginal country, for all of us. No matter where. People take a *wangka* (men's dance) from here, and send a corroboree from their way. Aboriginal people go even for corroboree and *wangka*, change and change. Halls Creek people have a different language but they give us their corroborees. So you can't separate people.

We're satisfied now, all agreed with one another. The mining company are good mates with the people now.

We were trying to look after that dreaming. It runs all the way to Dunham River. If they touched the main part, people would die. Some blokes were trying to cut at the sides and top. One died in his motor car - that's big punishment. Two have died now.

⁶³ Local Aboriginal people interpret the goods provided under Argyle Diamond Mines' Good Neighbour Program as compensation. The Company sees the Program as a goodwill gesture.

The Company negotiated separately with John Toby's family group, which they understood to be the sole interested Aboriginal party. After this group compromised with the company by signing an agreement (see Community SIA paper), the others sought similar recompense.

Queenie McKenzie

Well, that Argyle diamond you know, we know that, we know we had lot of people here belong to that country, but we didn't know what they (the Company) were doing, really. We didn't know what happened. Well, we was living here, till this Madigan (Thomas) mob bin come from Wyndham. She used to live in the 9-mile (Guda Guda community). Till he bin come, with this word, he said, 'Hey, couple of these people bin fly down to Canberra or somewhere, yeh, Canberra (actually Perth) to sign the agreement for that Mandangala', they reckon. 'What twofella John Toby bin tell them that way?' he reckon. Till this lot bin start waking up now. Jumpany (Bob Nyalcas) mob. They bin start talking about, Rammel (Peters) mob. They bin start talking about, 'hey, he should ask em we, we belong to that country, we belong to Kurnumpurruny' all abat reckon. 'That's not right. What he you want to do that for? We didn't want to sell that ground la them miners'. They bin start talking about. Talking about, every morning now.

All right, Mike Dillon bin ask em us next morning, 'I want to get Nancy Williams (from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies) to help you fellas', he said. 'Yeh, we want Nancy Williams.' Then we bin get Nancy Williams and nother girl got a big hair (Pat Vinnicombe of the WA museum). We went down that way now with a motor car, right up la that place where you can see drains (trenches) everywhere. And follow that hill right up la top. No good, all cut up. Nancy bin ask em us. They bin tell em, 'this is a really dreaming this one.' We went up la that gap now. And we bin have em that old woman too, she owns that country too you know, Topsy Purni (Brownie). We bin ask em him and he bin tell em all abat (us), 'this is a lubra's place now. This is the camp now', he bin talk, 'but I can't climb up with you all abat. I'll have to stop here', he reckoned.

Twofella Liddy (McCarthy) bin stop there. We bin follow em up meself up la hill. He bin talk, 'when you fellas get la that gap, that's that dreaming, that's the barramundi now where he bin find eggs. That's the barramundi now' he reckon.

We bin go up right up la top, we bin find em biggest dam. Biggest dam la that gap now, that side. They bin make em water. Drinking water, eh. You can see em kartiya bin make em, water cross (a trench). Bin looking out, finish, we bin go down. We bin go back la Purni. 'Yah, finish,' we bin talk, 'they bin cut em already. La side, everywhere.' Go back, we bin drive down that way, where that nother town, old town (miners' camp). We bin go there, get a cool drink - gammon (pretending) get a cool drink, you know, to look around what they done to ground. We bin looking round. They bin tell us, 'you can't get across this way', they reckoned, 'you'll have to go back same way and go round that side', they reckoned. 'Lot of drains there, you can't go through there. No road. That's true, they bin cut em already. We bin come back here.

Now we bin talking about that morning. Talking about - Nancy bin asking me all abat. 'What you fellas reckon, do you fellas gonna let em this thing going like a that?' 'No, no, no, we'll have to bring em up them miners here to meeting. We'll have a biggest meeting.' Mike Dillon know. He bin proper wild.

All right, we bin sit down. We bin camp, we bin have we own meeting that day. Next morning, we bin call for them. We bin call for two. Two bin come. We bin talking to that two. They said, 'John Toby bin agree to us'. 'Yes, but what about all these people', we bin say, 'Lot of these people here want that country too. What [are] they getting, this lot?' We didn't care what he got to say. 'Ah, I don't know', they reckon. 'I think you fellas got to talk to John Toby, I think. I think he bin make a fool out of us.' That's true too, you know. He bin want that money himself, see.

We bin talk, 'We want em this meeting on Tuesday, big meeting on Tuesday. We want em all the miners here, all the head blokes for miners. And John Toby with it. He can come anytime. He want to come tomorrow he can come'. He bin come that morning. He didn't want to come when them kartiya bin there, he bin just come meself (himself). He bin talk, 'I'm sorry I didn't let youfellas know', he said. 'That's right' Jumpany (Bob Nyalcas) bin talk la him, 'you should have let us know. You know I'm belong to that country, and that old woman there, old Purni Topsy. I'm bla that country', he bin talk. 'You should have come up and let us know. Not saying your whatacallem to yourself'.

We bin sit down. Next morning we bin have em big day down there la river. Big mob of *kartiya*. Big mob. Talk-talk, talk-talk. I tell you Mike Dillon bin getting wild la all abat, he nearly belt em one *kartiya*! We bin tell him, just leave it to us.

We bin talking, talking, talking, talking, talking, talking. Frank Hughes bin come. 'I can come in?' he bin talk. 'You come in after. You wait there for a while.' We bin talk-talk. Right, he bin come in. Now there all abat bin talking, talking, talking. Mike bin getting proper wild la them *kartiya*, really wild. They didn't want to give it money la Turkey Creek. They bin very hard. But that Mike bin still talking. I tell you he bin still bore it up them.

Well he bin tell em all abat, 'them John Toby mob gotta get money, not this side. Peggy (Patrick), Tim (Timms) John Toby, Evelyn (Hall) all that mob getting that money, not Turkey Creek. Jumpany, Purni, old Tawalngu (Jacko Dolmyu) oh more there. Old Raymond, all that mob. They bin miss on that country. They bin keep talk, talk, talk. Mike Dillon bin talk la all abat 'yeh', he bin talk. 'In the law, tribal law, Bob here, Raymond here, old Tawalngu there and Topsy (Brownie) there. What they getting out of that place?' 'NOTHING', he said, 'really nothing'. Keep going they bin have em that arguing the point. All right, after they bin talk 'righto, we'll move here for a while,' they bin go, all the *kartiya*. They bin move la nother tree. They bin talking, they bin tell em what hundred they going to give to what thousand, all this, they gotta give it Turkey Creek. Jumpany (Bob Nyalcas) twofella Mike Dillon.

Righto, they bin come back tell em us now. They bin tell em us, 'ah, Turkey Creek got to get half of that money'. And everyone clapped everywhere up to river, you ought to hear em that river bin sing out. When they bin clap hands I thought [it was] that river there! Yeh, really good. All right. We bin tell em them now. Final round we bin tell em. 'Look, any miners like that. You got to find out who that really bloke for the country too, you know. Not only that one man. He must be one, but some [other] people too, you know,' we bin tell em. See. Not only that, and old Topsy bin tell me, 'you talk'. I bin talk, 'one thing this old Topsy telling me for one place there, women's sacred place and you fellers bin cut em up already, he's messed now already. Not me', but I bin talk, 'this old woman got feeling there. He know that country from when he was young woman', I said, 'he must get something out of it'. That true. They bin bugger em up that place now. Two, three times now I bin talk bla old Topsy, for that sacred place there.

Nevertheless some people fear the consequences of the Tayiwul (barramundi) site having been destroyed. A cataclysm has not occurred yet, but some predict it when the hill is eventually levelled.

Queenie McKenzie

They've just about flattened that hill. People are really sorry about that dreamtime. A big water might come yet and drown everybody.

If they level it right down there might be a big flood in this country.

The Good Neighbour Program, which followed from the signing of the Glen Hill Agreement, has enabled the people to obtain more capital resources, particularly vehicles which have increased the peoples' mobility and independence of non-Aborigines significantly. The distribution and use of these resources creates internal friction, however. There has also been a high accident rate.

Queenie McKenzie

The Good Neighbour Program

First thing they bin give us money. I don't know what they bin say. They gonna give us money. Next minute, meeting bin come on, 'what you fellas want it? Toyotas?' 'Yeh, yeh, yeh.' Didn't matter who him, 'yes, yes'. Toyotas come. Give em Toyotas, broke em up. Then sit down again, money come again. Ah, three man want a Toyota. Another three get em. Sit down with that, bugger em up again (laughs). That's the thing you know.

That's the way now they read em out that thing, notice, when they say, them *kartiya* (company representatives) nother three years before they get that motor car⁶⁴. But he's making it wrong for mine. My motor car bin broke down before three years, it's out for me. Long time. Finish. That's over three years after my motor car bin broke down. Long way. Some (newer cars) there la top camp. That's a long long time before my motor car bin buggered up. i'n't it!

⁶⁴ Argyle Diamond Mines adopted the policy of the Argyle Social Impact Group steering committee, on which it is represented, that damaged vehicles should not be replaced within three years. See forthcoming East Kimberley working paper on these funding schemes.

Sam Butters

I don't think they care about the money, but ... when a lot of new people come in, a lot of them got a motor car, see, and the people that belong to here, been here all the time, they still haven't got a car. Chairman, he can recommend anybody as he likes. Lot of people that belong to here haven't got a car. Bedford Downs mob, three-four families got a car... In my opinion, it's going the wrong way sometimes. A lot of these people go culture, corroboree, chasing culture, they haven't got cars. These fellas who've got cars, they just drive anywhere, into town and back. People who really should have it, to chase culture, corroboree, they haven't got it. They've got to hitch-hike, grab a lift with somebody else.

Peggy Patrick

And this lot women don't ask for that truck or anything, money from the mine. Nothing. Let all the man put in for toyota all the way. And women don't get chance. You know, women don't get chance to ask for things. Oh, bla women supposed to be. That thing they bin knocked down from woman law, that one. And they don't think about that one. They don't worry about that. They should put in for women only. All the man get em toyota, toyota, toyota, everywhere. Man always be the first one, and go and jump in for it. But woman get nothing out of it. That's the woman mine place. That's the women's law place, woman supposed to get share of that. We bin ask em.

Winan, they give us winan now. They give us some presents from that government place. And now they digging that place. They have to give us some presents. Winan we call em. That's because that's law belong to woman. For everybody, for man too, they should give us. But especially woman should get em ... Money should be spreading out by the winan again.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ See Dixon (forthcoming) for detail on the way in which the ideology of winan, the customary system of trading, has been adapted to the context of recompense for mining.

OVERCOMING THE IMPACTS

The Aboriginal people of rural East Kimberley are still adjusting to the psychological impact of generations of white peoples' domination over them, and the more recent impacts of removal from their land, loss of vocation in the pastoral industry, and alcohol. They also have new concerns, to overcome social problems which have emerged since they left the stations. At the same time, they have strong ideas about solutions to at least some of the problems - movement back to their lands and more access to the land, bicultural education for the young, control over development in their vicinity, and sharing in the proceeds of development.

Joe Thomas

And now, we just about settled down. We got kids going to school, doesn't matter where's the school - might be Perth or Broome. We was thinking hard for kids to get some experience, like *kartiya*.

Now we are a bit different, today, because we came into this place. Save all that trouble, Turkey Creek community.

We're asking Government to give us more land, somewhere to live. We lost something, *kartiya* bin hunt us around like a dog.

Right now a lot of people are struggling pretty hard to own a block. They're battling hard to get back. Most of the people want to get back to their own place now, see if they can get a block, reserve, to live.

We bin getting too much people, we bin piled up pretty tight (in Turkey Creek), they break out like a wild dog to go away. What people belong to here want to stop here. Others came from different places, want to go back to own country. Violet Valley is difficult, they're fighting pretty hard.

They people (Turkey Creek people) should be happy if some of the people go out on the block. People getting full here. Kija people and Jaru people, they still here. They're battling hard to get back. People they killing theyself, people they die, too many, some of them want to go away.

We don't agree with the way the community running. So we go out to make it lighter, but come in if there's any meeting, ceremony. That's the way (why) we come in for meetings, so we can figure out problems.

Country

Many people (whose country lies elsewhere) feel cooped up in Turkey Creek, and are impatient to move back to their country.

Hector Chunda: *Kartiya* ought to let us (onto land). We locked up here. We can't able to walk over there. Just like a we in jail house. That's the way.

Jack Britten: *Kartiya* got we all over, in't it. You can see that. *Kartiya* town that side, nother town this way, nother town that way.

Hector Chunda: They ought to let us walk up there.

Jack Britten: Stations, anywhere.

Hector Chunda: But they can't let us. They only give us here. Don't go nowhere.

Jack Britten: They don't want we to go longa - what we bin walking about early days, walk around all over the country, (getting) porcupine and kangaroo. They don't want we to go there.

Jack Britten

Well they're here now, trying to come back ...

Well they bin just think abat for their country. You know, 'poor country bla we, what we leave em bat' they reckon. Well I reckon, me, I go back to my country. I can stay there, and my sister say the same word.

Personal identity and identity as members of Aboriginal groups are closely related to land. The threat of damage to religious sites is a constant concern.

Kenny Bray

If you got your country, you're free to go back all over your country ...

I bin fight for that land, till I bin get em up ...

Tawam - we belong to the country. That's the really country belong to me. We bin born and raised there. We can't get out from that place. When we get out from there we lose the country. If we lose the country we'll be nothing. When we got a country back, we'll be right.

Jack Britten

That way, you can see that big hill? You see em that big gap through there? Well all them animals bin travelling that way, go back to river. That's where the turtle bin just get up there. And another one, we call em Nyapanany, Wulunguriny, and Purruwul, tayiwul. That mean that tayiwul, big barramundi laying there, top of this country now, Han Spring. Dreaming, he laying down. And that rock cod, he's standing up like that. Straight up. That's for our old grandpa country. And grandpa mother, Krakala, that him country. Well all this lately people, mefellas, we gotta have that country. We call em nawarji, sister-in-law.

David Turner

It's important. Really, I mightn't say something straight out, in one part of word - sacred sites. It's important places. Got to be there, so what is damaged can be - so mining people, they can dig everywhere, but you don't know sacred site places. Bad places. If the mining listen to Aboriginal... he could mine the country tomorrow, outside of the fence. We could find em together, but sacred sites is our life.

We've got some places there, he can drown the country too. Eastern Territory side is my father's country. If they dig around there, the dreamtime, sun, they'll cover that sun, we'll be in dark. We still alive, but travelling (people) with a long tail. Sun would be covered. Yeh, that dreamtime live there, from history. That's true. But kartiya got to listen blackfella. You know. Mining all right... but he do what he like. He can come visit with mining inside, that's all right, but certain places is important. Even the women, woman could say that himself too... We got eggs for ocean, dreamtime, rain, flooded. You know Jesus told Moses to build a boat? Well the same thing they left for Aboriginal tribal law. That's the important places.

Jack Britten

Well I went to Wyndham (after being told to leave Bow River because of award wages), work around la Shire. They bin give me job. Working there, till I bin make all that Reserve (Guda Guda, near Wyndham) come good.

All right, I leave my son there. I had his mother. Soon as his mother bin passed away, I had to move back this way. Soon as them kartiya bin say, all the government, 'go back home! Everyone want to go back their own country. Where their country.' Government, Ernie Bridge mob, all bin say 'go back to country.'

All right, I had to come straight back. This place. This lease bin run out for this place, right, I bin jump in. Me and Sandy (Sandy Thomas of Violet Valley)... We own the place, that's our country.

My mother born there, la creek. Bush way you know, they never have em hospital. After that, when old Sam Muggleton bin die here (Frog Hollow in 1910) we went to Tickalara. Stop round there now. Till we bin grow up. Well, that's the country belong to whole lot of us...

Well my mother used to told me, 'that Frog Hollow anytime, you want to get em that country. We taawam (countrymen, owners) really for the country.'

George Mung Mung

That's why I like to come back to my country... I'd like to keep this place...

I'm sitting down here where the place I was young man. I bin grow up. My wife, we bin married down there (at Tickalara). Me and him bin young boy and young girl here.

That's why my wife didn't want to go anywhere. Just like she got to go back here, me and my wife.

Me, and my father, Charlie Mung Mung, we bin roaming that country, all around Bungle Bungle, and we bin grow [up in] that country, right round go back to Jarlarlu again ...

We bin work, work, work, work, me and my mate. But my wife... we bin together here now. Down la big shady tree, everytime we sneak away just like the kartiya do... Then me an my wife bin married. And we're here today, come back and look country again what we bin working.

David Turner

From that time we're talking about block of land, from '72 (on the former Turner station). I bin get no answer. But I got a little bit of answer. I think they might give me little bit of block, on Turner. They reckon there's money coming from Turner, and money coming for Cattle Creek - Jock Mosquito mob.

More ideas if we got a block. We'll work on our block, get your house, tank, pump, work, pipe. Pipe in each places, fencing, might have a little bit of a school, little bit of medicine, clinic. You in the bush. Gotta have an airstrip too. They used to have one there - that old Vestey airstrip.

The people are glad of the opportunities available for returning to live on their land, but consider them too circumscribed. The size of incisions and difficulty of obtaining them, and the finite leases, are considered unjust.

Joe Thomas and Tim Timms

Land should stop there, not 99 year lease. We want to keep it going for young people. We're not going to leave. We belong to that place. When we finish, we pensioner, we let them young fellas take over. We stop in the house. They belong to land.

When we working longa kartiya place he didn't like us. He kick us out. We make him millionaire. We want to be independent.

Clifton Gilmary

We bin talking lot of way. We bin go to every meeting, KLC (Kimberley Land Council), NLC (Northern Land Council), they never take notice of mefellas from Bedford. Nobody turned up good for mefellas to go back to own country ... I bin asking whole lot and never get a good answer back.

... We bin try lot of ways. We want somewhere for stockmen, kids, so when they get old they'll have a place. We'll keep pushing and pushing till we get that place. Other places have stations. Why we don't? ... Us fellas, we got no land to live anywhere, with our grandchildren growing up. Why we don't, East Kimberley mob? ...

... [We've] got to keep pushing, while we've got Labor mob (government) ... No good sitting down and talking all the time. Got to work out what you want - fences, bore and all that. Look at John Toby. He settled down with just a fly and a motor car, now he's got houses. We've got to do something to prove the place, so government can see man there. When you start living on your country, you'll get all the materials. No good trying to talk from this place.

I feel very shamed (because he can't live at Thunpi yet). Other mob - Chinaman's, Frog Hollow, have their places.

Young people, education and work

The older people feel that the young people lack a work ethic, and tend to blame some of this on the young people. They also lament the lack of jobs available for young Aboriginal people, while they see so many jobs within their communities performed by non-Aborigines. They are concerned about the transmission of culture and language, and use their community school to promote these.

Hector Chunda

We want to try and make em them camp boss, you know, work. We want em plenty Aboriginals for work...

Book-keeping, teaching, like a white lady teaching their own school. I was in Perth in the schoolhouse, Sydney, I seen lot of white girls teaching their white children. What about black lady can't do that?

In early days in the blackfellas way they used to teach em when they bin young girls, you know, cut em sugarbag, got a stone axe, look about goanna, kill em. Bring em up, make em there and cook em, that's the teaching in my way. And looking for taluny (green plum), minyjiwarrany (black plum), blackfella know. Tell em to get em them, make a fire, yurnkurr, cook em in the hole. That's the way they bin do em early days. This time I can't see no school children do that, never. Even young boys. You see him that one (a man of his household) he never go la school. Well he can cook em tucker, he can do everything. You want him to work, well he get your things and take them in there. He teached by old people. That girl there, you want him to work, well he cook em for us beef, and goanna, well that kind of stuff we like to see. But this day, oh no. I can't see no good girls, no good boys. All longa this one (gestures drinking).

David Turner

These days we have a bit of idea now, we have school for language, *kartiya* school. And they gotta learn culture. And work. We've been working we got no school before. Hard working. These days get very light work you know what I mean. Not too many young fellas working on job... They might turn on clinic sisters, work on doctors, or some of the place work on big office. That's the thing to see ...

That's why I'm asking, I want em my block of land. They'll (young people) take over, work on that job. Work on the *kartiya* side, or they could run their own business, same as *kartiya*. Make it the same class, equal in white man way...

Frank Budbaria

See this country now, this time here. Young people round this country can't get much understanding, see. They like to live on the reserve with old people, don't want to leave old people, go and work somewhere else in cattle station, they just don't like to do that job you see. Mefellas never bin hang around like that before, with them white people from Queensland. They used to tell us to get out of old people, go and do your job, your own tucker, you have your own tucker in the station. We had we own cook. We get up and cleaned up and go and get our supper, dinner, go back. Next morning we got up in the morning before sunrise, cleaned up and go in and have a breakfast, all that idea, see the old white people bin learn us.

White people never used to do that, he used to take em himself. He used to work that boy. When that boy couldn't do nothing much for that white people, he tell them, 'if you can't do thing right for me I gonna put in gully.' In dry gully. 'I gonna shoot you.' That boy have to do them job what white man used to tell em to do all the time...

Olden time white people in this country they bin school us really. Don't matter we never bin in school but white people bin understand mefellas this country, learn mefellas to do work.

Joe Thomas

Biggest problem is we like to send away kids, away to work when they finish from college. No good running. Kids we want to work, and do something for old people. Let young people run it, we're getting old, they've been in the school. Old people, we bin run it a long time. Kids should take over, girls and men. Young people should watch, listen to government and advisers, see how it is operating.

We want kids to build this sort of house and offices, to drive machines. [We want] *kartiya* to train young people, so they can do something and fix something, even stock ... Now, we got a lot of worry, they can do something. But they come back and drinking and making trouble, instead of working here or on Main Roads or Shire.

[It's] pretty hard to get young people to come into the meeting. If they do that, we'll be happy. [They are] too interested in grog, and too lazy. You push them, they still can't listen to you.

Why do we have (white) contractors here, and young people not working? There are plenty of jobs around.

Good for them to work on station and get idea from old people. Not to bludge on old people for tucker. As soon as they get money, where does it go?

People will be happy if CDEP (Community Development Employment Program, a scheme whereby communities receive a block grant to pay wages, instead of unemployment benefits), come in, young people can be kicked out to work. No more unemployment, finish ...

I think we got fair idea. Aboriginal people we're stuck, even women. Why can't we get them writing, working for money? We don't see *kartiya* work for nothing, they work for money.

What about cleaning up, washing, sewing, use machines, run books? Most of the money coming from government is for sit-down money, not for wages. We would like to talk to CDEP, for the young people, put money in. OK for old people to get pensions, but not young people. They should have proper pay for proper jobs.

David Turner

What we in Turkey Creek now can see the point, we like a block of land to settle down. You got kid in school, we happy for it. Whatever class grade they want to go more high, they'll have to sit down and work to see how people do it, like that job, before we're dead and gone. If we can't get those straightened out, young people, when we're gone, six foot underground, where they gotta be? They'll be lost. Kartiya always say, 'he haven't got nothing'. You don't know what he'll talking about. Kartiya will say that. 'What do you mean?' He can't even answer question. 'What you like to be?' All that sort of thing. 'You like a work or what?' 'Yes, might be work, yes.'

You can see our people go along, we want a block of land. What make us feel and look at our problems? The kids in school now. We got place here now. We want a place like this.

Helen Ross: what makes you worried abat for kids?

How they're going to work, schooling? If they get married and things where they gotta be? What job they'll do? What they gotta be? Sisters? Officers? Or pilot, carpenter, or whatever. Work on mining, all the big machines job and all that sort of thing?

Kartiya give us all the idea, we got everything. Well the school people could get it, there's no trouble. We just look at what we want, what we need, we can't hang out any more for this, long as we looking at what we want.

Sam Butters

Well they want to keep connected with the school here, holding culture, keeping the culture. Teach the kids language, dance corroboree. They take them out picnic, take em out bush, show them how to find sugarbag. Show them how to find tracks. All that sort of thing. Show them where yam, find out what sort of plant, so they teach them the customs. Not kartiya way, our own way. Whereas some other schools haven't got that kind of thing...

Helen Ross: Is it hard to keep up culture with some of the young people now?

Sam Butters: No, not really hard to keep up culture with some of the young people. It's only, some of the parents, they're the worst. They spoil them. They say, 'you don't have to force them, bring em back'. Some parents say, 'you go, whether you like it or not'. I know when I went to meeting one time at Myroodah Crossing, you know Balgo and some other communities, they had apprentices. Well they go with that four young blokes, they had to go up there, they had to paint themselves, they had to dance, whether they liked it or not ... A lot of these kids, they love it. Only that big size ones, they should force em but over there, may be next year they get another four, right through.

Hector Chunda

We talk English, and we got language for us too. We talk one another when we talking to kartiya, till we come back to camp we talk our own language. We don't forget our own language.

And this lot of better people that going to school, we try to teach em two ways - like us now, some can do that, some can't. He go him way, kartiya way. He got that language for kartiya. Whole lot of people now bin writing down listening them, you know. That's the way government make em they talk their languages and English, two-way you know. That's what we bin fighting longa languages all the time. But make em two-way school, here now. When all the old people, might be me and (Henry) Wombin, Wombin go to school now, and we teach em languages. And we bin teach em that girl how to talk proper languages, and he know now. He can write em down, all that. That's the way we bin talk.

And that's it, we here now, we got everything else, motor car, even video. Government bin give us you know, just to make a man interested! All sort of thing you know, listening to things. This kind one, listening news from the government. Well I understand what they meaning. What this and that from the government is. Well I understand through my thing now (radio). Well I got that languages from kartiya you know. And still I can't lose em my language. If I do talk long television, kartiya he can't understand my language.

Alcohol

Though drinking rights were associated with the lifting of restrictions on citizenship rights in 1971, a few years before the people left the stations, the full effect was felt when people ceased to be insulated by station life, no longer had a full-time occupation, and had regular money from pensions and benefits.

Sam Butters

After they taste alcohol they think it's something good, make you very happy, they don't want to go back to work any more. Some of them want to go back, first thing they're back in town. Spend all their money, coupla hours, they get into trouble. Lot of drunks don't know when they're breaking the law. That's another thing. They've got nobody to teach them law, you know. Sometimes they get picked up for something, they say to themselves, 'I never do nothing wrong', you see. White man way they've done something wrong, might be littering or something ... Might go behind a tree (for) toilet or something, throw empty bottle ... They think that they get picked up for no reason. Nobody teach them law.

Helen Ross: Before Aboriginal people got drinking rights, how did they feel about *kartiya* being allowed to drink and they weren't allowed?

Sam Butters: It didn't effect them at all. Why I say it made a big change is, I didn't know what the real reason when that happened. But when I come back here I seen the difference. I remember one time we used to go in from station, go to Halls Creek race meeting, everybody looked, oh, beautiful colours everywhere. Everybody nice and clean, real cowboy shirt and trousers, real clean. When they start drinking, you walk in there today, they're finished, they forget about being clean. They just go day by day, same old clothes, no food, knock em right back ...

Helen Ross: Why do you reckon some people went so wild for grog, mad for grog?

Sam Butters: I dunno really. I think what might be causing all their trouble, the idiot people, same old problem. What I think is Aborigine person, he's not really immune to alcohol. *Kartiya*, their parents, grandparents they had alcohol all the time, and you got little bit in your system ... doesn't take effect. These fellas, just no alcohol in their system at all, just a few little drinks and they're gone. That's what send em mad. Maybe another ten years time, find out if they might hold their grog a little bit better.

Helen Ross: What sort of effects have grog had, what you can think of?

Sam Butters: Well, for a start they forget to get clean. Forget to have a shower and get clean. They chuck their boots, they forget to comb their hair. They get pretty rude and nasty, they walk up and say, 'ah, gooday' to someone, something they wouldn't do if they was sober.

Helen Ross: What sort of effects does it have on families and other Aboriginal people?

Sam Butters: Not so bad now, but one time, they demand money ... drink all the money. Kids ... get feed here and there, that's the worst thing. Then when they're about 17, 14-15, they start drinking then. Get a taste, make them feel good ...

At Turkey Creek, alcohol is brought in, from Kununurra, Halls Creek, and (by getting around the control system) the Argyle Diamond Mine.

Sam Butters: (re grog at Turkey Creek) They make up for it, maybe 3-4 days, couple of nights a week. They make a real good job of it. Make up for the rest of the week. Not so bad, but it can be real serious ... Big fight everywhere. Some sober people get involved, what shouldn't be ... That's what they need. Someone to lecture them on how to drink. Tell them how easy it is to get into trouble, you don't have to get drunk, there's a lot of little silly things that you can get into trouble. Just for answering police, you can get into trouble.

Young people's desire for alcohol is a particular worry to the older people.

Hector Chunda

We are old people, trying to make em do that you know, like us, what we bin do work (eg construction work). We are trying making them smart, you know. All in the grog, [as far as] I can see. Young lady, no, only they spoil for grog. When they drinking they teach em them school kids too. They teach em bat school kids, they - some school kids they interest in what they doing. That's bad to me, I don't know what. You supposed to teach em for work. Cooking, serving, no, you can't get em to do that. Especially I see em all around the community. I can't see, no. He only got one girl in the community school, teaching that girls, there. And he understand from old people. Some girls there, they're wild, they don't know how to come school. You can see them yourself.

Race relations, power and development

The people have a strong consciousness of the power of non-Aborigines over them, and resent the need to fight for small gains. This affects their attitudes to resource development in the East Kimberley - they are willing to share the resources of their country, but seek rights to support more equitable arrangements.

Jack Britten

Kartiya bit tricky. You can go through all the little kartiya, and overseas kartiya, that's the good one. Australia kartiya no good.

'We know the blackfella', he says. 'That's all, we're not going to give him money.'

Overseas kartiya helped their people, American Indians, Africa. Why can't they do that here?

Hector Chunda: We are friend up for white people, well they should friend up for us.

Jack Britten: But kartiya don't want a man to friend up, it look like.

Hector Chunda: He like [to] make a war.

Jack Britten: What can we can do here? We can't make a war from here! We're just nothing, poor buggers. Well you go back to country now, make that report that way, they [might] say, 'no, leave em poor things round that country. They haven't got nothing, they haven't got nothing.' [That's what] they might be say [when] you put that report through to government.

Hector Chunda: They can come here digging around here, we can't stop em digging for gold here.

Jack Britten: They might be can get diamonds here, we can't tell em.

Hector Chunda: Nobody help us.

Jack Britten: Nobody behind we, see.

Hector Chunda: When we bin fighting for that tayiwul (barramundi site destroyed by the diamond mine) everywhere - every Aborigines, we don't want dreamtime to get knocked down. They wouldn't listen. [We said] 'you can have a dig one side,' we bin tell em in the court, every time. No, they didn't believe us. They dig, come over, come over, all the way. Nothing bin help. We didn't have no help. We had to let them, and they might

be able to help us [with] housing, like that. We got that boss bloke there now, Milton (Newman of Argyle Diamond Mines). Milton bin help us now. We had to let em go, we can't do nothing for that mineral line. We had to let em go. Then he bin help us just for everything.

Joe Thomas

We want it level (jobs and money). Permanent jobs should be there for people. They don't like to put permanent jobs here, after six weeks jobs finish. Money should be there all the time.

Company (Argyle Diamond Mines) and government work together, they have money and can give people permanent job any time they like.

Station people too, find they're getting into trouble here so go out and look for jobs...

In the past we fought politicians. We had lawyers, legal aid, to fight the mine. We fought government and the mine in the past, and they are the biggest. They had money and people coming from all over the State. We didn't have money to pay lawyers.

Now we have something, little bit, from the diamond mine (jobs).

We fought for the school - now there's still not enough money.

We had to fight for the things we've gained. Only way to succeed, you have to fight... (But he'd rather get 'level', work together with *kartiya*, and control things themselves)...

We had to fight Canberra, Perth, big mining company and the government people. We want to get level and stop there (referring to school and housing). Then we'll be right. They've got money, surely to Christ. Government has money, they could look after Aboriginal people. Aboriginal people bin lost in the past. We got to put something in writing, and it all go away (will be solved).

Many people have no objection in principle to mining and tourism, provided they are able to guide the process to ensure protection of the land, and to share in the proceeds.

George Mung Mung (Kija translated by Eileen Bray)

If they smash this turtle, we will have nowhere to live (belong). If we find it smashed, we don't know what we'll do.

...This is the special one. That's his country (hills to the east), Mungarrtapany. Those two small hills over there, there's a cave there. That's his country, he's looking out.

We'll put a signboard there, little bit of a yard (fenced area), too. If they're going to break this one, well, everywhere when this mob bin talking about, when that CRA (Conzinc Riotinto Australia, main shareholder in the diamond mine) mob got that tayiwul, that's all right for that mob, but mine, here, I'll be - I can't go nowhere see, if they going to (likely to) smash this one for me...

All that mob, we're trying to just watch em that mob now, kartiya. But kartiya, [I'll be] kind to kartiya too, but I tell em kartiya, 'if I show you that place don't touch em, please', I say. All the kartiya they know me, I told them too, them Main Roads (Department) mob.

Living on the land enables people to watch over it.

Jack Britten

... We watching out all that every country all around. We see any miners come well they gotta come and see us. If they find anything, we gotta go and tell em what to do. Might be good thing in there well we might be want to say longa him, 'we want em half.' Half-half (a share). We don't want to be get greedy. We go half-half.

George Mung Mung

He got a properly gold, they get em there (near Chinaman's Garden). If people go there and bust em well they (group who live there) can come up and tell me, and we tell em too, *kartiya*. 'You got a 50 on me too. If you got a get a gold there you 50:50 share la me, that's my place'. Share.

I'm not going to talk about it all the time, but just like I can let you go there, I got no anything to drill em, but just like you now, you 50 on me. *Kartiya*, I'm not going to tell em just like this mob, trying to go hard la *kartiya*, you know.

Kartiya be bin learn me to talk English, he bin learn me to go this way, that a way, hard working this way, back that way. That's why I can't, you know, I might as well agree to *kartiya* too, you know, meself. *Kartiya*, well he might help me too.

Legislation is seen as necessary in order to attain control over development.

Jack Britten

Northern Territory has stronger law too, but here they can't believe. Northern Territory has strong communities and strong councils too, they have to come and see him before they touch that hill. They say, 'pay \$100 and come in'. Here *kartiya* just pull up blackfellas.

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ATTACHMENT 1

EAST KIMBERLEY WORKING PAPERS 1985-89

- 1985/1 East Kimberley Impact Assessment Project: Project Description and Feasibility Study.
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ISBN 0 86740 181 8
ISSN 0816-6323
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