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SUMMARY

WHERE THE CROW FLIES BACKWARDS:
MAN AND LAND IN THE DARLING BASIN

Harry Allen
The Australian National University
Canberra
1972

The Darling River, the second largest river in eastern Australia, flows through an area of semi-arid grassland. The presence of the river in this dry region created a highly favourable environment for the Aboriginal inhabitants.

Historical descriptions of these Aborigines, mostly written in the late nineteenth century, show the Darling River as the single most important human resource in the Darling Basin. These records provide some evidence that the Bagundji Aborigines of the Darling Basin moved from the narrow river margin into the drier hinterland and back again. These movements coincided with discernible seasonal climatic fluctuations.

The majority of archaeological sites so far discovered in the Darling Basin are clustered around the shores of lakes. Some of these lakes have not been filled with water for the past 15,000 years. Analysis of these lakeside sites, dated back as far as 26,000 B.P., reveal that the prehistoric Aborigines exploited the Darling Basin in a similar manner to that described for the historic Aborigines.

Stone implements recovered from the older sites are similar to those recovered from younger sites, such as Burke's Cave, in the same region. This is taken as indicating that the inhabitants of the Basin have shared a single cultural tradition from the late Pleistocene to the ethnographic present.
ERRATA

p.12  lines 18 and 24: for "reversal" read "excursion"

p.21  lines 23 and 24: for "Cumpston (1925)" read "Cumpston J.H.L. (1925)"


p.55  footnote 1: for "from Bickford (1966)" read "after Bickford (1966)"

p.96  line 25: for "Harris" read "Harriss"

p.104 line 5: for "howitt" read "Howitt"

p.127 paragraph 2, sentence 2: delete "These are reproduced from Etheridge (1918: Plate VI) are shown on Plate 4.2b." and insert "Sketches by Mathews of the carved trees from one Bora ground were reproduced in Etheridge (1918: Plate VI). A copy of Etheridge's plate appears on Plate 4.2b in the present volume."

p.128 line 11: for "superceded" read "superseded"

p.159 line 3: for "pieces écailles" read "pièces écailles"

p.210 line 20: for "McCarthur" read "McArthur"

p.258 paragraph 4, sentence 2: delete "A copy of this paper is included at the back of this thesis."

p.285 line 24: for "[W.C.L.]" read "[L.I.]"

p.336 lines 13, 17 and 23: for "families" read "genera"

p.346 line 7: for "(Meggitt 1946:30)" read "(Meggitt 1964a:30)"


should read


should read

WHERE THE CROW FLIES BACKWARDS:

MAN AND LAND IN THE DARLING BASIN

by

HARRY ALLEN

This work is a thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in The Australian National University.

September 1972
Except for work done jointly with Rhys Jones on the Mungo I site published in Bowler et al., (1970:47-56) and the acknowledged assistance of specialists in various fields, this thesis is the product of original field and library research of the author.

Harry Allen
Canberra
September 1972
Yes I'm tall dark and lean
everyplace I've been
the whiteman calls me Jack
its no crime I'm not ashamed
I was born with my skin so black
when it comes to riding rough horses
or working cattle I've mixed with the best
in the land where the crow flies backwards*
and the pelican builds his nest.

---

Dougie Young Sings Songs From the Aborigines Camp.
*Wattle Recordings*, Melbourne 1965

* To keep the dust out of his eyes.
## CONTENTS

### PREFACE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Darling Basin</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Aliens in Their Own Land: Aborigines of Western New South Wales and Their Chroniclers</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Bagundji Riverine Economy</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The Bagundji Culture Area</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Fieldwork 1969–1971</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Burke's Cave</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Other West Darling Sites</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The Willandra Lakes</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Man in the Darling Basin: Conclusions</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appendix</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Foods Eaten by the Aborigines of the Darling Basin</td>
<td>A1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Faunal Remains from the Darling Basin by Jeanette Hope</td>
<td>A36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Human Remains from the Darling Basin by A.G. Thorne</td>
<td>A42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Otoliths from Freshwater Fish of the Murray-Darling River System and Graphs Showing Estimations of Weight and Length of Fish from Otolith Lengths and Vertebrae Diameters</td>
<td>A44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PREFACE

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I received much help and hospitality from many landowners in western New South Wales. Albert and Venda Barnes, Mungo Station, Alex and Mrs Barnes, Joulni Station, Clarrie and Mrs Barnes of Leaghur Station, Mr and Mrs Barnes of Chibnalwood Station, Mr and Mrs Johnston of Zanci Station, Pat and Mrs Roberts of Meadow Glen Station, Henry and Mrs Creswell of Broughton Vale Station, Mr and Mrs Caskey of Byrnedale Station, Mr and Mrs Hand and Ron Lukosheck (overseer) of Boolaboolka Station, and from the owners of Garnpung, Gol Gol, Mulurulu, Spring Hills, Red Hill, Mount Manara, Tandou, Bindara, and Milton Grove Stations.

The mammalian remains were identified by Dr Jeanette Hope, the rats by Jack Mahony, the birds by Pat Rich, the egg shell by Alan McEvey and the reptiles by David Horton, I received assistance with the fish from L.C. Llewellyn, John Paxton and Alan Weatherley.

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The Mitchell Library, Sydney gave permission for the reproduction of plates 2.1a, 2.1b and 3.1a and the State Library of Victoria permission to reproduce plates 3.1b and 6.2b.

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I apologise to anyone whose name has been omitted from the acknowledgements above due to an oversight on my part.