

Chapter 1: The Town District

Chapter 2: The Pastoral

Chapter 3: The Town

Chapter 4: Camps and

Bibliography

BLOCKS, RUNS AND CLAIMS:

INTERACTION IN THREE SETTLEMENTS

IN THE UPPER ROPER RIVER DISTRICT, 1911-1942

Jane Gleeson

B.A. Honours thesis, 1983
Australian National University

Contents:

	Page
Acknowledgements	(i)
List of Maps	(ii)
List of Plates	(iii)
Introduction	1
Chapter 1: The Town District	6
Chapter 2: The Pastoral Industry	22
Chapter 3: The Tinfield	38
Chapter 4: Comparisons	53
Bibliography	60



Acknowledgements

Thanks are due particularly to Dr C.C. Macknight, for his encouragement, supervision and helpful suggestions. I am grateful also to the Northern Australia Research Unit, for sponsoring my visit to Darwin and the Roper River, and especially to Dr R. Gerritsen. The staff of the Commonwealth Archives in Darwin and Canberra were diligent searchers on my behalf, and my sincere thanks go to them. I am indebted to the people who, through oral testimony and written correspondence, added a much needed dimension to the study. Their names are listed in the bibliography.

List of Maps

	following page
Map 1 - The Roper River in the Northern Territory	1
Map 2 - Mataranka Station and Mataranka Town Site	7
Map 3 - Aboriginal Tribal Territories along the Roper River	23
Map 4 - Roper River Pastoral Stations, circa 1930	23
Map 5 - Maranboy, 1914.	38

List of Plates

following page

Mataranka Homestead, 1983.	
Remains of a railway worker's home, Mataranka, 1983	10
Butchering at Mataranka, circa 1935.	
Remains of railway houses, Mataranka, 1983.	14
'Leper van', Mataranka, 1983.	
Aboriginal camping site, Mataranka.	16
Homestead at Hodgson Downs, 1934.	
Dam at Red Lily Lagoon, Elsey Station, 1934.	35
Holes left by mining operations at Maranboy, 1983. (two photographs)	39
Home of the Battery Manager, Maranboy, in the 1930s.	
Remains of treatment plant at Maranboy, 1983.	48

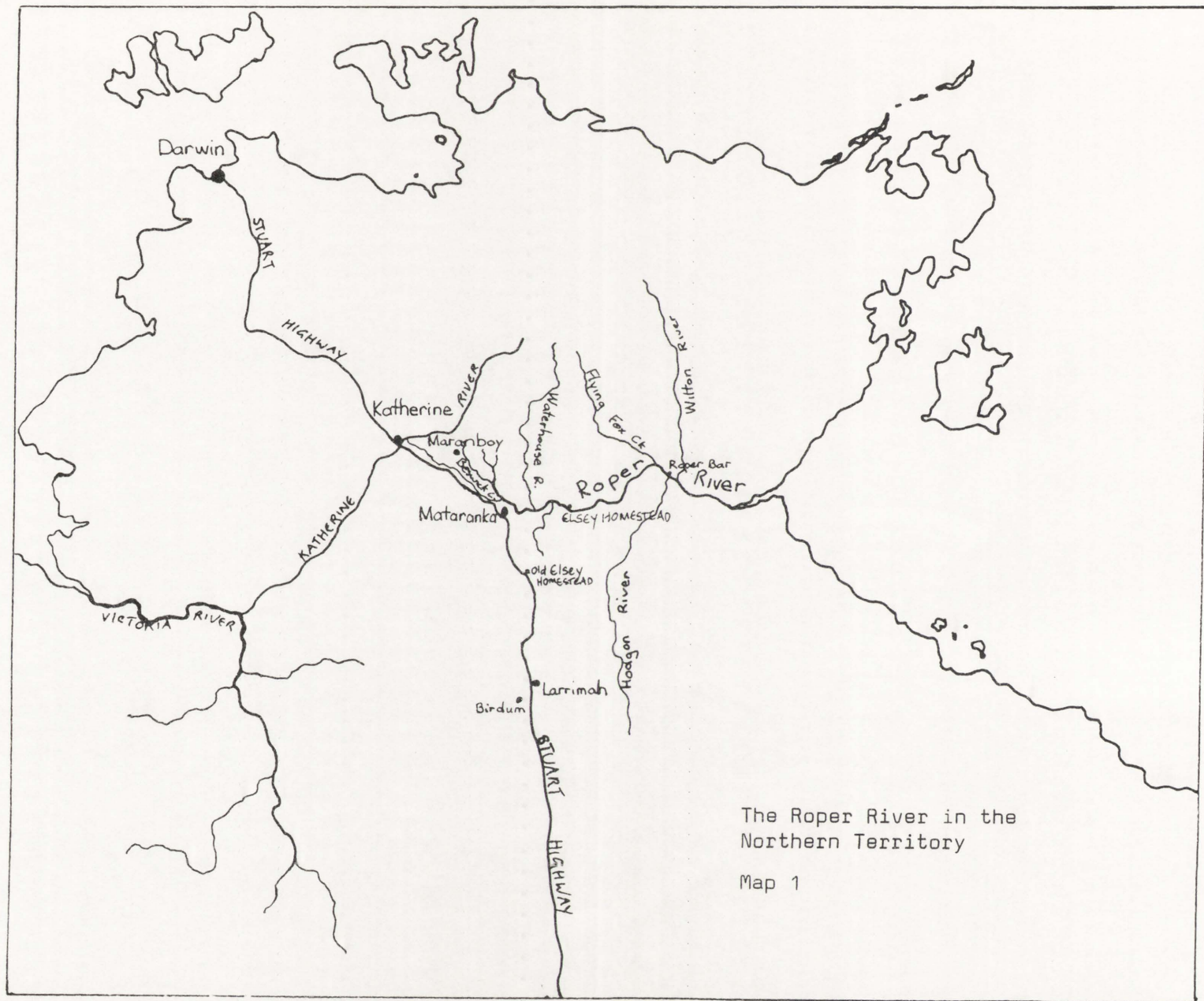
INTRODUCTION

Many Australians are familiar with the Mataranka region through Jeannie Gunn's We of the Never-Never, written about Elsey Station in 1902. (Map 1) Gunn's story of adventurous pioneering days in the pastoral industry and her own happy association with the Elsey, is one telling of courage, vitality and humour in the face of hardship and isolation in the harsh outback.¹ This thesis will present an alternative view.²

The time span for the study is 1911-1942. The choice of 1911 as a point at which to begin is largely dictated by the availability of source material. In that year the Commonwealth took over control of the administration of the Northern Territory, and archival records were kept in Darwin and Canberra. The year 1911 is also a useful marker for periodisation purposes. Before that date (roughly) competition for land can be seen to have divided society into two main camps - the invaders and the invaded. Further social divisions can generally be made only within the contexts of the two culturally distinct groups. Interaction was predominantly confrontationist. In the first decade of this century, elements of each side began to perceive possibilities for exploitation, based on exchange of goods for labour and sexual favours. Competition for land continued to divide society along racial and cultural lines, but

1. Mrs Aeneas Gunn, We of the Never-Never, and The Little Black Princess, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1982

2. Elsey Station was also the focus of a history of 'pacification' of Aborigines in the nineteenth century by Francesca Merlan, published in 1978. H.E. Thonemann, former lessee of Elsey Station and Hodgson Downs, published in 1949 an 'as told to' life story of Buludja, an Aboriginal woman who was raised at Elsey Station and in 1947 contracted leprosy and was taken to Darwin.



new social and economic relationships developed which gave rise to interest groups.¹

Neither a class relations model nor a race relations model, taken singly, is adequate to explain the interaction of people. A class model minimises the existence of Aboriginal societal structure, and the role of racism. A racial explanation obscures the imposition and acceptance of an economy based on capital. In the period after 1911, it is still necessary to define social groups along racial lines, but such analysis must take place within a broader economic framework. The year 1911 is roughly the time at which it becomes both possible and necessary to do so. The study deals with both Europeans and Aborigines, and is not an autonomous Aboriginal history.

The bases for interaction were fundamentally altered after 1942, when the reverberations of World War II brought army camps, urban and foreign Aborigines, and a bureaucracy into the upper Roper region. The consequent turnover in population, changes in social and economic relationships, and later, post-war reconstruction, began a new phase in the history of the region.

Within the region in the period to be discussed, there were three foci of interaction. The township of Mataranka, the brain-child of Administrator J.A. Gilruth, was forecast in 1912 as the new inland capital. The Administration hoped that Mataranka would become a centre for an agricultural and pastoral hinterland worked by 'desirable' white settlers

1. The word 'group' has undesirable implicitly functional associations. As it is used here, the word is intended as a dynamic, not a descriptive, term. Groups emerge in a historical process of social construction, in which individuals are seen to be defining their situations as much as they are being defined by their situations.

and their wives. Government initiated experimental farming was intended to demonstrate the attractiveness of the area to prospective settlers. The inability of the farms to show positive results in the first few years, the slowness of north-south railway construction linking the site to Darwin, continuing low cattle prices and the depression of the 1930s combined to produce a town which functioned only as a minor supply depot and stopping place for travellers. The town's residents were not the European family groups envisaged by Gilruth, but a conglomeration of railway workers, Chinese storekeepers, Aboriginal employees, and assisted peanut growers affiliated with the Unemployed Workers' Union in Darwin. On the outskirts of the town, a local tribal grouping of Maṅarai¹ Aborigines camped for several months of the year. Interaction can be partially constructed on an economic level, but few records remain which deal with social relations. Some conjectures can, however, be made.

Surrounding the town site and to the east along the Roper River was the pastoral industry, the second focus of activity for this study. Elsey Station, the first cattle enterprise in the area, was originally stocked in 1882, and during the period 1911-1942 much of available pastoral land along the Roper was both taken up and subsequently abandoned. The large size of pastoral holdings, coupled with understocking, made possible the continued maintenance of a hunter-gatherer economy and other aspects of traditional society for some Aboriginal groups. The holdings also facilitated the emergence of Aboriginal groups who, exploiting the pastoralists' need for labour, shifted their economic operations from

1. Spelling of tribal names is taken from N.B. Tindale, Aboriginal Tribes of Australia, University of California Press, Los Angeles, 1974.

hunter-gatherer to wage (or, in most cases, rations) employment. The stations in the early years consisted of two culturally separate power structures, one Aboriginal and one European. They were linked by mutual economic dependence. In time, new groups arose which owed loyalties to both power structures, and to a limited extent began to constitute power bases on their own.

On an inter-station level, isolation felt by white station workers in the early days contributed to a spirit of togetherness and hospitality well described by Jeannie Gunn in We of the Never-Never. As land was taken up and communications networks developed, tensions became evident between station managers, and feuding was as common as co-operation.

The third setting for interaction in the region provides a further contrasting social and economic organisation. A tinfield at Maranboy, some 27 miles north-west of Mataranka and situated within the Djauan tribal area, drew in 1914 a population of white male small-claim holders, Aboriginal labour of both sexes, and workers and management of a Government-operated battery. A police station, a general store and an Australian Inland Mission hospital served the needs of the miners, while a transient but relatively large Aboriginal population visited from the north-east for trading purposes. Friction developed between different groups of Aborigines, between miners and management, and between non-employed Aborigines and some Europeans. Aboriginal employees lived and worked side by side with the white miners, and their living arrangements facilitated a degree of separation on both sides from their cultural backgrounds. Successive pieces of legislation were enacted to restrict the movement of Aborigines on the tinfield. As a racial group, Aborigines

had little power to combat such legislation, but as active and indispensable participants in the mining economy, some Aborigines in time gained bargaining power to take industrial action against legislation aimed at categorising them as a race.

The task of this study is to look at social construction in three forms of settlement. In this process, groups emerged which had differing degrees of cohesion, consciousness of self-interest, and intractability. Groups existed by virtue of their interaction with other groups, interaction which was sometimes conflicting and sometimes co-operative. The formation of groups and their interaction was related to socio-economic and political conditions and the presence of distinct cultures.

Chapter 1

The Town District

In his tours through the Northern Territory during his term of office as Administrator from 1912 to 1919, Dr J.A. Gilruth was struck by the potential for development of the land at the head of the Roper River. He noted the richness of the soil, the clarity of the water, and central location. Gilruth shared the Federal Government's high hopes for the development of the Territory, and believed that the area at the head of the Roper River offered good prospects for successful small scale agricultural and pastoral enterprise. Further, a site which he named Mataranka, located on the Overland Telegraph Line, and adjacent to first-class pastoral country east along the Roper River, would provide an excellent site for an inland capital city. In time, it was hoped, Mataranka would replace Darwin.¹

History has shown that Gilruth's plans did not materialise. Until World War II brought army camps and Aboriginal labour compounds into the area, Mataranka remained only a very small country town. That it existed at all was due to a Government belief in the prospects for permanence of settlement. The process of settlement can be seen as an interaction between Government activity, climate and settlers. The combined effect was to produce a township whose inhabitants expected growth but did not get it. The town functioned mainly as a stopping off place for travellers and as a supply depot for pastoralists along the Roper River. Interaction was predominantly of a routine kind.

The first consideration of Gilruth's Administration was to attract good settlers to the Territory. It was felt that some demonstration had to be

1. Report of the Administrator, 1912:12-13.

made to the rest of Australia that the far north was capable of supporting rural industries. In 1912, experimental farms were set up at Batchelor and Daly River. The area around Bitter Springs¹ was held under lease by W. Lawrie and Partners, a Darwin firm of butchers, and formed part of the Elsey run. Gilruth wrote in his 1912 Administrator's Report that he had discussed with Lawrie the importance of experimental farming in the Bitter Springs area, and that Lawrie had offered to surrender 770 square miles of the Elsey lease for the purpose.² (Map 2)

Mataranka Horse and Sheep Experimental Station was subsequently set up in 1913. Gilruth hoped that, once the land had proved its worth, Mataranka Station lands could become available for fairly close settlement.³

Wool from the sheep would be sent to external markets, and horses bred on the station would, it was hoped, supply the requirements of numerous pastoralists along the Roper River. The brumbies on the station were rounded up, and 2,000 ewes and 50 Wanganella rams were ordered from Avon Downs, some 800 miles away on the Barkly Tableland. Almost as an afterthought, 70 head of cattle were purchased from Daly Waters in 1914.

It took eight months for the sheep to arrive, because the dryness of the land between Avon Downs and Mataranka Station meant that the sheep had periods of waiting for rain to fill the intervening waterholes. When they did arrive, in April 1914, their numbers had been reduced to 1,771 ewes and 43 rams. In the following year the total number dropped to 1,750, but in 1916 a further delivery lifted their number to 2,600.⁴ The

Administrator wrote optimistically in 1916 that the sheep were 'in very good condition' and expressed his faith in the manager, V.L. Watson.

There had been, however, a few problems with the sheep. Fencing was slow,

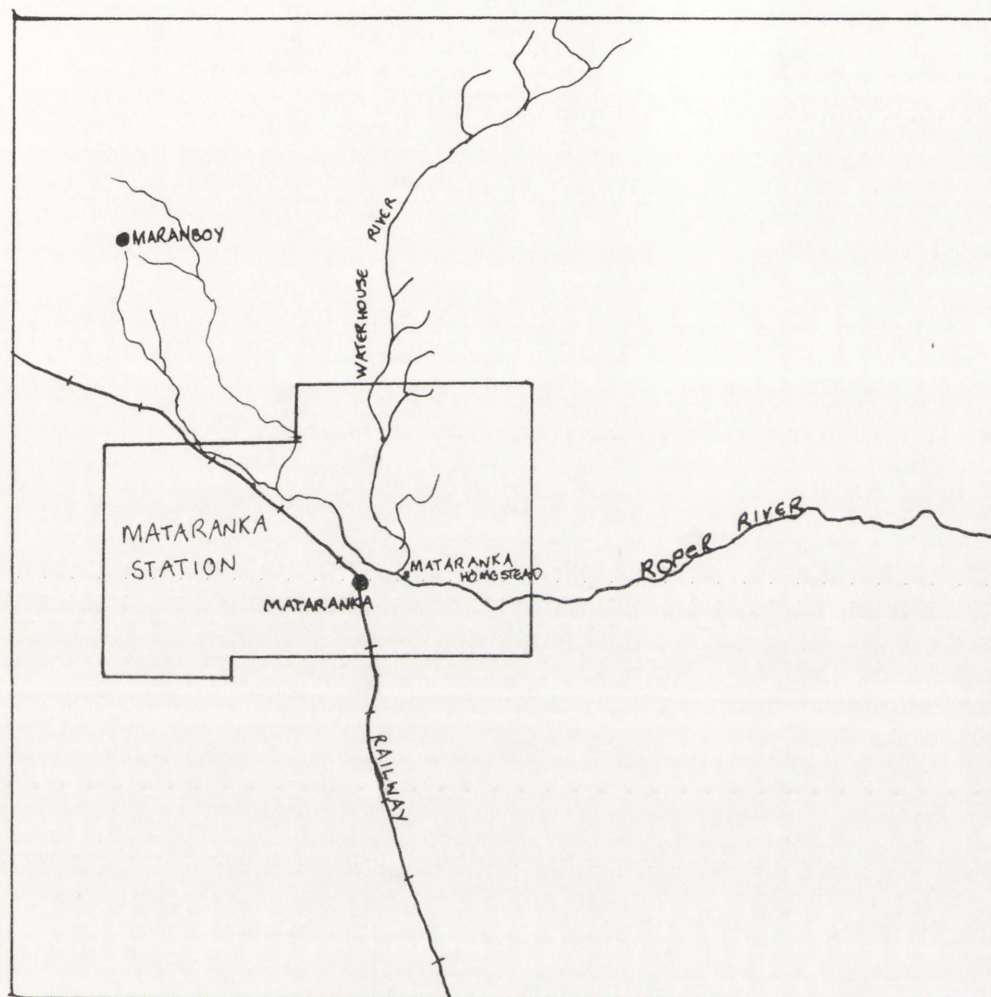
1. Bitter Springs was the name given to a series of thermal springs at the head of the Roper River, and in 1916 was renamed Mataranka Springs, because Gilruth felt that the former name was not conducive to attracting settlers.

2. Report of the Administrator, 1912:9

3. Ibid

4. CRS A3 18/693

Map 2 - Mataranka Station and Mataranka Town Site



as European labour was difficult to attract, and the sheep runs were not yet dogproof. The wet season had contributed to blowfly strike and mortality of lambs, due to the fleeces being continuously saturated with water. The ewes, in protest at the wet weather, had stopped lactating, and at the end of 1915 floods 'of unprecedented magnitude' rose eight to ten feet in the homestead buildings.¹

Similar tales are told of other experimental farms.² The Government was faced with a problem to which experimental farming seemed the logical answer. As they saw it, their job was to populate the north with successful white settlers in the hope that further white settlers would be attracted to the area. The Administration's determination to keep the station at Mataranka operating, despite major setbacks, was not so much 'culpable ignorance' of environmental conditions, as F.H. Bauer believes,³ but a realisation that without industries which could bring investment into the Territory, there was little likelihood of sustained white settlement and development.

It is only in these terms that reports on the progress of the stock at Mataranka Station can be interpreted. The experiment was patently not a success. Against unsatisfactory lambing and calving, a further 1,000 sheep were delivered in 1916, and 360 breeding cattle in 1917, followed by another 160 in 1918.⁴ By December 1919, drought and fires had reduced the number of sheep from 3,100 to 1,700, cattle had increased to 700 (a natural increase of 110, which was low), and the number of horses had remained static at about 140.⁵

1. CRS A3 18/693

2. See, for example, Michaela Richards' account of the experiment at Daly River, An Australian Frontier, B.A. Honours thesis, A.N.U., 1982.

3. F.H. Bauer, 'Historical Geography of White Settlement in Part of Northern Australia. Part 2, The Katherine - Darwin Region', C.S.I.R.O., Division of Land Research and Regional Survey, Divisional Report No 64/1, 1964:206

4. CRS A3 18/693

5. CRS A3 19/4350

Where the figures show failure, the reports of the station's progress show optimism and enthusiasm. The reverses experienced were seen as simply teething problems. Every year Gilruth reported that the stock were 'very healthy', that the quality of the wool was improving, and that the project was realising success.

In 1919 H.M. Trower, Director of Lands, took over from Gilruth as inspector of Mataranka Station. In his report of 12 June 1919, which was not available to the public, Trower acknowledged the sorry state of Mataranka Station:

The losses sustained on this Station and unsatisfactory conditions are due solely to the parsimonious way in which the Station has been worked.¹

He noted that not enough paddocks had been fenced, sheep and horses were sharing the same land, and each sheep had an insufficient grazing area of $2\frac{1}{4}$ acres. The manager was overworked, and the 'hut' in which he lived was

hardly a fit structure to house Aborigines, and would not be tolerated on a privately owned station.²

In a letter bearing the same date as his report, Trower wrote to a prospective settler, saying that Mataranka Station

obtain(s) very good results from the sheep, the wool realising satisfactory prices and being reported as excellent by Dalgety and Co., Brisbane, to whom we forward our wool for sale. Cattle and horses do excellently on this station and on Elsey Station adjoining.³

This was obviously not the whole story. The discrepancy reflects the Administration's belief that Mataranka Station had to be seen to be a success, or no further white settlement would follow. The experiment was not going to be allowed to fail, and in blaming the Federal Government's 'parsimony' for the poor showing, Trower absolved both the Administration and the climatic conditions:

1. CRS A3 19/4350
2. Ibid
3. CRS F5 S183

The importance of the development of Mataranka on proper lines cannot be overestimated, especially in view of the settling of Crown Lands round about it...

If money is not found for the development of Mataranka, it will retrograde and do more harm than good to the Territory.¹

H.E. Carey, Director in 1919, agreed with Trower's assessment of the situation at Mataranka, and in July of that year went even further, regarding the experiment as successfully completed. Carey echoed the opinion of J.E. Palmer, manager of Mataranka Station, that the experiment had proved that sheep would thrive on such country. In a do-or-die attempt, Carey recommended further expenditure on the station of £3,200 in 1919-20, £1,000 in 1920-21, and £500 in 1921-22. If the money could not be found, the Station should be offered for lease, even though the possibility existed that there would be no takers. The cattle could be sold, but the sheep would have to be slaughtered.²

Treasury in Melbourne refused funding, and in 1920, after a bout of pleuropneumonia in the cattle, and the death of 1,000 sheep through drought, the sheep were sold and removed to Vanderlin Island. The cattle and horses remained at the station but no breeding improvements were made in the herds. In 1923 the Inspector of Stock, F.A.C. Bishop, reported that the results from Mataranka Station were very unsatisfactory.³ In 1926 tenders were called for the disposal of remaining stock, but none were received.⁴

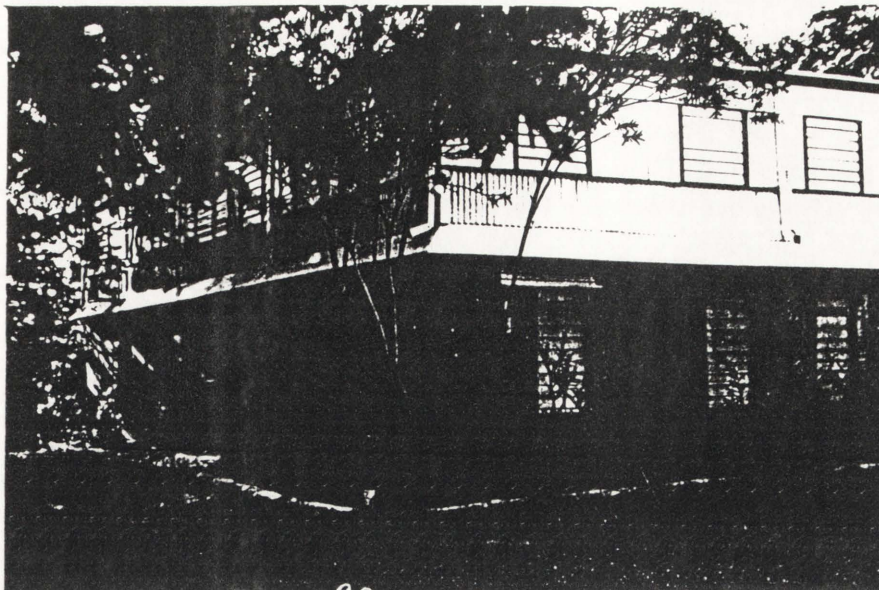
The closer settlement envisaged by Gilruth for the Mataranka area did not eventuate, due in large part to the failure of the experimental venture. However, Government policy for development continued to reflect a commitment to an understanding that the station had realised success. A 1916 investigation by a Parliamentary Committee on Public Works, in regard to the proposed extension of the Pine Creek - Katherine River railway, considered

1. CRS A3 19/4350

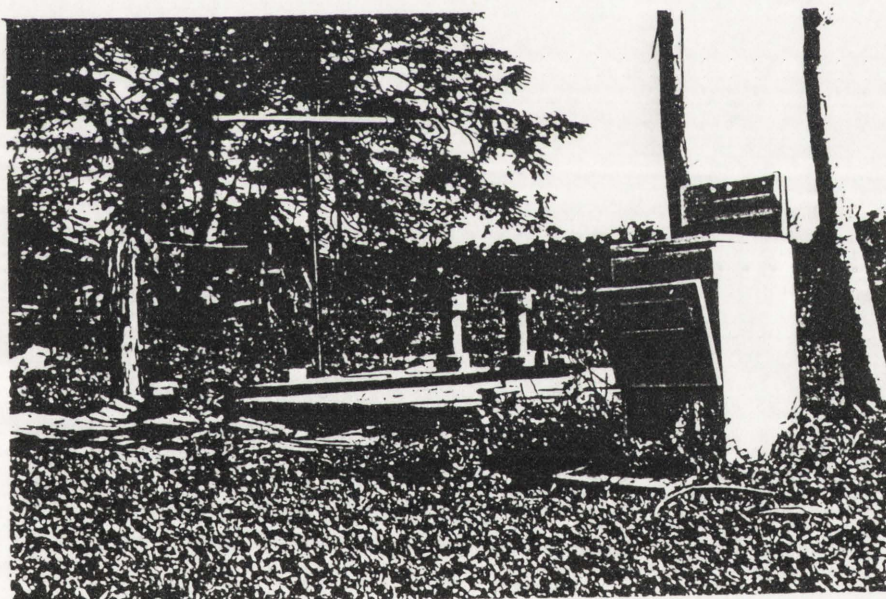
2. Ibid

3. Report of the Administrator, 1923:21

4. Report of the Administrator, 1926:25



Mataranka Homestead, now used as a tourist resort.
Taken February 1983



Remains of a railway worker's home at Mataranka.
Taken February 1983.

three directions that the railway could take from Katherine. A.A. Hunt, Secretary of the Department of External Affairs, H.V. Francis, Assistant Engineer of Commonwealth Railways, T.E. Day, Chief Surveyor for the Northern Territory, and of course, J.A. Gilruth, all gave evidence to the effect that the neighbourhood at the head of the Roper River offered admirable opportunities for small stock settlement, and that as soon as it became generally known that the railway would pass through Bitter Springs, there would be considerable endeavour to lease land in that vicinity.¹

Gilruth was in favour of insisting that employees on railway construction bring their wives and families with them, take up holdings, and thus form the beginnings of a permanent settlement. Arguing for the Mataranka route, Gilruth commented:

... as the country is developed, Darwin will become more and more unsuitable as the capital on account of its situation; a more central administration point will become necessary. This in addition to the fact that residence in the tropics should be as far from the seaboard as possible especially for women and children.

... I am convinced that the neighbourhood of the Roper River source Mataranka, offers the very best site available in the Territory for an inland city, because of its altitude, distance from the sea, central situation, good soil, and beautiful River.

... in considering a route for a transcontinental railway, it would seem obvious that the probability of some such central city becoming a necessity in the future should be considered.²

It was thought crucial to attract white women and children. Chief Surveyor Day commented, 'No country can be a white man's country without white women.'³

The investigating committee concluded that, of the three proposed routes, Mataranka provided the best potential for developing the country to the south, which would not be practicable in the absence of a railway.⁴

1. Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, Report together with Minutes of Evidence in Regard to the Proposed Extension of the Pine Creek - Katherine River Railway Southwards so far as Bitter (Mataranka) Springs, Commonwealth Parliamentary Papers, Vol IV, 1916:16-66

2. Ibid:66

3. Ibid:54

4. Ibid:10

Political and economic factors made construction slow. The railway crossed the Katherine River in 1926, took two more years to cover 63 miles to Mataranka, opening on 1 July 1928, and then another year to reach Birdum, 51 miles further on. There, the railway stopped, and the connection with the more populated centres of the south was never made. The railway finally closed in 1976.¹

The period 1916 to 1919 was the time in which prospects for a future town looked rosier. The experimental farm was publicly regarded as a success, since it had not ultimately proved otherwise. Railway construction seemed imminent. The Government constituted a cohesive and powerful interest group whose explicit aims were white settlement and development. Servicemen returning from World War I were looking at taking up blocks for agricultural and pastoral purposes, and shared the same aims for the land as the Government. Those inhabitants of the region who did not share the Government's aims, the Aborigines, had come to accept their dispossession as a social as well as a physical fact, since they no longer used violence against intruders.

The Government had power to legally dispossess Aborigines. It also had the power to choose which white settlers it wanted on the land. After 1918, when the Director of Lands received many inquiries from returned servicemen,² there was competition for 37 small blocks opened for lease along the Roper in 1919. Despite the Government's commitment to bring new settlers, there were times when, in competition for a block, established capital won out over less wealthy newcomers. On one block of 150 square miles, preference was

1. For an account of the factors influencing railway construction, see P.B. Stiles, *The North Australia Railway: Its History and the Effect of its Closure*, B.A. Honours thesis, A.N.U., 1977

2. CRS F5 C74

given to the Thonemann company, which already owned about 5,000 square miles, rather than to a returned serviceman.¹ There was also a tendency to refuse applications from people who did not seem to be of 'good character', and judgements were sometimes made on the basis of how much capital the applicant commanded.²

Applications for blocks dropped off in 1920, and the Government lost its power to pick and choose settlers. Of five pastoral leases on 42 year terms totalling 998 square miles thrown open to the north of Mataranka and east of Maranboy in that year, only one block was taken. This block adjoined Beswick Station, and was taken by M.J. Madrill, the lessee of that station. A slump in the pastoral industry in 1921³ ended expansion, and markets did not recover until after World War II. In the 1920s, many of the small holders abandoned their leases.

In 1928, just before the Great Depression, and at the worst possible time for the establishment of a new town, the railway limped into Mataranka, and a township was declared. The first settlers were railway construction employees. Optimistically 60 town blocks were offered for auction, but at the sale on 15 June 1928, only 22 blocks received bids. Nearly all buyers were small business people, settling in Mataranka with the intention of serving a thriving township which would grow in importance as the railway proceeded south to more populated centres. Nine blocks were bought by Chinese storekeepers, one by a European storekeeper, six by a boarding house keeper, one by a baker, two by the Manager of Mataranka Station, Edwin Lowe, two by a labourer, and one by a person whose profession was not recorded.⁴ In spite of the expectations of the settlers, Mataranka was dependent for its future

1. CRS F5 B233

2. CRS F5 E225

3. A. Powell, Far Country: A Short History of the Northern Territory, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 1982:153. The depression in the pastoral industry was part of a world-wide business slump.

4. CRS F5 A192

on the pastoral hinterland of the Roper, and the fluctuations in prosperity of the cattle industry generally.

In the township, the census of 1929 gives population figures of 119 Europeans, nine Asians, four others, and 20 part-Aborigines.¹ The full-blood Aboriginal population was not recorded, but it is likely that at least an equal number of Aborigines inhabited for several months a year a camp situated about half a mile from the town. Oral evidence suggests that relations between the two settlements were comfortable, Aborigines coming to the town once a month for rations but otherwise keeping pretty much to themselves.²

Most European households employed one or two Aboriginal domestic workers in the 1930s at a rate of 3/- per week plus rations. Aborigines Don and Ida³ were employed by Mary Peterson, a railway ganger's wife, performing chores such as washing, sweeping, chopping wood, yard cleaning, caring for goats and poultry, and child care. They lived in a shed at the back of the house, which had its own bathroom. They worked for three or four hours every day, and spent their evenings at the Aboriginal camp. Both were semi-literate, having been raised at the Roper River Mission.⁴ Mrs Peterson described her employees as very loyal, and they were accorded the respect given to any adult. The local Aboriginal camp was not a source of concern to the Mataranka police.

This apparent racial tolerance is borne out by the contents of the Mataranka Police Journal of 1932-3, in which there are no recorded incidents of arrests or confrontation between police and members of the Aboriginal camp.⁵

Townspeople were not invited to visit the Aborigines' camp. Ida, Mary

1. Report on the Administration of the Territory of North Australia, 1929:17

2. Interviews with Mary Peterson, Katherine, and Pam Agostini, Darwin, by author, February 1983.

3. Aboriginal names unknown.

4. The C.M.S. mission at Roper Bar was begun in 1908.

5. This is the only Mataranka Police Journal available. However, it covers a period in which an influx of single men from Darwin came to Mataranka to take up peanut farming, and any conflict is likely to have occurred at this time.



Butchering at Mataranka, c. 1935. From left to right: Mick Walsh, Harry Clayton and George Armstrong.
Photograph courtesy of Mrs Mary Peterson, Katherine.



Remains of railway houses, Mataranka.
Taken February 1983

Peterson's employee, told Mary's children that the camp was 'too dirty'.¹ The absence of recorded incidents of violence does not necessarily point to racial harmony. Possibly the lack of friction indicates, given that dispossession of Aborigines was a social as well as a physical fact, that Aborigines had come to accept institutionalised inequality. That working Aborigines lived what Mrs Peterson called 'a double life', keeping work life and camp life separate, and that non-working Aborigines came to the town only for rations, suggests that Aborigines chose to deal with white settlement by accepting its presence and limited usefulness, and then ignoring it. So long as this was the case, the whites had no reason to interfere.

Not all Aborigines, however, were left alone. Government policy on medical treatment for Aborigines legally defined a group who were doubly victimised, first by their contraction of introduced diseases and second by the social consequences of having the diseases. Aborigines suspected of suffering from venereal diseases, granuloma, yaws, and particularly leprosy, were sought by the local policeman and detained at the police station until a doctor could be brought in for a formal diagnosis. If the disease could not be treated locally, Aborigines were forcibly detained at Mataranka until a train could transport them to the hospital in Darwin. When an Aborigine was diagnosed as having leprosy, he/she was taken to the leprosarium at Darwin, a place from where few people ever returned. Mataranka was centrally located as a holding depot for sick Aborigines, since it connected the Roper River with the railway.

For Aborigines, European medical attention, particularly for leprosy, was a punishment. Policy for dealing with leprosy, in spite of good intentions, blamed the victim. Treatment was effected by attacking the symptoms (i.e.

1. Peterson, interview by author.

by segregating the lepers) without touching on the causes (economic deprivation, expropriation of land, malnutrition). Aborigines were blamed for not being hygienic and for living in squalor.

Most Aborigines considered the social consequences - removal to Darwin - to be worse than the disease, and sought to avoid capture by disappearing into the bush. Further, European medicine did not apparently cure the disease, since those who went to Darwin rarely returned. The refusal of Aborigines to submit to treatment was a challenge to the European assumption that 'doctor knows best'. Aborigines owed no cultural allegiance to European medicine, and underlying the conflict was an attempt by one culture to impose its values on another. The consequence of Aboriginal rejection was that lepers were treated as criminals.

The extent to which treatment for Aborigines resembled a police hunt for criminals is well illustrated by an extract from the Mataranka Police Journal, 1932:

Wednesday 16 November

192 miles Dr McCann and M.C. [Mounted Constable] per car to Maryfield station where the Dr treated two Abo children suspected for yaws. Mr D Booth reported that an alleged lepor (sic) suspect had left the station some few weeks previously for Daly Waters. Dr McCann and M.C. to Rodericks Bore and camped.

Thursday 17

11 miles per car, 20 miles horse Dr McCann and M.C. Johnson per car from Rodericks Bore to Daly Waters, raided native camp in search of lepor but ascertained he had left for a waterhole some distance away. The M.C. was given permission to take a few telegraph horses for the purpose of locating Abo lepor. The M.C. to Dumana Waterhole and took Abo Jack (Coonamingie) as a suspected lepor...

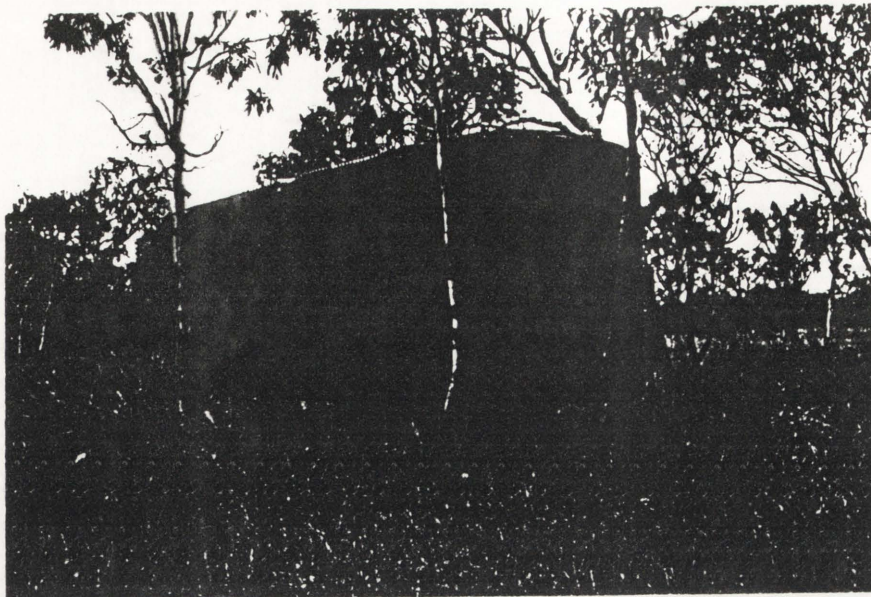
Friday 18

M.C. Johnson with Abo Jack (lepor) left Dumana with horses at 12.30 am and arrived Daly Waters 5.45 am where Dr McCann examined Abo Jack and instructed M.C. to keep him in charge as he was a suspected lepor...

Sunday 20

M.C. Johnson with horse searched black's camps and found 2 sick children instructed their mother to remain Daly Waters until arrival of Doctor...¹

1. Mataranka Police Journal, 1932



Disused railway car outside Mataranka, thought by local residents to be the 'Leper Van', used to transport lepers from Mataranka to Darwin after 1938.

Taken February 1983



Pumping Hole, so called because it supplied Mataranka residents with water, thought by local residents to be the site of the local Aboriginal camp before World War II.

Taken February 1983.

The mother and children subsequently waited until Thursday 24 November for treatment, and 'Coonamingie' was interned until Saturday 26 November (nine days) at Daly Waters, after which he was transported to Darwin.

It was not until 1938 that Mataranka police requested a building to house lepers and leper suspects pending their transportation to Darwin. Until then, the Constable wrote,

the method of holding lepers there has been to chain them to trees with the protection of a Bough Shelter.¹

During the two years ending December 1938, 24 lepers and suspects passed through Mataranka, spending periods of from one to 20 days there. Once there were seven at a time.² In 1933 the numbers were higher, and it was not unusual for the police station to hold 12 at a time.³ Sergeant Wood of the Katherine Police Station in 1938 complained of the refusal of the local hospital authorities to have leper suspects at the hospital, with the result that they too were chained to a tree outside the Katherine Police Station, even during the wet season.⁴

Aborigines dealt with leprosy in their own way. Influences other than the desire of the patient were often at work. Douglas Lockwood has written that if the leper was female, it was the husband who decided her fate, and generally offered strong resistance:

he is not only being deprived of a wife, but also of the insurance policy he has against his years of decrepitude, the woman who by fair means or foul will provide him with tobacco. Her departure for quarantine means that he will be without comfort.⁵

Similarly, H.E. Thonemann of Elsey Station wrote of a unanimous tribal

1. CRS F1 39/593

2.. Ibid

3. Mataranka Police Journal, 5 June 1933

4. CRS F1 39/593

5. D. Lockwood, I the Aboriginal, Rigby, Adelaide, 1962:164

decision to hide a female leper suspect in the 1940s.¹ Lockwood records Waipuldanya's belief that in the 1960s there were more Aboriginal lepers hiding in the bush along the Roper than there were at the leprosarium at Darwin.² Even the most well-intentioned Europeans reported Aboriginal leper suspects to the police, and since Europeans did not tend to contract the disease themselves, the social effect was the reinforcement of cultural separatism and hostility.

In 1930 the Government began a peanut growing scheme at Katherine and Mataranka which was designed to solve the twin problems of Darwin unemployment and southern settlement. The Peanut Growers' Scheme began after unemployed men picketed Government offices in Darwin and attempted to lock up all the representatives of Government until unemployment relief work schemes were set up. Fifty unemployed men camped on the verandah of the Government offices 'adopting aggravating and disturbing measures, making it impossible for any work to be performed'.³ On 5 May, the Government responded by offering unemployed unencumbered men 30/- per week to take up small blocks at Katherine and Mataranka for the growing of peanuts. The growers were to be paid until the first harvest. Despite ignorance of peanut farming, many unemployed men accepted the offer with enthusiasm. By July, 52 men had availed themselves of the scheme, and 47 farms had been allotted.

The plan was ill-considered, and formulated under pressure from the unemployed men. Independent peanut growers had in the previous season had more crop failures than successes. F.A. Olsen and J. Holt, both Mataranka peanut farmers in 1929, requested assistance under the 1930 scheme because of previously failed crops. Two other growers at Mataranka, E.R. West and

1. H.E. Thonemann, Tell the White Man, Collins, Sydney, 1949:168

2. Lockwood, Op Cit:164

3. A1 34/5886: Minister for Home Affairs, Blakely, 30.4.30

J. Brown, had larger areas planted and were having more success.

Each of the new blocks was of five acres, and growers were loaned tools by the Government. In September Mataranka had eight occupied blocks, and a few miles away on the Waterhouse River there were ten more. The Northern Territory Times reported in late July that a visit to Mataranka revealed all men tackling the problems of clearing and water supply with 'right good will', and that they were full of optimism.¹ Initially, the Government did not supply water tanks, and the Report on the Government Assisted Peanut Farms in October noted that without the help of the Chinese storekeeper at Mataranka who carted water to the farms on a lorry, the scheme would have failed.²

In spite of enthusiasm, the crops did fail. In 1931, many of the growers deserted their holdings. Where these had failed, many more unemployed men were willing to try. In August 1931, 30 unemployed men were camped at Mataranka in the hope that the Government would reallocate deserted blocks. By this stage the Government had been informed by Queensland peanut growers that the market was already overstocked, and market conditions were precarious.³ None of the blocks was reallocated, and the scheme was discontinued in 1932. The debts incurred by payments to growers had to be written off. Even those larger blocks held by independent growers, did not fare well. West and Brown, successful in 1930, were destitute in 1932 and unable to pay their Aboriginal employees.⁴

The peanut growing scheme represented the last attempt by the Government to fill the upper Roper district with white settlers. A change was taking place in the Government's attitude towards settlement possibilities. From Gilruth's vision of an inland capital, Mataranka had come to be seen as a desirable

1. CRS A1 34/5886

2. Ibid

3. Refer to M. Richards, 1982, Op Cit, for discussion of peanut prices.

4. F1 38/17. Most peanut farmers in the district, for the purposes of the Aboriginals Ordinance, were considered to be working in country districts, which meant that they did not have to pay Aboriginal employees if it could be demonstrated that they were feeding the dependants of the employees.

place for European settlement which would help offload the unemployment problems of Darwin. By 1936, Mataranka came to be seen by C.E. Cook, Chief Medical Officer and Chief Protector, as a place where Aborigines could form an agricultural settlement. Mataranka became simply a place which would help to solve the problems of the north. Cook wanted the site of the Aboriginal compound in Darwin to build a new hospital, and therefore proposed to make Mataranka Station an Aboriginal Reserve. He planned for Aborigines to be brought from Darwin to Mataranka and trained in stockwork and agriculture with 'the ultimate object of the placing of a peasant class of Aborigines on small holdings in the area', in spite of the fact that 'agriculture has to date failed in this area'. Aside from providing employment for adult Aborigines, the reserve was to be a dumping ground for those Aborigines who were causing problems to the whites in Darwin. It would house aged and infirm Aborigines, provide disciplinary facilities for criminals, and treatment for opium addicts and alcoholics.¹

Opposition to the plan from Darwin Aborigines was disregarded. The Government did not consider the suitability of the land for farming, the cultural problems inherent in transplanting Aborigines from one tribal area to another, or the unlikelihood that Aborigines would ever become 'a peasant class on small holdings'. It was implicitly assumed that Aborigines had no prior culture. The plan demonstrates the power of the Government as an interest group to override opposing interests by defining them as problems to be dealt with. The plan also demonstrates the interactive process between external (Government) and local conditions, in that the Government was forced to back down on its former proposal for an inland capital.

In 1937 a new site was found in Darwin for the Aboriginal compound, and

1. CRS A1 38/31941

the plan was dropped. Subsequently the Superintendent of Police visited Mataranka Station in 1938, and reported that the site was unsuitable even for an Aboriginal reserve. It was bad grazing country, in appalling condition, and the Roper River was dangerous for stock.¹ His remarks constitute a complete reversal of Government attitude from that expressed in 1912.

The single most significant factor determining the nature of settlement at Mataranka was Government policy. The Government set up the experimental station, built the railway, publicised in glowing terms the future potential for settlers, assisted peanut growers, and legislated for the 'protection' of Aborigines. Though it was the single most influential interest group, it was an external one, and in interaction at the local level its plans foundered. The town attracted no moneyed settlers, and those who could not make a living did not stay. The resulting process of interaction is therefore composed of bits and pieces, as the Government attempted to institute one form of settlement after another.

1. CRS A1 38/31941

Chapter 2

The Pastoral Industry

- I am living hard and working hard and just about full of things, but I will carry on while I can.
- I am not going to let the place go to ruin as long as I can hang on to it there must come good times some day.
- John Guild, lessee of Veldt Station, to the Lands Department, 1933 and 1935.¹

Guild's words convey an essential difference in expectation and commitment between the people of the township settlement at Mataranka and those in the pastoral industry along the Roper River. Pastoralists shared the conviction that, even if individuals failed in attempts to settle the land with cattle, the industry itself was permanent. Against the formidable odds of bad markets, cattle diseases, adverse climatic conditions, isolation, labour problems, and hostile Aborigines, pastoralists remained on the land. By 1911, after 30 years of pastoral settlement, Aborigines resident on their land came to understand the permanence of this form of settlement, and sought to exploit it rather than drive it away. Faced with an absence of European labour to work their stations, pastoralists had the same idea about Aborigines. In the process of forming social relations, emergent social groups are discernible but often not sharply defined. Cultural groupings were complicated by economic groupings, and often members of one group held an interest in a conflicting group.

There was little variation in the pattern of social relations from station to station. The stations were small empires unto themselves, with the lessees or their manager controlling not only the land, but also, implicitly, the other residents and workers. Relations between the stations, amenable in the early days, became bitter as the pastoralists struggled against each other for use of the land.

The history of the pastoral industry prior to 1911 had been one of violent

1. CRS F630 PL165N

competition for the land against Roper River and Arnhem Land Aborigines, a competition which the pastoral industry did not always win.¹ Violence was not new to Roper River Aborigines. Thonemann, writing from oral Aboriginal evidence, records that conflict regularly took place between tribal groups before the arrival of Europeans. The Magarai, inhabiting the Elsey area, engaged in warfare with Alawa, who occupied the Hodgson Downs area, with Mara, eastern neighbours of Alawa, and with Jarman, south of Magarai territory. (Map 3) At the time of European arrival in the 1870s, relations between these tribes were relatively settled, although intermarriage was rare and great care had to be taken when visiting neighbouring tribal country.²

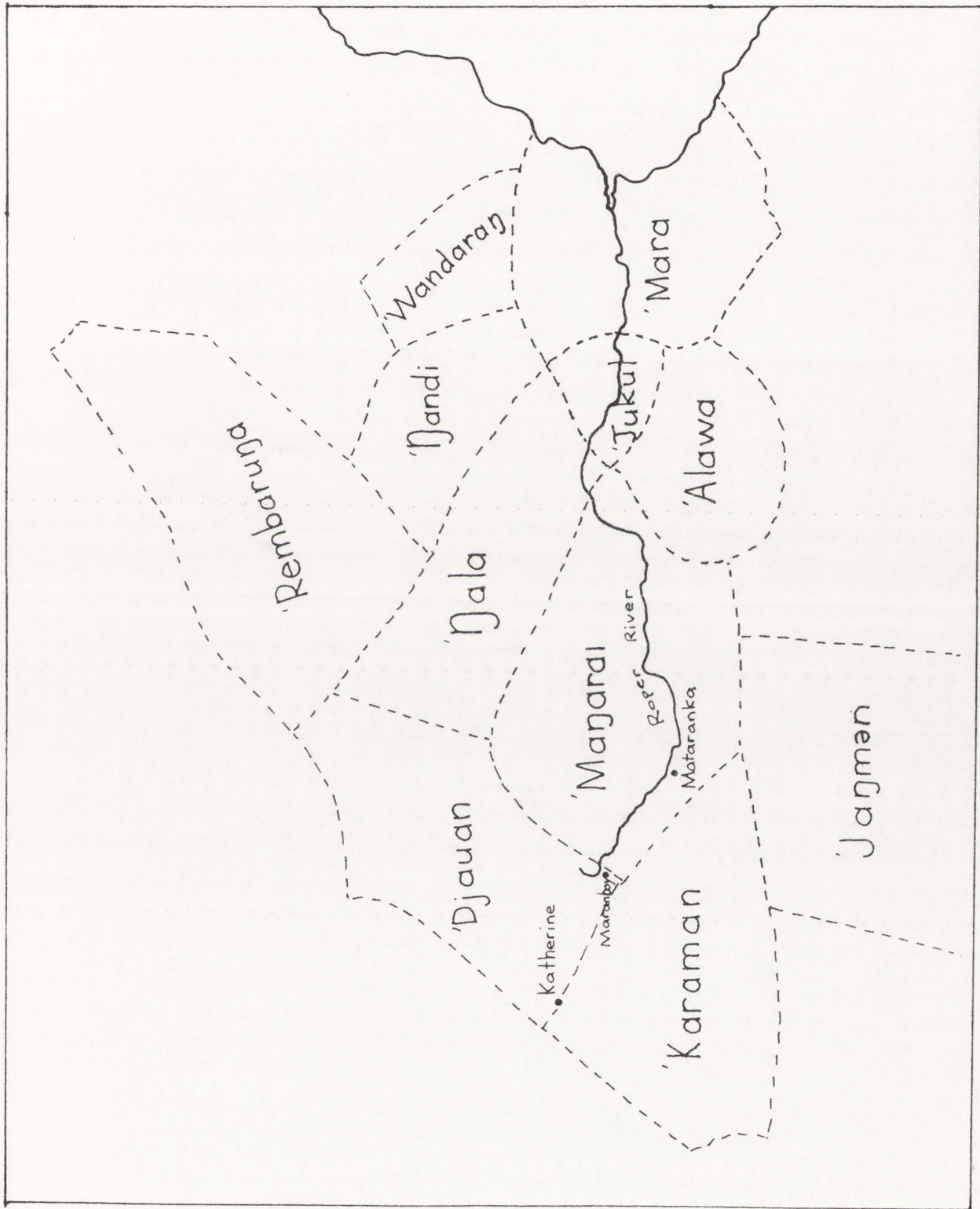
The pattern of European pastoral settlement had been the taking up of large tracts of land along the river to ensure permanent water for stock. In 1911 holdings included Elsey Station, Hodgson Downs, Roper Valley Station, and the Roper River Mission Station. In the upper Roper area, Mataranka Station was set up in 1914, Beswick Station in 1915 or 1916, and Veldt Station in 1927. (Map 4)

Violent competition for land dominated Aboriginal/European relations before 1900, and sporadic violence continued until World War II, when the presence of army camps brought about a new economic relationship and a diminishing of power able to be wielded over Aborigines by pastoralists. In the intervening period, possibilities for mutual exploitation blurred the hitherto distinct

cultural divisions in Roper society. By 1911, it was the norm for stations

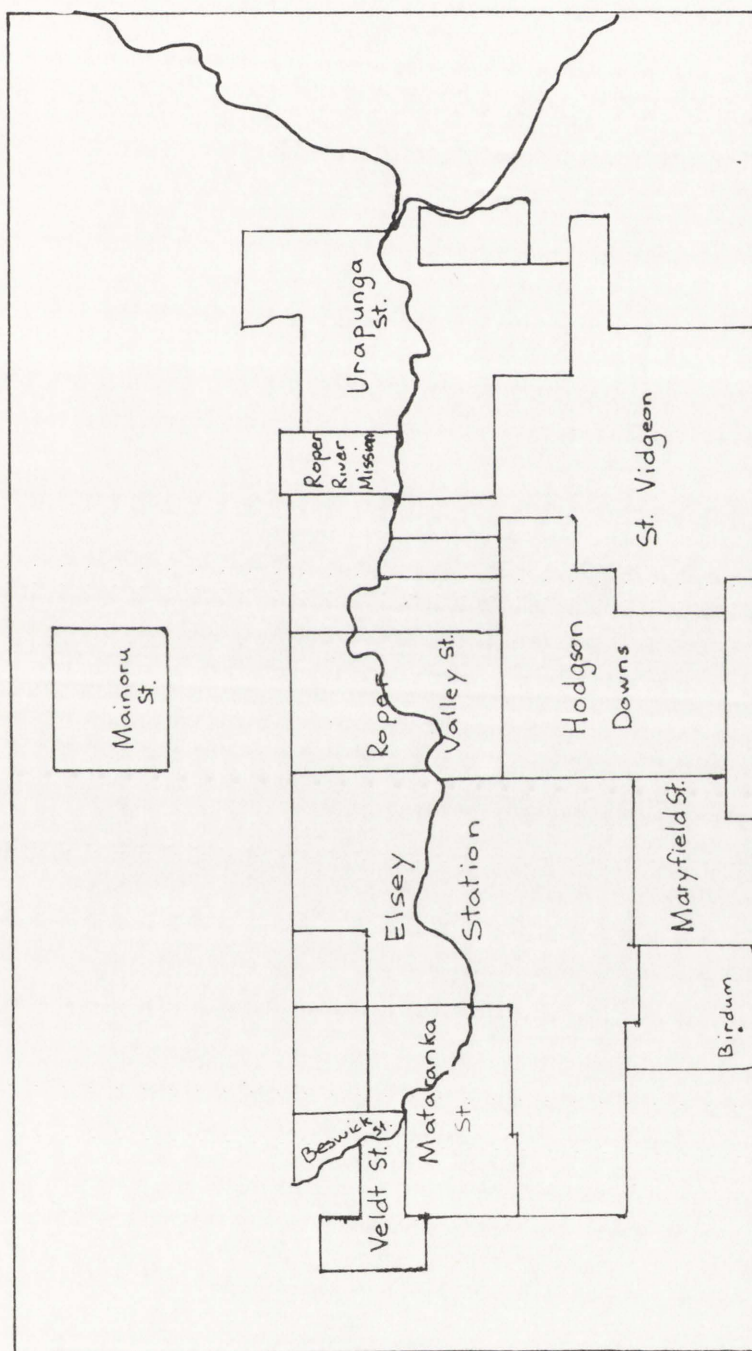
1. F. Merlan, 'Making People Quiet' in the Pastoral North: Reminiscences of Elsey Station', Aboriginal History, 1978, 2:1. Merlan records the 'pacification' of Aborigines in the Elsey and Hodgson Downs area. Bauer, Op Cit:157 instances a case of the Eastern and African Cold Storage Company, which held Elsey, Hodgson and a large area of Arnhem Land between 1903 and 1908: 'It is commonly said that the blacks "hunted the cattle out". This was probably one of the few authenticated instances in which the aborigines were systematically hunted. For a time the company employed 2 gangs of 10 to 14 blacks headed by a white man or half caste to hunt and shoot the wild blacks on sight.' Aborigines played a major role in the ultimate failure of the Company's venture.

2. Thonemann, Op Cit:Chapter 5



Map 3 - Aboriginal Tribal Territories along the Roper River, from N.B. Tindale, Aboriginal Territories of Arnhem Land, 1974

Map 4 -Roper River Pastoral Stations, circa 1930,
from Northern Territory Pastoral Map 1930,
Australian Archives, Darwin



to have Aboriginal camps attached to them, and some Aborigines, by virtue of their employment in the industry, identified common interest with the pastoralists against the former landowners. It was not simply a matter of changing sides in a continuing battle; rather, it represented a drastic alteration in the nature of the battle. The presence of Aborigines on cattle stations is the point at which it is possible to speak of cross cultural economic relations.

In the early years of pastoral settlement, Europeans utilised white labour, as it was the only skilled labour available. White labour was expensive and hard to get, and pastoralists tended also to import trained Aboriginal stockworkers from other areas. Such workers had no local tribal affiliations and were therefore considered to be reliable. Two Queensland Aboriginal workers were employed by Duncan Campbell, head stockman of Elsey Station, in 1882.¹ When Aboriginal camps were set up on the stations in the 1890s, station managers began to recruit and train young men (and sometimes women) for stockwork. Camping on the stations solved problems for both sides. Aborigines did not have to hunt as often for food, since the station occasionally provided beef, flour, sugar, tea and tobacco. Pastoralists had cheap labour, and some means of social control, since while they were on the stations Aborigines were generally not disturbing or killing the cattle. Stockwork was seasonal, and workers were allowed several months off each year during which time they could engage in traditional ceremonial activities. To this extent, the pastoral industry and maintenance of Aboriginal society were compatible.

A description of a bangtail muster² in 1914 at Elsey Station by H.E. Thonemann

1. Merlan, Op Cit:79

2. A bangtail muster is an exact muster in which tails of cattle are cut square for accurate count.

gives some idea of the nature of stockwork and the numbers who could be involved in it. A mustering camp consisted of one or two Europeans and ten Aborigines. A mustering plant had about 50 men, or four or five camps. In each camp, one of the Aborigines did the cooking, others on horses held the mustered cattle until they had been bangtailed, and the rest mustered. The musterers collected the cattle, branded the calves, and let them go. When one area was finished, the camps shifted to a new area and started again. At night, the Aborigines rode slowly round and round the mob. They were ordered to sing softly as they rode, performing a dual function - reassuring the cattle, and proving to the boss that they were awake.¹

Other work performed by the men on Elsey Station was the rounding up and breaking in of horses, fencing, running messages and fetching supplies. Women milked and shepherded the goats, worked in the garden, cooked, and performed household chores. Under Mrs Giles, wife of the Elsey manager from 1928 to 1946, domestic workers wore uniforms while in the homestead.² In Giles' time as manager, Aborigines sawed the timber and helped build the homesteads at Elsey and Hodgson Downs. Some stockworkers were taught to do minor repairs to cars. Half-caste apprentices were taught to do up and repair saddles. Giles regarded all his Aboriginal stockworkers as good horsemen.³ Such tasks were representative of work performed on all stations by Aborigines. Where there were no white women on the stations, Aboriginal women were also often sexual partners for the Europeans. Although few records exist of sexual relations, it is likely that Roper River stations were the same as those elsewhere. George Conway, a drover who founded several stations along the river, reputedly lived with an Aboriginal woman

1. Thonemann, Op Cit:46-7

2. Ibid:Chapters 6-13

3. CRS F1 46/820 (Pt 1)

called Rooney for forty years.¹ In 1919, a policeman, an Aboriginal Protector, allegedly had what was termed a 'harem' on the Roper River, and was the father of four part-Aboriginal children by different mothers.² In 1932 a Board of Inquiry was called to investigate allegations made by Aborigines that one of the missionaries at the C.M.S. mission at Roper Bar was engaging in sexual activities with the Aboriginal women there.³

As the pastoral industry became entrenched, Aboriginal workers and pastoralists became mutually dependent. The cattle industry increasingly became dependent on Aboriginal labour. Initially, Aborigines worked on the stations for rations to supplement an already viable lifestyle. In time, the able-bodied hunters were spending their time in stockwork, and some of the female gatherers were domestically employed, so the Aboriginal camp as a whole came to regard the rations supplied by the station as necessary and not just supplementary. Further, in supporting the cattle industry, Aborigines supported a system of land use which impoverished the land for hunting and gathering. Cattle upset the ecological balance, devouring the grasses, hardening the ground with their hooves, and taking over the waterholes from wild game.

While this process of dependence and exploitation was taking form, two systems of power operated on the stations. On the one hand, there was the white 'boss', his wife (if there was one), and seasonal white workers. On the other, there was the power structure of traditional Aboriginal society, with the older men at the top and the women and children at the bottom. Caught between these two structures were the Aboriginal workers,

1. D. Lockwood, Up The Track, Rigby, Adelaide, 1964:156.

2. A. McGrath, 'Aboriginal Women Workers in the N.T., 1911-1939', Hecate, Vol IV, No 2, July 1978:14. The policeman was dismissed of several charges, including 'serious ill-usage of certain native women' because the Judge claimed that all 15 Aboriginal witnesses were liars.

3. CRS F1 38/534. The report following the investigation is not available, and there is some dispute as to whether the alleged events actually took place. The matter is discussed in J. Ingoldsby, Labourers Together with God, C.M.S. Missionaries in Northern Australia, 1908-1934, B.A. Honours thesis, ANU, 1977

who owed allegiance to both sides.

Power amongst the Aborigines was accorded through gender, heredity, and ownership of land and ceremonies. Initially no status was gained through the type of work performed for Europeans; stockworkers, no matter what their status in European eyes, were still the 'young men' in the traditional hierarchy.¹

The movement by Aborigines towards employment in the pastoral industry altered their economic base, and in the process largely destroyed the traditional power structure. With the transfer of economic base, power began to accrue in the hands of workers. Traditional mechanisms of power began to lose some of their relevance. As Aborigines gradually became dependent on the stations for rations, power could be held by those who held positions in Aboriginal as well as European power structures. The women who worked in the homestead could win favour with the 'missus' and secure clothes, tobacco, sugar, tea and information, all valued items in the Aboriginal camp. However, it was the stockworkers who occupied the key position between the white and black hierarchies, and they came to be accorded power and status on both sides because of what they could offer to each. They had access to better clothes, boots, hats, tobacco, food and sometimes alcohol, that lower status occupations did not draw. Trusted employees were allowed the use of guns. In exchange for work, stations supplied rations for the dependants of workers, and so non-workers at all levels in the old power structure became dependent on the stockworkers for their food.

1. This situation obtained in Jeannie Gunn's time at Elsey Station (1902). The camp as described by Gunn was a completely functioning social and economic unit. Gunn perceived a hierarchy in which the 'wise old men of the tribe' wielded power through ownership of the land and possession of stories and ceremonies through which the land was used and understood. Ebimel Woolloomool, perceived as the 'king', performed sundry tasks for the 'missus', including gardening - low status European chores - yet lost no power as an old man of the tribe. Gunn, Op Cit.

The housing situation of stockworkers was illustrative of their position. The Northern Territory Pastoral Leases Investigation Committee Report of 1935 shows the existence of houses near the homesteads for the Aboriginal workers. Variouslly described as the 'mens' hut', 'blacks' house', or 'mans' room', these buildings provided the stockworkers with a means of asserting superiority over those at the 'blacks' camp'. It also removed them from its influence.¹

The change in economic base was not achieved without antagonism. Since the expropriation of Aboriginal land, pastoralists were the dominant power holders. Access to white culture, language and skills gave the edge to those who had it, over the possessors of traditional skills and stories which were becoming, through the shrinkage of Aboriginal land power, increasingly unusable. Rolf Gerritsen's analysis of power in Aboriginal village communities today, dealing with Bamyili, Beswick and Ngukurr in the Roper River area, suggests that positions of dominance are acquired by those who have a combination of ceremonial control or ownership, land power, and mununga 'whiteman' power.² Although the power of the stockworkers has long since been eroded, the process whereby prestige devolved on those with mununga, began in the pastoral industry.

Self-interest, not communal interest, was the motivating factor. Gerritsen points to Kevin Gilbert's repudiation of myths surrounding Aboriginal social structure:

... that Aboriginals share freely; that they have a strong feeling of community; that they don't care about money and lack the materialism of white society; that they care more deeply for their children than do white parents; and so on. Such fallacies are generally believed by both black and white people.³

1. CRS F658 19

2. R. Gerritsen, Thoughts on Camelot: From Herodians and Zealots to the Contemporary Politics of Remote Aboriginal Settlement in the Northern Territory, Australasian Political Studies Association Conference paper, August 1981:6-7

3. K. Gilbert, Living Black: Blacks Talk to Kevin Gilbert, Penguin, Ringwood, 1977:1

There were well defined roles in Aboriginal society on the Roper which dictated sharing, allied to the power structure and motivated by the self-interest of those in dominance. Who was allowed the use of what, was incorporated into the belief system, and pre-dated European settlement. Gunn wrote of Elsey Aborigines that no women were allowed to wear red because the 'thunder debbil-debbil' would kill them 'deadfellow'. This same spirit was delighted if men wore red. Similarly, the old men told the young men and women that they would become old and weak if they ate turkey or kangaroo tail. In this way they reserved the best meat for themselves.¹ Pam Agostini, daughter of a railway worker at Mataranka from 1933 until the early 1950s, mentioned in an interview that if Aboriginal women in her parents' employ were given more than one set of clothes, they would wear them all so that it would be apparent to others that the clothes were not available for sharing.²

It seems a doubtful Eurocentric proposition that self-interest was learned by Aborigines with the coming of Europeans. While Europeans such as Gunn perceived that there were certain items that they could provide which were shared by Aborigines, they failed to perceive that there was a power structure in Aboriginal society which dictated allocation of such goods, and prestige accruing from possession.

Although stockworkers gained status in both power structures, employers treated their workers as expendable. Under the provisions of the Aborigines' Ordinance 1918-33, the Chief Protector controlled the financial affairs of all full-blood Aborigines, single part-Aboriginal females and male part-

1. Gunn, Op Cit:159

2. Agostini, personal interview.

Aborigines up to the age of 21, provided that after that age the latter could demonstrate capability of managing their own affairs. Employers were supposed to pay a licensing fee to the Government of 10/-. The minimum wage for Aborigines was 5/- per week, of which 2/- per week was to be paid monthly into a trust account in the name of an authorised protector. In country areas, the employer was relieved of his obligation to pay if he was feeding the employee's dependants. Stockworkers in the 1930s were supposed to receive 24/- per week when droving, and 16/- when travelling with plant.¹

In practice payment was erratic, and employers made full use of the provision which stated that in country areas rations could be used in lieu of payment. Rates of pay did not increase during the period, the system was inadequately policed, and often wages were not paid at all. In the 1930s, when cattle markets were poor and stations were unable even to pay the rent on their lands², registered as well as unregistered employees went unpaid. Trust fund account records for 1938 reveal a debt of £263/13/4 outstanding to Aboriginal drovers, much of it outstanding since 1931. A lot of the debt was subsequently written off.³

Low and erratic payments to Aborigines exemplify the economic relationship between exploitation and the fact of racial and cultural difference. White stockworkers, though they were not more highly skilled, received better pay and conditions; Aborigines were cheap purely because they were Aboriginal.

In some respects they were slaves, since they were considered the possession of the station owner. Aborigines unwittingly contributed to this, staying

1. CRS F1 38/17

2. John Guild of Veldt Station applied for extension of rent payments in 1931, and continued to receive extensions until 1936. Michael Madrill of Beswick Station applied in 1932, paid in 1933, then received further extensions until 1937. Rogers of Roper Valley Station owed £1,230/19/9 in overdue rents by 1933; further extensions were granted but eventually the station was sold. CRS F630 PL165N; F630 PL158N; F630 PL104N

3. CRS F1 38/17

on stations because of their allegiance to the land. If a station was sold, Aborigines were implicitly sold with it.¹ Labelled as 'boys', 'stockboys', 'housegirls', etc., the assumption was made that Aborigines were not quite adult, and therefore should not be allowed the powers of independent decision making.

Legally, Aborigines were within their rights to leave a station at any time. In practice they could only do so when the labour pool was sufficiently large to cope with the absence of some of its members. The response of pastoralists in the years of World War II to attempts by station workers to find employment in army camps, where pay and conditions were better, illustrates the ownership principle which was at work throughout the period. In one incident, Giles of Elsey Station demanded the return of Elsey stockmen and other workers who reported to Larrimah Army Camp asking for employment. The Aborigines refused to return. Giles refused an offer to visit the settlement to talk with the Aborigines, demanding their forced return, which was subsequently complied with. Giles' attitude was typical, and complaints of the same kind were numerous. Underlying their attitude was the fear that the army was treating Aborigines in a way that it would be 'impossible for station owners to treat them after the war is over'.² In other words, Aborigines would not be so readily exploitable. Because of this legal right to leave stations, Aborigines cannot strictly speaking be called slaves. However, neither could they be regarded as employees in the European sense of the term. Workers constituted a group who, embracing a European economic system, were held back from full participation in it by the fact of their racial subordination.

1. CRS F1 46/820

2. CRS F1 44/333

Not all Aborigines exercised the option of station existence. Those who did, by virtue of their numbers, eased the pressure of population on the land for those who retained traditional patterns of land use. Throughout the period, all of the stations were understocked. Elsey Station in 1922 carried roughly $2\frac{1}{4}$ head to the square mile, and the owner believed it could carry four times that number.¹ Moreover, large areas on the runs were considered unsuitable for cattle, and were therefore available for Aborigines to use.² Roper Valley Station, covering 1,249 square miles, was abandoned for a period in the 1930s. With no records of stock, which were neglected and unbranded, the possibility existed for cattle killing without fear of reprisal. The proclamation of the Arnhem Land Reserve in 1931 gave Aborigines north of the Roper security of tenure, although Aborigines may not have been aware of this.

In the 1930s pastoralists began to complain of 'native drift' from Arnhem Land. Madrill of Beswick Station wrote in 1936:

stock are awfull poor and weak and what makes it worse the blacks are at Liberty to walk all through the cattle and Burn everywhere. All my country has been burnt right out including 3 stock yards, I expect to lose about 500 head of Breeders this year if we don't get rain this month as now I have to shift them for feed.³

Madrill was told by Chief Surveyor Shepherd that Aborigines were legally entitled to free right of range and hunting over leased areas, as they had done before the leases were taken out. V.C. Hall, of the Maranboy police, supported Madrill's claim:

The presence of wandering bands of Aborigines on a Pastoral lease is directly subversive of the whole purpose of the Lease; it is an axiom so well known in the bush that 'cattle and blacks will not mix', as to be scarcely necessary to mention it. The unrestricted presence of aboriginals on a Pastoral Lease is entirely disastrous to the purpose of the pioneer cattleman.

1. Sectional Committee of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, Report together with Minutes of Evidence, (a) Northern Territory Railway - Extension from Mataranka to Daly Waters, Commonwealth Parliamentary Papers, 1922:62

2. CRS F630 PL104N, F630 158N

3. CRS F630 PL158N

It is not as though the aboriginals in general, or of this sector of the Territory have 'no place to go'. They are amply provided with reserves even from the point of view of the most ardent moralist. There is the 32,000 Sq. miles of the big Reserve adjacent, as well as other smaller reserves, and all the unoccupied Crown Lands for them to range over.¹

It is likely that Aborigines were using Beswick Station as a travelling route connecting Arnhem Land areas with the tinfield at Maranboy. In 1937, Mounted Constable Hall called for 'increased vigilance on the part of the out-back Police' because of the access of Aborigines from Arnhem Land to the Maranboy community.² Because the white pastoral population was sparsely settled, there was little possibility for whites to control the movements of Aborigines in the bush or on the peripheries of white settlement. Complaints such as Madrill's indicate the extent to which Aborigines who retained the traditional economic base were able to ignore the presence of pastoralists, and simply supplement their lifestyles with visits to European settlements such as Maranboy.

Jeannie Gunn in We of the Never-Never characterises relations between white pastoralists as very close, brought about by isolation and need. If this 'mateship' spirit ever really existed, it gave way in subsequent years to rivalry and feuding between stations. Whereas in the first 30 years of pastoral settlement competition for land had been between pastoralists and Aborigines, pastoralists began to compete among themselves for the use of land and its resources. At first the resentment was directed towards cattle stealers and illegal musterers who owned no land. Shadforth, Manager of Elsey Station 1916-1920, complained to the Director of Lands in 1919 about:

People that have no country, and yet go about mustering on Crown Lands, and coming on to stations when the hands are mustering on the opposite side of that run.³

1. CRS F630 PL158N
2. CRS F1 48/10
3. CRS F5 S175

The size of the runs and the absence of adequate boundaries made the stealing of cleanskins (unbranded cattle) relatively easy, and the practice continued throughout the period. Madrill of Beswick Station, given a 25% reduction in rent in 1937, demanded

something better than that we want more proction (sic) for our stock there is some people making a better living stealing stock and paying no rent and the blacks walk all through our stock.¹

In the 1920s cattlemen began to have grievances against each other, over boundaries, roads, grazing rights and water rights. F. Thonemann wrote in 1927 that he was 'having difficulty with neighbours trespassing on Elsey and Hodgson with the excuse that they are on roads opened by themselves'. He wrote that Roper Valley Station had three roads to Hodgson Downs, and five through Elsey Station, giving 'undesirable people great opportunities for wrongdoing'. Drovers were supposed to drive stock through designated stock routes. There was no such stock route from Roper Valley in any direction, and according to Thonemann, Rogers of Roper Valley took the view that he could therefore take any route he liked, and still be complying with the regulations.²

Another dispute, in 1919, involving Beswick Station and a Maranboy butcher, John Shuter, over grazing rights, resulted in a declaration of common land in the Maranboy district.³ There was sometimes little basis for accusations made against other cattlemen, and such incidents illustrate the high level of tension in relations between cattlemen. In 1933 Harold Giles of Elsey complained to the Mataranka police that he 'believed' that Edwin Lowe of Mataranka Station had travelled a plant of horses through Elsey Station 'without sufficient notice'. When the matter was investigated, Lowe told

1. CRS F630 PL158N
2. CRS F5 R243
3. CRS F5 M192

police that he had sent written notice of his intentions, but that the letter could not have arrived in time.¹ Giles also reported that he suspected that Lowe's stockboys were illegally carrying firearms, a complaint probably more designed to incriminate Lowe than the Aboriginal stockworkers. In disputes between stations, Aboriginal workers owed allegiance to the station for which they worked. In a feud between Mataranka and Beswick Stations in the late 1930s and 1940s, Mark O'Connor of Mataranka Station reported that a part-Aboriginal called Campfire of Beswick Station was illegally mustering his cattle, and another, Teddy Little, attempted to get into O'Connor's tent 'to give him a bashing'.²

A contributing factor in disputes between cattlemen was the refusal of police to be involved. It was the policy of the Police Branch not to prosecute in matters of cattle stealing by whites, since, in the words of the Police Commissioner, 'neighbouring pastoralists would only be making a convenience of the police to settle their private differences'.³

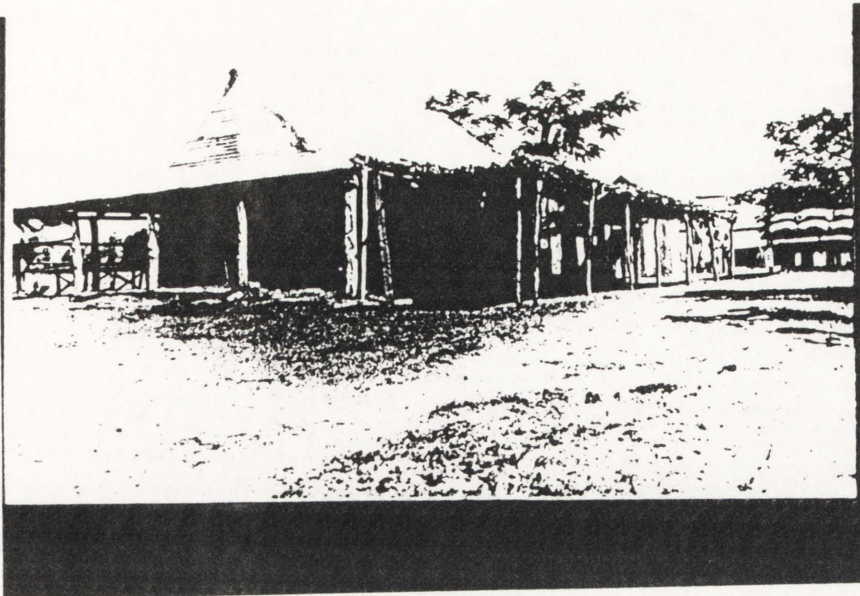
Pastoralists were told that they must settle disputes amicably or take civil action. Cases settled by the former means are not accessible to the historian, and disputes tended to develop into full-scale feuds before civil action was taken as a last resort.

One such feud concerned the damming of Red Lily Lagoon, on Elsey Station, which, according to successive lessees of Roper Valley Station, reduced the amount of water flowing down the Roper into that station. For many years it had been an Aboriginal custom partially to dam the lagoon with small sticks for the purpose of conserving fish and attracting ducks during the

1. Mataranka Police Journal, 1933

2. CRS F1 46/820 (Pt 1)

3. Ibid



The Homestead, Hodgson Downs, 1934.
from photographs accompanying the Pastoral Leases Investigation
Committee Report, 1935.



The paper-bark dam at Red Lily Lagoon, on Elsey Station, 1934.
from photographs accompanying the Pastoral Leases Investigation
Committee Report, 1935

later part of the dry season. Lessees of Elsey Station continued the practice because it enabled cattle to drink from the lagoon on hard ground. If the lagoon was not dammed, losses of cattle were sustained through bogging and crocodiles.¹ George Conway, who formed Roper Valley Station in 1910, wrote that the dam did not become a problem until Frank Earl, manager of Elsey Station from 1920 till 1926, raised the level of the dam.² The first formal complaint was made by J.W. Rogers of Roper Valley in 1926, and Rogers continued to register annual complaints after Harold Giles was appointed manager of Elsey in 1927.³ In 1934 Roper Valley was sold to a partnership of T. Allison Holt and Roy Chisholm, who, after extensive and numerous reports on the dam by police, surveyors, engineers, and even the army, took the issue to court in 1946. The case was won by Roper Valley on a legal technicality, but throughout the long struggle between the stations, each side attempted to engage the support of other cattlemen in the area. George Conway sided with Holt and Chisholm, and Frank Earl, against whom the original complaint was made, did likewise.⁴ Mary Peterson of Mataranka said that Elsey and Roper Valley were 'always fighting over anything', and that 'Mannion [the Mataranka policeman in the 1930s] had much bigger problems with cattle stations than with Aborigines'.⁵

There are no records pointing to good relations between pastoralists and stations, though they must have also existed. Available evidence points always to conflict. However, analysis of conflict situations show the demarcation points between interest groups, and in this instance the class interests in the intra-station hierarchy were subordinated to the interests

1. CRS F1 46/406

2. CRS F5 R248

3. Ibid

4. Ibid

5. Peterson, personal interview.

of the station owners and managers against each other.

Using a race relations master-servant model, M.C. Hartwig has characterised the situation on an intra-station level as intractable, possessing an inherent stability, based on the 'paternalism of the dominant caste' and the 'accommodation of the subordinate group to its inferior status'.¹

The two 'racial castes' were fundamentally separated by a wide gap in status, living standards, legal rights and cultural traditions. While such an analysis is acceptable if the fact of race is taken to be the only criterion for the grouping of people, it does tend to treat Aborigines as an undifferentiated mass. It leaves no room for understanding that fundamental changes took place in the power structure of Aboriginal society, allied to the transfer of economic base from hunter-gatherer to subsistence labour economy. Further, station life was not the only option open to Aborigines, as the perseverance of traditional economies outside the fringe of pastoral settlement testifies.

M.C. Hartwig, 'Aborigines and Racism; an Historical Perspective', in J.S. Stevens, ed., Racism: The Australian Experience, Vol 2, ANZ Books, Sydney, 1972:13-14

Chapter 3

The Tinfeld

In the beginning of 1914, when the sheep which Gilruth hoped would attract settlers were straggling the last miles to Mataranka Station, a new and unsolicited settlement was forming nearby at Maranboy. Profitable quantities of tin were discovered in 1913 by Sharber and Richardson in the valleys of the Maranboy and Beswick Creeks and their tributaries, and by July 1914 there were 80 independent claim holders on the new field.¹ Though this could hardly be termed a 'rush' on standards set by the Victorian gold-fields, for the Northern Territory it was a settlement of some significance. In spite of his commitment to settlement of a pastoral and agricultural kind, even Gilruth was pleased, and following recommendations made by the Director of Mines, H.I. Jensen, construction began in 1914 on a ten head battery with concentrators to crush the tin ore. The bureaucracy in Melbourne saw fit to criticise the Administration for proceeding with the battery with undue haste, without proper mining investigation to discover whether there would be enough tin to justify its construction.² Such an investigation was subsequently carried out by geologist G.J. Gray in 1914, and he reported the tinfeld to be a viable economic proposition.³ Because of isolation and freight costs, the Northern Territory's mining record had previously been poor, but the discovery of tin coincided nicely with high prices brought by World War I.⁴

Jensen thought that the field would last for a long time. In 1914 he estimated the extent of tin bearing country to be eight miles long and four

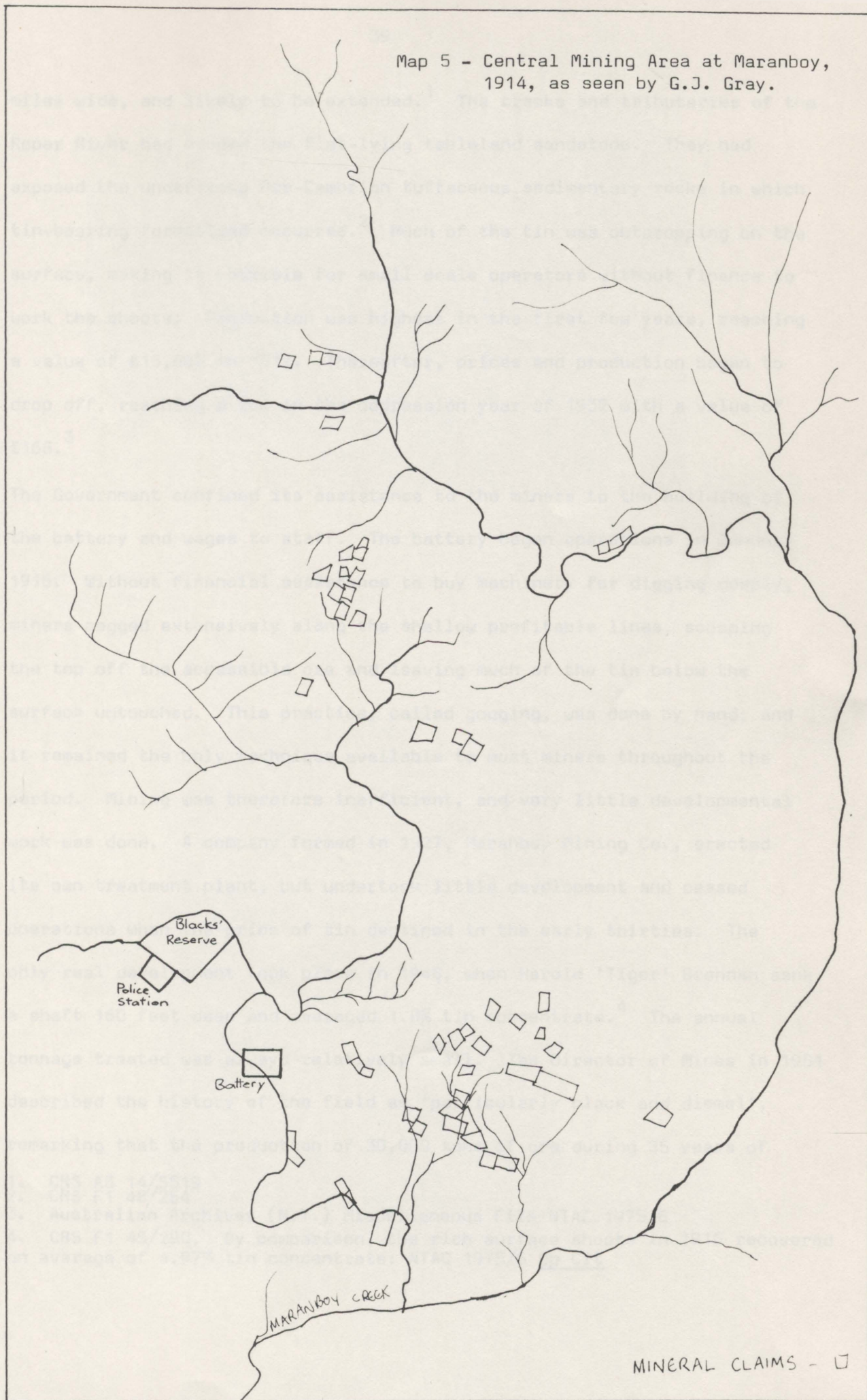
1. CRS A3 14/5519

2. Ibid: T.G. Oliver, Department of External Affairs, to the Inspector of Mines.

3. CRS A3 17/1402

4. Bauer, Op Cit:240

Map 5 - Central Mining Area at Maranboy,
1914, as seen by G.J. Gray.



miles wide, and likely to be extended.¹ The creeks and tributaries of the Roper River had eroded the flat-lying tableland sandstone. They had exposed the underlying Pre-Cambrian tuffaceous sedimentary rocks in which tin-bearing formations occurred.² Much of the tin was outcropping on the surface, making it possible for small scale operators without finance to work the shoots. Production was highest in the first few years, reaching a value of £15,660 in 1917. Thereafter, prices and production began to drop off, reaching a low in the depression year of 1932 with a value of £168.³

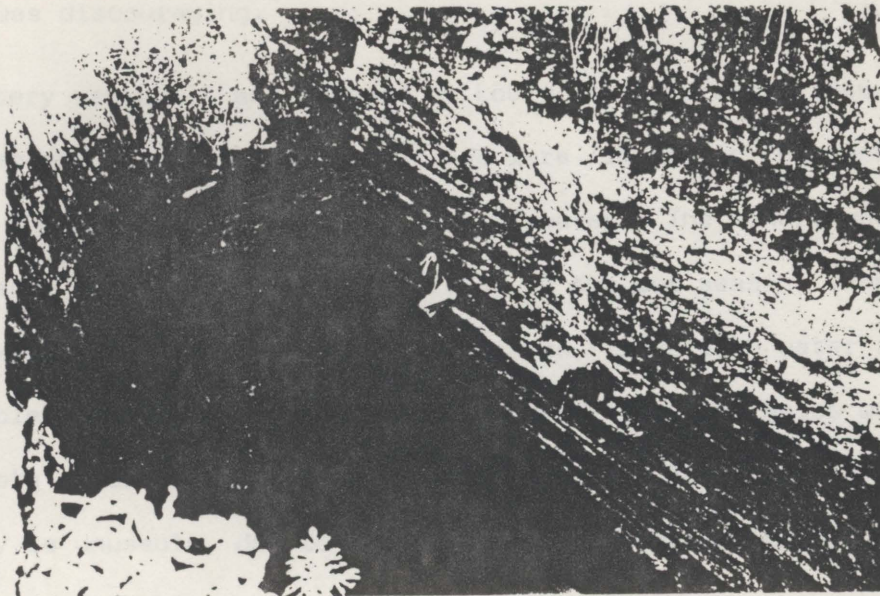
The Government confined its assistance to the miners to the building of the battery and wages to staff. The battery began operations in January 1916. Without financial assistance to buy machinery for digging deeply, miners pegged extensively along the shallow profitable lines, scooping the top off the accessible ore and leaving much of the tin below the surface untouched. This practice, called gouging, was done by hand; and it remained the only technique available to most miners throughout the period. Mining was therefore inefficient, and very little developmental work was done. A company formed in 1927, Maranboy Mining Co., erected its own treatment plant, but undertook little development and ceased operations when the price of tin declined in the early thirties. The only real development took place in 1948, when Harold 'Tiger' Brennan sank a shaft 160 feet deep and averaged 1.8% tin concentrate.⁴ The annual tonnage treated was always relatively small. The Director of Mines in 1951 described the history of the field as 'particularly black and dismal', remarking that the production of 30,000 tons of ore during 35 years of

1. CRS A3 14/5519

2. CRS F1 48/254

3. Australian Archives (N.T.) Miscellaneous File NTAC 1975/6

4. CRS F1 45/290. By comparison, the rich surface shoots in 1916 recovered an average of 4.97% tin concentrate: NTAC 1975/6 Op Cit



Holes at Maranboy left by mining operations. Taken in the wet season, February 1983.



mining was discouraging.¹

The battery was built and managed by Louis Stutterd until 1946. Powered by boiler and steam engine, operations were limited to four months of the year in the wet season, owing to lack of water. The miners worked in the dry season, while the battery was idle; in the wet season, when the battery was working, the holes gouged by the miners filled with water and became unworkable. In the absence of pumping facilities, the holes were worked to a depth of about 50 feet and then abandoned. Today the land around Maranboy is unusable, due to the presence of numerous large holes.

The population of white miners actually working on the field probably never much exceeded the 1914 figure of 80 given by Jensen. Atlee Hunt, Secretary of the Department of External Affairs, set the 1915 figure at 120 to 150 miners, but a large number of these had been granted exemptions pending battery completion, and were working on railway construction or in Darwin.² The 1915 Report of the Administrator gave the average number of miners at 30, with an additional 16 labourers, two carters, and one officer.³ In 1918 there were 47 European men and six European women,⁴ and probably only 30 or so of these were miners. Two of the women were nurses, brought with the Australian Inland Mission hospital which was set up in 1916 when a malaria epidemic at the field killed many people. One of the women was Ethel Stutterd, the battery manager's wife, and the remaining three were wives of miners. The 1925 figures were given as 25 miners, three teamsters and four battery hands.⁵

1. CRS F1 45/290

2. Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, 1916, Op Cit:16

3. Report of the Administrator, 1915:73. The European female population was not counted until 1918, and the Aboriginal population not until 1927.

4. Report of the Administrator, 1918:17

5. Report of the Administrator, 1925:27

A rise in the price of tin in 1926-27 led to increased numbers of miners in the late 1920s, and the 1929 figures were 45 miners, 17 European female adults, and seven children under 12.¹ No further figures for whites are available until 1943, but as the production of tin never again reached its former levels, the population probably decreased. In 1943 there were nine miners left, with two carters and two battery hands.²

There were never any Chinese miners at Maranboy. In 1913, before the first miners arrived, the Government declared an area of 30 square miles around Maranboy (formerly spelt Marranboy) to be a new goldfield under Section 8 of the Northern Territory Mining Act of 1903. The express purpose of the legislation was to prevent Asiatic holders of a miners' right from mining on that field.³ No gold was ever found on the tinfield, but the legislation, along with a decline in the Chinese population generally in the Territory, effectively kept such 'undesirables' out.

The largest population group at Maranboy, and one which has received the least attention in records of the period, was the Aborigines. No figures were given until 1927, when the estimated number was 270, about four times the European population.⁴ In 1929 the recorded figure was 272,⁵ and in 1930 it was 250.⁶ The tinfield was situated within the Djauan tribal territory, and from 1913 onwards each miner employed two or more Aborigines and rationed their dependants.

The working Aborigines were the pivot around which the whole settlement operated. They worked not only for the miners, but also for the miners' wives, the prospectors, the police, the hospital, and the women as well

1. Report on the Administration of the Territory of North Australia, 1929:13
2. CRS F1 43/85
3. CRS F141 445/15
4. Report on the Administration of the Territory of North Australia, 1927:11
5. Report on the Administration of the Territory of North Australia, 1929:9
6. Report on the Administration of the Territory of North Australia, 1930:7

gave sexual favours to the miners, billabongers,¹ and visiting railway workers. V.C. Hall, the policeman at Maranboy in the 1930s, later wrote that 'the Aborigine' was 'the Territory's most vital economic asset', 'in every sense of the word the key person, irrespective of sex'.²

Hall's words emphasise a racial categorisation at the expense of complex economic and cultural interaction. Aborigines were not all a 'vital economic asset'. Djauan Aborigines provided a core of employed workers, but Maranboy was an Aboriginal trading centre, and people from other tribes visited the area to trade in bamboo for spears. Aborigines from Rembarunga tribal territory, bordering Djauan on the north-east, also began to be employed at the field in the 1930s.³ Besides working Aborigines, there were dependants, non-working Aborigines living on the fringe of mining settlement, traders and visitors, and others who lived a partial or total tribal life. Hall himself indirectly drew attention to the presence of different groups of Aborigines when he wrote to the Superintendent of Police in 1937 of his concern about Arnhemlander traffic into Maranboy. He called for 'increased vigilance on the part of the out-back Police', since the 'so-called Reserve' was in reality 'a refuge':

... this Station abuts on that vast human zoo known as the Arnhem Land Aboriginal Reserve, from which Aborigines have free access (sic) down here into this community.

At any time a settler may be speared, or a crime be committed calling for quick and fast mounted work to give the police a sporting chance to get on tracks and clean up the affair by 'first intention', thus perhaps avoiding a long and expensive search.⁴

Violence between Aborigines, and between Aborigines and whites was common particularly in the early years when the population was transient. Fay

1. A billabonger was a prospector who receives government assistance but simply disappears into the bush and camps at a billabong while rations last, without attempting any prospecting. CRS F144 928

2. V.C. Hall, Sister Ruth, Spearman, London, 1968:15

3. J. Brinke, 'Demography and Settlement Geography of the Rembarunga Tribe' Anthropologie, 1979, 17(2/3):178

4. CRS F1 48/10

Shepherd, daughter of Louis and Ethel Stutterd, recalled that 'Police spent a lot of their time chasing murderers'¹. Numerous deaths of Aborigines 'under suspicious circumstances' are recorded in Police Journals, and there were probably more that were not recorded. In the seven months preceding July 1916, five deaths were recorded at the field: one Aborigine was murdered, one miner was murdered (Stutterd presumed the offence had been committed by Aborigines) and three other whites whose manner of death was not recorded.² Also common were fierce arguments between Aboriginal men and women, in which the latter were sometimes speared or hit on the head with stones. Shepherd believed that 'the lubras were punished very severely if they didn't keep on the straight and narrow'.³ More common than murder were charges against Aborigines of stealing or drinking, and Stutterd, empowered to deal with minor offences, regularly heard cases against Aborigines. One Aborigine, Jacky, was sentenced to two months' gaol in 1916 for larceny. He subsequently escaped while being transported to Pine Creek, and returned to Maranboy. Here he was recaptured and charged with escaping from legal custody, for which he was sentenced to a further four months in prison. The general practice for Aboriginal offenders was to send them to prison; for white offenders, a fine was usually levied instead.⁴

The stealers and raiders amongst Aborigines were generally those who were not employed. Their settlement history at Maranboy is marked by constant efforts by the authorities to control their movements. In 1923 Harold Giles, the Maranboy policeman (who later became manager of Elsey Station)

1. Northern Territory Government Oral History Program, Record of Interview, Fay Shepherd.
2. Katherine Police Journal, 1915-1919
3. Northern Territory Government Oral History Program, Fay Shepherd.
4. Katherine Police Journal, 1915-1919

applied for an area of ground to be set aside and declared a camping place for Aborigines. The reason given was that non-working Aborigines camped wherever they liked, outside Dan Dillon's store, and caused trouble with Aborigines employed by locals:

At times the bush blacks come in in big mobs and loaf about these camps and there does not seem to be any way of preventing them.¹

Giles proposed an area of 12 chains by five chains (six acres) which was subsequently declared a reserve in April 1923. The attempt at curtailment had no effect, for in the following year Mounted Constable White of Maranboy requested that a prohibited area for Aborigines be made, because

The Blacks at the present time, camp all over the field, and when the miners are absent at work, the Blacks sneak to their camps and steal anything they can lay their hands on, and it is very difficult to catch them.

If the area is made, the supervision of the natives will be much easier to carry out.²

It took only 11 days before an area of 4,000 acres was declared prohibited to Aborigines, covering most of the field. Aborigines appear to have ignored the legislation. Mounted Constable Cheyne reported in 1926 that Aborigines were present all over the prohibited area.³

Few charges were levied against the 'Tin Boys' - those actually employed by the miners, and such cases were dealt with sympathetically. Mitemore, employed by Stutterd, was convicted without penalty in 1940 of unlawfully drinking intoxicating liquor. William Moore (part-Aboriginal) charged in 1940 with the same offence, was fined £5. Both were dealt with 'leniently', the latter because he was a self-employed partner with a European in a tin mine, and was 'a good worker'.⁴

1. CRS F1 294/23

2. Ibid

3. CRS A1 28/9474

4. CRS F3 20/2/5

The Tin Boys worked hard at the mines, and gained the respect of their employers. Efforts at 'native control' were not generally directed at them, and an attempt in 1943 by the Native Affairs Branch to remove Aboriginal wives to a compound met with a belligerent response from miners, and forceful opposition from Stutterd and the Director of Mines, W.A. Hughes. Employment of female Aborigines by single European men was illegal, but because they were regarded as indispensable the authorities at Maranboy had previously turned a blind eye to the practice. The few European women on the field threatened to leave if the Aboriginal women were removed, as without them there would be nobody to do the 'drudge work'. Abbott, the Administrator, overrode the advice of the Director of Mines and in May 1943 the Aboriginal women were taken away.

The result was cohesive action on the part of the Tin Boys. Stutterd wrote that 'all working Aborigines have cleared out and production has practically ceased'. Sixteen miners petitioned the Government, writing that the workers were experienced Base Metal Miners, were happy and contented in their work, but refused to work unless their wives and families were with them. The combined efforts of Aborigines, miners and management were unsuccessful, and the directive was maintained. Tin production slowed even further, and to keep the services of the Tin Boys the miners had to send a truck to the compound every morning (a distance of seven miles) to collect the workers, and bring them home every evening.¹

Underlying the directive was the categorisation of all Aborigines on the basis of race, and conflict ensued because Abbott failed to recognise the significance of Aboriginal workers in the mining economy. The women were at the bottom of the conflict. Protector had been unimpressed with relations

1. CRS F1 43/85

between miners and Aboriginal women since the mine first opened. As early as 1914 a complaint was made that 'miners have in the last year brought Venereal Disease to every lubra in the Maranboy district'.¹ A report in 1925 called the miners 'a very undesirable crowd', 'mostly squatting down with the Gins' while Aboriginal men did 'a bit of gouging'.² Periodically there was trouble at the field when railway workers visited, supplying methylated spirits in exchange for sexual favours. At these times the camp was 'in an uproar'.³ It was a report in 1943 of 'contact' between Aborigines and employees of the Main Roads Board and the introduction of methylated spirits which precipitated the removal of women to the compound by the Native Affairs Branch.⁴

The incident of the removal of Aboriginal women is the only recorded event in which miners and management were of the same mind. Generally the relations between the two were strained. The Director of Mines in 1945 referred to Stutterd's 'regime', and his inability to deal sympathetically with the miners throughout his term as Battery Manager.⁵ Stutterd was explicitly condescending towards the miners. Giving evidence to the Public Works Committee on railway construction in 1916, he spoke of the 'undesirable types of claim holder' who were slow and inefficient:

This may be due largely to a process of elimination whereby the better class of labour is able to remain in congenial surroundings, leaving the unfit to satisfy outside requirements.⁶

In 1918 the miners petitioned the Government, expressing 'considerable dissatisfaction' regarding the actions and attitudes of the Battery Manager. In reporting the matter, Chief Warden Playford expressed the hope that the ventilation of grievances would lead to more harmony.⁷

1. CRS A3 16/608

2. CRS A3 25/2247

3. CRS F1 43/85

4. Ibid

5. CRS F1 44/167

6. Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, 1916, Op Cit:67

7. Report of the Administrator, 1918:6

It was an optimistic expectation. In 1921, industrial action, supported by the Australian Workers Union, took place over rates of pay and conditions for the supply of firewood to the battery. The action resulted in severe financial losses to the miners, since for much of that wet season the battery was inoperative. Stutterd attributed the action to 'the antics of a few arrogant red-raggers working under the guise of unionism'. The miners supported the unionists (Stutterd wrote that the 'unionists managed to bluff them') and Stutterd was unable to get the miners to supply firewood in the absence of an authorised union contractor. Stutterd wrote in his report to the Administrator:

Apparently the mill is run for the sole benefit of the members of the A.W.U., and I am here simply to pay the men, and do what little I am allowed to safeguard the interests of the Government.¹

Infrequent visits to the field by authorities in Darwin always met with deputations of miners demanding better conditions. Often the nature of the requests were such that they could have been dealt with by the Battery Manager, without recourse to further Government intervention. In 1927, 45 miners held a meeting and elected a committee of Messrs Grady, Allmich, Fotinos, Dooley and Scott to meet with Norman Bell, Warden and Government Assayer. Their demands included basic pumping equipment to get water out of the mines after the wet season, so that work could proceed; preference for local miners for casual employment at the Battery; cessation of favouritism by the Battery Manager towards a new company, Maranboy Mining Co.; improved roads; advances to carters from unprocessed ore; and a visit by a Government geologist. Bell reported the meeting to the Administrator, who supplied a portable pumping plant, organised the payment of carters, and the improvement of roads.²

1. Report of the Administrator, 1921:17

2. CRS F20 No. 71

R.W. Coxon, Director of Mines in 1951, commented on the history of Government policy on the mine as being in 'a spirit of laissez faire'. It interested itself only in tin production, and not in the people involved or the methods of mining. Coxon believed that the Government's attitude was to keep the battery going and the miners quiet. Nothing else mattered.¹

Miners and working Aborigines protected each other's interests. Nor were the police uniformly opposed to lawbreaking. Mounted Constable Cheyne, Maranboy policeman in 1926, reported on a sly-grog traffic allegedly run by storekeeper Dan Dillon and Dan Lynch. Grog was being sold to Aborigines at 5/- a nip, and miners were protecting Aborigines against the police. It emerged that Cheyne was running a mine as a sideline to his official job, in his wife's name, and that he had no intention of catching anyone involved in the grog-traffic.²

The position of the policeman was a difficult one. His patrol area amounted to hundreds of miles, and he was called upon to perform numerous functions which were by definition sometimes in conflict - Stock Inspector, Registrar, Inspector of Roads and Waters, Protector, Mining Field Warden, and general overseer of all forms of administration including medical work.³ Police quarters at Maranboy were poor, in 1934 having an ant-bed floor and no running water.⁴

The Battery Manager's home was the only building which could properly be described as a house. Described by Fay Shepherd as 'like an enormous meat safe', the house had a cement floor and was mosquito proof. Inner walls were constructed from tightly stretched unbleached calico.⁵ The local store

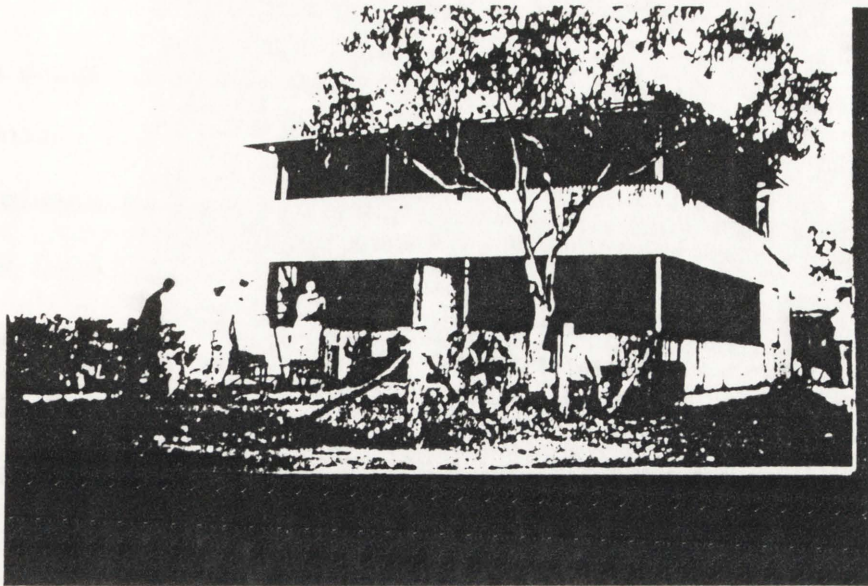
1. CRS F1 45/290

2. CRS A1 28/9474

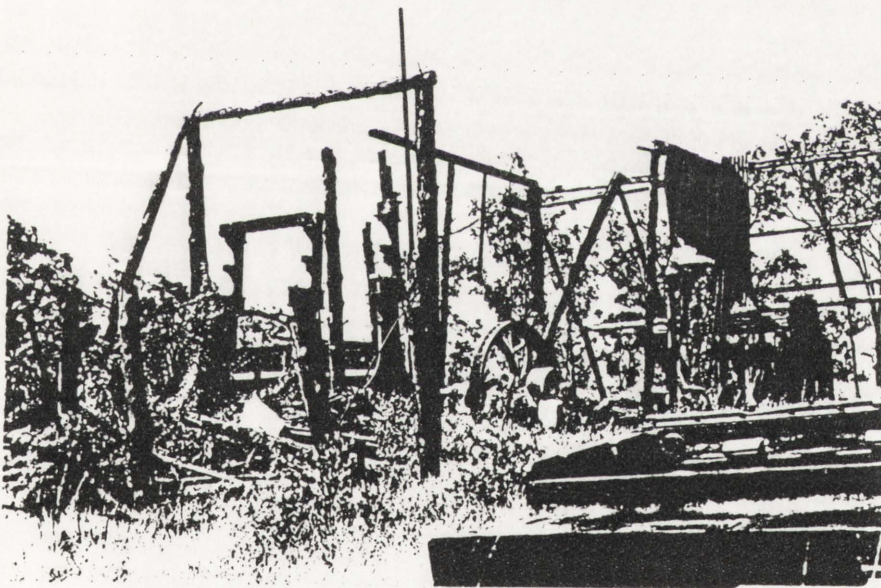
3. V.C. Hall, Op Cit:15

4. CRS F1 48/10

5. Northern Territory Government Oral History Program, Record of Interview, Fay Shepherd



Home of the Battery Manager, Louis Stutterd, at Maranboy, c.1930s.
from the Jones Collection.



Remains of treatment plant built by Maranboy Mining Co. in 1927.
Taken February 1983.

was a paper-bark shanty. Some of the miners had paper-bark houses with galvanised iron roofs, others had mud houses made from clay and ant-bed.¹ Aboriginal workers lived with the miners or at the Aboriginal camp about a mile from the Battery Manager's house.

Stutterd's family probably ate better than anyone else at Maranboy. Stores were imported annually from Brisbane. The only shortage was fresh fruit and vegetables. Whatever the family ate, their Aboriginal employees ate, including plenty of meat, but the workers' favourite foods were porridge and rice, and bread and golden syrup or jam.

Many of the miners subsisted on bread and jam, not being able to afford the beef sold by station-owners. George Fisher ate galah and kangaroo. He recalled to Douglas Lockwood

If you ever want tough tucker try a brolga. But if you want to use it for its intended purpose then resole your shoes with a piece of breast meat.²

Refrigerators were unknown, and miners did not buy foods that needed to be kept cool, concentrating instead on flour, sugar and tea. Some miners had goods hauled in by wagon train, others relied on the local store, which gave extended credit. Miners shared their food and tobacco with Aboriginal employees, often instead of pay. Aboriginal women breastfed their children until they were two or three years old. After that, it was 'straight onto corned beef'.³

The Stutterd daughters rarely left the house. Their mother would not allow them out alone, and they never saw the Aboriginal camp and rarely went near the mines. By contrast, the miners often formed close relationships with Aborigines, who replaced the families the miners did not have. One such

1. Northern Territory Government Oral History Program, Record of Interview, Fay Shepherd

2. Lockwood, Op Cit, 1964:159

3. Northern Territory Government Oral History Program, Record of Interview, Fay Shepherd

was Paul Allmich, who 'adopted' an Aboriginal boy, Eric, soon after his arrival in 1926. Eric subsequently married and had eight children, all of whom lived at Allmich's camp.¹

Miners tended to associate with each other and with Aborigines, steering clear of 'civilised' life. Fay Shepherd recalled that in spite of sickness the miners didn't want even the hospital -

most of them of course would be bushmen who couldn't bear being washed every day and having to have showers and all that sort of thing and be clean and having women around ... Some of them didn't even want the hospital. They felt the place was becoming far too civilised when you had women round the place. The less women there were the better they liked it. It was a man's world.²

By contrast, the Stutterd females clung to the trappings of 'civilisation'. They read 'American lady's Home Journals' for 'weeks on end', and did a lot of needlework - doilies and tablecentres and tablecloths and pillowcases for their glory boxes. Meanwhile they dressed for the bush, wearing very loose dresses with only side and shoulder seams, no sleeves, and bare feet.

Interaction at the Maranboy settlement was of political, economic, cultural kinds, and reflected a class bias. The most numerous group, the visiting Aborigines and those living at the Aboriginal camp, were to some extent outside the framework of European class relations, and had their own economic and political structure. They came to trade with each other and raid mining camps, which they did with some success, since miners' camps were generally situated on the claims and were some distance apart.

The second most numerous group was comprised of working Aborigines, defined as a group by their position in relation to the mining economy. Whereas power in Aboriginal society generally came with age (for males), young men could become independent of the Aboriginal power structure through employ-

1. Lockwood, Op Cit, 1964:161-2

2. Northern Territory Government Oral History Program, Record of Interview, Fay Shepherd

ment, and were the ones who had most to gain by a transfer to a wages economy. Since no Aboriginal camp depended on their employment for the supply of rations, as was the case in the pastoral industry, there was a degree of cultural separation over time. This is identified in the tendency of some Aboriginal workers and their wives and families to live with the miners rather than at the Aboriginal camp, and, in later years at least, to remain with the miners during the wet season when the mines were not operating.¹ Aboriginal workers were not implicitly 'owned' by white miners as they were in the pastoral industry, and there was the possibility for upward social mobility in the mining economy. At least one Aboriginal worker, William Moore (see page 44), eventually became a self-employed miner.

The third group was the miners, all small-scale operators without much money. In the early years this population was transient, but as the price of tin declined, there remained a core of 30 or so permanent residents. Members of this group also tried their hands at carting, gardening, and one miner ran the local store.² As a group the miners actively sought better mining conditions from the Government, but did not encourage development of a kind that would lead to the 'civilising' of their lifestyle, particularly the presence of white women. They were dependent on their Aboriginal workers, and paid them occasionally and poorly, but because their claims were of only ten acres, they lacked the power of extensive land ownership held by whites in the cattle industry. There was little possibility for the subordination of Aboriginal workers into the sort of hierarchy that existed on the stations. There is evidence that some long-term close relationships were formed between white miners and their employees.

1. CRS F1 43/85

2. Lockwood, Op Cit, 1964:161; CRS F915, Joe Israelson; CRS F912, Dan Dillon.

The Government battery existed to serve the miners, but in practice the class relationship between Stutterd and the miners was similar to that obtaining between management and workers of a company, in which workers had to agitate against management for better conditions. The management, concentrated in one man, regarded miners' claims as necessarily antagonistic to the Government's interests. Miners organised union activity and, bypassing the management, sought arbitration from the Administration in Darwin.

On a routine level the interests of each group reflected its class interests. Further, the quality of housing, food, social interaction and attitudes reflected a class bias.

Chapter 4

Comparisons

The similarities in the three forms of settlement are general ones, relating to the conditions of racial and cultural contact between Europeans and Aborigines. The main assumption governing white settlement was that since there was no evidence of agriculture, buildings, or industry, the land was there for the taking. Whites believed their culture to be superior, and asserted this economically first by dispossessing the former owners and then by undervaluing the labour of Aboriginal employees.

Aborigines also perceived the possibilities for exploitation and manipulation of the new settlers. In spite of the imposition of white control over the land, Aborigines had a choice about what they would take from the white culture and economy. To some extent they were able in all three areas to call the tune in labour relations. Aborigines worked only on the condition that the employer supplied food and tobacco to dependants. They reserved the right to leave employment for months at a time to fulfil ceremonial obligations and renew their cultural and economic acquaintance with the land and people. In the pastoral and mining industries, work slowed during the wet season, and workers were able to arrange for time off. Where Aborigines were domestically employed all year round, employers had either to train new staff or do without.

However, these general conditions were complicated by the differences in the forms of settlement, and the particular economic interests involved in each. Firstly, the nature of settlement determined the degree to which each settlement was regarded as permanent, which in turn had an effect on the developing social relations. This was particularly significant at Mataranka. On the one hand, the Federal Government and Administration in Darwin promoted,

through a determination to send a railway south to populated areas, through Gilruth's idea of an 'inland capital', and through experimental farming and other enterprises, a notion that Mataranka was to become an expanding centre more permanent than Darwin. It encouraged settlers to 'get in on the ground floor' of the new town. The buying up of numerous business blocks when the town was declared in 1928 testifies to the belief among new residents that they were about to serve a thriving township. On the other hand, the failure of the experimental station, the uncertain future of the railway and the absence of cattle markets for the pastoral industry surrounding the town made the settlement not only impermanent, but unlikely to ever function as a proper town. Instead of prosperous settlers, the great depression indirectly caused the settlement of impoverished unskilled peanut farmers in the Mataranka region, settlers who were unable to contribute to any notion of permanence or prosperity.

Besides the short-lived peanut industry, there were only the railway and the pastoral industry to keep the town going. These brought visitors but no permanent residents. The settlement contracted over time rather than expanded, and since it did not constitute an industry dependent on Aboriginal labour, there was little reason to interfere with the Aboriginal camp outside the town. Aboriginal and European settlement remained economically separate, and employed Aborigines who participated in both tended to preserve the separation. Aside from the employment of Aborigines, the two settlements were largely irrelevant to each other.

The Government, as the most powerful interest group in the formation of the town, also interfered with Aborigines. It legislated for rates of pay, and, under the guise of 'protection', punished the sick. Through the presence of the town, the railway and the peanut farms, the Government was directly responsible for the erosion of Aboriginal land power.

The pastoral industry made the greatest inroads into Aboriginal land power. It was based on the conviction of its European participants that it was permanent. At Mataranka, impermanence and the fact that Aborigines inhabited land on the periphery of white settlement contributed to a form of local social relations based on laissez faire. In the pastoral industry, notions of permanence, added to the fact that pastoralists took over land on which Aborigines traditionally ranged, meant that a system of social relations had to be worked out whereby Aborigines and pastoralists could inhabit the same land.

In setting up camps on stations, Aborigines were able to remain on the land without direct persecution. Life on stations was better than 'dispersal'. They had recourse to European material goods, and were periodically given a beast which previously they would have had to steal and thereby invite 'recriminations'. In exchange, pastoralists demanded practically free labour, and a guarantee that Aborigines would not disturb cattle.

There were antagonisms inherent in this manipulative exchange which led to changes in Aboriginal society. Firstly, the cattle impoverished the land for hunting and gathering, eating the grasses, hardening the ground and drinking the waterholes which sustained wild game. In supporting this form of land use by their acceptance of the conditions by which they remained on the stations and by their labour, Aborigines contributed to the erosion of their traditional economic base. The effects of this only became evident gradually. Through their loss of land power, Aborigines lost the ability to maintain a social organisation in which land power was crucial. Their very presence on the stations was in the long-term an implicit acceptance that the cattlemen had gained the power to define the situation.

Secondly, the change from a hunter-gatherer lifestyle to dependence and employment, bringing about a change in the economic basis of Aboriginal

society, affected the traditional power structure. Without land power, some of the traditional mechanisms through which power was accorded lost their relevance. Access to the European power structure began to be useful. Because non-working Aborigines on stations were dependent for rations on the continued employment of workers, the latter held both economic and mununga power. Stockworkers did not, however, have power accruing from possession of ceremonies and ritual organisation, which remained in the hands of the older men. Both groups lacked land power, which was held by the pastoralists.

Those Aborigines who exercised their option of retaining a pre-contact existence held on to a circumscribed form of land power, by ignoring the European presence. They burnt the land as formerly, and disturbed the cattle as they moved through the runs. Levels of interaction with station Aborigines are not known,¹ but it is likely that in the off-season in the pastoral industry interaction took place.

Land ownership was crucial in the relations between pastoralists and Aboriginal employees. Pastoralists were the dominant power holders on the stations, exercising paternalistic control over both Aboriginal workers and non-workers. They 'owned' the Aborigines because of their legal title to the land. Although there was some degree of social mobility for Aborigines within this framework, such as the position of the stockworker which was accorded prestige in both the Aboriginal and white cultures, workers could not aspire to ownership of a pastoral property. They could not move out of their subordinate position.

1. Gunn records an incident in 1902 where station Aborigines warned 'myalls' about the movements of Europeans on Esley Station, Op Cit, Chapter 7:115-124; Michaela Richards, in 'Aborigines in the Victoria River Region: 1883-1928', Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies Newsletter, March, 1982, instances both co-operation and hostility between 'nomadic' and 'employed' Aborigines.

Interaction between pastoralists, following the expansion and entrenchment of the cattle industry, was based on competition for land and resources. At first, complaints of 'cattle duffing' were particularly directed against illegal musterers owning no land. Later, pastoralists vied with each other over cattle, boundaries, water rights and grazing rights. The social effect was the tendency of pastoralists and workers to function as units and to regard other stations as, if not enemies, not quite friends.

The nature of industry at Maranboy attracted a population which, particularly in the early years, was transient. White miners had control over very small areas of land, and, unlike pastoralists, had no means of control over large numbers of Aborigines. Miners were dependent on, and supported, only workers and their direct dependants. The power relationship between miners and their Aboriginal workers was based only on employer authority and the undervaluing of Aboriginal labour. Miners had no land power through which they could implicitly 'own' their workers. The social and economic distance between pastoralists and station Aborigines was not so great at the tinfield, where miners lived and worked alongside their Aboriginal employees.

Whereas in the pastoral industry working Aborigines contributed to the support of non-working Aborigines through their labour, the Aboriginal camp at Maranboy, as at Mataranka, existed outside the system of capitalist relations. The 'Tin Boys' were economically independent of wider Aboriginal society. The skills they acquired as Base Metal Miners allowed for the possibility of eventual self-employment. All working Aboriginal men had women with them, who also worked, but the movement and activities of Aboriginal women were largely controlled by their husbands. It is not known whether these were the women who provided sexual services to the whites, or whether women were drawn from the visiting population or from the Aboriginal camp, or both. There was no significant enhancement of the position of Aboriginal women as a result of sexual interaction with whites.

The non-working Aboriginal population, living in camp on the fringe of white settlement, was host to the visiting Aboriginal population who came to trade. This group, while retaining its economic and cultural ties with the land, exploited the widely spaced nature of white settlement by stealing and raiding, and made little attempt to separate itself in the way that the Aboriginal camp at Mataranka did. Its population was more transient than at Mataranka, and since Maranboy was adjacent to the Arnhem Land Reserve, there was considerably more freedom of movement.

Interaction between miners and management was generally antagonistic, and fits into a conventional management/worker model with its inherent conflicts. The employment position of Aborigines, however, complicated the class relations between management and miners. Both had an interest in keeping Aborigines working, since without them neither the mines nor the battery could operate. The unified stop-work action by male Aborigines in 1943 focused their dependence, having the temporary effect of uniting management and miners against the Native Affairs Branch.

Besides the degree of permanence associated with each settlement by residents, the nature of settlement itself gave rise to different forms of social relations. Where there was a specific industry involved, as at Maranboy and the cattle industry, there was a dependence on Aboriginal labour. The essential difference between the two forms of settlement was control over land; pastoralists exerted greater control over their workers than did the miners. Where there was no specific industry, as at Mataranka, there was little dependence on Aboriginal labour. Since there was also no large-scale white control of land, mechanisms for control were held only by the Government.

The three forms of settlement in this small region are covered for only a short span of years, but the variety of interaction is great. There is the interaction of two cultures, of external and local interests, of cultures within particular industries, and of class relations. Hence local history is in a sense a microcosm of the wider picture. The local level has relevance to the Northern Territory, and has implications for Australia, the British Empire and the world system. The historical questions are far from parochial, raising issues important for the study of social relations generally.¹

However, the variety and complexity of local interaction also cautions against generalisation. It involves many different sorts of history - political and administrative history, development history, pastoral history, mining history, and Aboriginal history, yet all work together. The region is best understood as an independent point operating in a shifting network of linkages between all these forms of history.

1. This is the approach to regional history taken by Alfred W. McCoy and C. de Jesus, (eds), Philippine Social History: Global Trade and Local Transformations, ASAA Southeast Asia Publication Series No 7, Ateneo de Manila University Press, Quezon City, George Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1982. Using trade linkages, the region is considered as the starting point from which to look outwards to the historic interaction between internal social change and external trade.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Official Government Publications

Jl.W. Bleakley, Report on the Aborigines and Half-Castes of Central Australia and North Australia, Commonwealth Parliamentary Papers, Vol II, 1929.

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, Report together with Minutes of Evidence in Regard to the Proposed Extension of the Pine Creek - Katherine River Railway Southwards so far as Bitter (Mataranka) Springs, Commonwealth Parliamentary Papers, Vol IV, 1916.

Report of the Administrator, Northern Territory of Australia, for the years 1912-1926.

Report on the Administration of the Territory of North Australia, for years 1927-1931.

Sectional Committee of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, Report (a) Northern Territory Railway Extension from Mataranka to Daly Waters; (b) Extension of the Port Augusta - Oodnadatta Railway from Oodnadatta to Alice Springs, Commonwealth Parliamentary Papers, Vol IV, 1922.

Professor W. Baldwin Spencer, Preliminary Report on the Aborigines of the Northern Territory, Bulletin of the Northern Territory, No 7, July 1913

Professor W. Baldwin Spencer, Dr J.A. Gilruth, Dr Woolnough, Dr A. Breinl, Report of the Preliminary Scientific Expedition to the Northern Territory, Bulletin of the Northern Territory, No 1, March 1912.

Government Manuscript Material

Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976, re the Yutpundji-Djindiwirritj Land Claim. Transcript of Proceedings, 1982

Northern Territory Administration - Social Welfare Branch, 'Beswick Aboriginal Reserve', Darwin, 1965. Copy held at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.

Australian Archives

Canberra

CRS A1, General Correspondence Files, Annual Single Number Series, 1903-1938.

1903-1916 (Nov 14)	:	Department of External Affairs (I)
(14 Nov) 1916-1928 (Dec 10)	:	Department of Home and Territories
(10 Dec) 1928-1932 (Apr 12)	:	Department of Home Affairs (II), Central Office
(12 Apr) 1932-1938	:	Department of the Interior (I), Central Administration

[CRS A1

Items:	12/8649	35/7520
	25/24044	35/9074
	26/2657	36/578
	27/6913	36/5484
	28/8706	37/10
	28/9474	37/70
	29/1431	37/5692
	31/6877	37/13696
	32/829	37/15996
	34/4637	38/7395
	34/5886	38/27026
	35/3291	38/31941

[CRS A3, Correspondence Files, Annual Single Number Series, with 'N.T.'
(Northern Territory) prefix, 1912-1925

1912-1916 : Department of External Affairs (I)
1916-1925 : Department of Home and Territories

Items:	NT 14/2482	NT 19/4350
	NT 14/5519	NT 20/938
	NT 16/608	NT 20/1707
	NT 16/847	NT 20/1871
	NT 16/1767	NT 21/557
	NT 17/1402	NT 21/1368
	NT 18/693	NT 21/2705
	NT 18/1145	NT 22/1813
	NT 18/1780	NT 23/3604
	NT 18/2858	NT 24/1047
	NT 19/1137	NT 25/1686
	NT 19/2941	NT 25/2247

CRS A431, Correspondence files, Annual Single Number Series.

1946-1972 (Dec) : Department of the Interior (II), Central Office

Item: 46/563

CRS A452, Correspondence Files, Annual Single Number Series.

1951-1968 : Department of Territories

Items: 53/109
53/542
55/506
57/2641

CRS A659, Correspondence Files, Class 1 (general, passports).

1939 : Department of the Interior (I)

Item: 39/1/10643

Darwin

CRRS F1, Correspondence Files, Annual Single Number Series, 1915-1978

1915-1927 : Office of the Administrator, Northern Territory (I)
 1927-1931 : Office of the Government Resident, North Australia
 1931-1973 : Administrator, Northern Territory (II)

Items:	23/294	42/415
	28/9474	42/435
	36/110	43/85
	37/580	44/127
	38/17	44/409
	36/6	46/406
	38/521	46/820 (Part 1)
	38/534	48/9
	38/636	48/10
	39/104	48/14
	39/593	48/76 (Part 1)
	40/297	48/76 (Part 2)
	42/291	48/254
	42/374	48/265

CCIRS F3, Correspondence Files, Multiple Number Series, 1933-1949

1931-1939 : Medical Service, Health and Aboriginals Branch, Darwin
 1939-1949 : Native Affairs Branch

Items:	20/104	20/2/5
--------	--------	--------

CCIRS F5, Correspondence Files, Alphabetical Single Number Series 1915-1929
(contents: 1908-1947)

1915-1921 : Lands and Survey Department (I)
 1921-1925 : Mines Department
 1925-1931 : Lands and Survey Department (II)
 1931-1947 : Lands and Survey Branch

Items:	A57	P188
	A110	P204
	A192 (5)	R19
	A192 (10)	R182
	C74	R202
	C239	R229
	E225	R248
	E272	S175
	G64	S183
	H174	T32
	M192	T112
	N80	T114
	O39	T115
	P69	T140
	P96	W159
	P182	

CRS F290, Police Journal, Maranboy, 1928-1932

CRS F293, Police Journal, Mataranka, 1932-1934

CRS F297, Police Journal, Katherine, 1916-1919

CRS F299, Police Journal, Roper River, 1928-1932

CRS F630, Correspondence Files, PL Series (Pastoral Leases) second system, 1925-

Items: PL104N
PL131N
PL158N
PL165N
PL369

CRS F658, Pastoral Leases Investigation Committee 1933-1935, Reports, Single Number Series.

Items: 36 : Elsey Station
19 : Beswick Station
51 : Hodgson Downs
76 : Nutwood Downs
83 : Roper Valley Station
95 : Veldt Station

CRS F911, Register of Registered Mineral Tenements, 1907-1940

CRS F912, Register of (1) Business Licences, 1907-1940
(2) Business Permits, 1940-1943

CRS F901, Register of (1) Occupation Blocks, 1897-1919
(2) Residence Areas, 1919-1949
(3) Business Areas, 1919-1940
(4) Machinery Areas, 1919-1948
(5) Tailing Areas, 1920-1948

CRS F913, Register of Registered (Miscellaneous) Tenements, 1907-1940

CRS F915, Register of Garden Rents, 1910-1947

CRS F1312, Numerical Register of Miners Rights, 1930-1946

CRS F1313, Alphabetical Register of Miners Rights, 1930-1943

Northern Territory Government Oral History Transcripts:

Fay Shepherd (nee Stutterd) interviewed by Rhonda Jamieson
Vanda Marshall interviewed by Helen Wilson

Photographs:

Pastoral Leases Investigation Committee, accompanying photographs.
Jones Collection.

Miscellaneous File: N.T. NTAC 1975/76.

Books and Articles

- F.H. Bauer, 'Historical Geography of White Settlement in Part of Northern Australia, Part 2, The Katherine - Darwin Region', C.S.I.R.O. Division of Land Research and Regional Survey, Divisional Report No 64/1, 1964.
- J. Brinke, 'Demography and Settlement Geography of the Rembranga Tribe', Anthropologie, XVII/2-3, 1979.
- R.W. Connell and T.H. Irving, Class Structure in Australian History, Longman Cheshire, Melbourne, 1980.
- A. Curthoys and A. Markus (eds), Who are our Enemies? Racism and the Working Class in Australia, Hale and Iremonger Pty Ltd, Neutral Bay, New South Wales, 1978.
- R. Duncan, The Northern Territory Pastoral Industry 1863-1910, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1967.
- Kevin Gilbert, Living Black: Blacks Talk to Kevin Gilbert, Penguin, Ringwood, 1977.
- Mrs Aeneas Gunn, We of the Never-Never, and The Little Black Princess, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1982.
- V.C. Hall, Sister Ruth, Spearman, London, 1968.
- M.C. Howard, (ed), Aboriginal Power in Australian Society, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 1982.
- J.H. Kelly, Beef in Northern Australia, Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1971.
- D. Lockwood, I the Aboriginal, Rigby, Adelaide, 1962.
- D. Lockwood, Up the Track, Rigby, Adelaide, 1964.
- A.W. McCoy and C. de Jesus (eds), Global Trade and Local Transformations, ASAA Southeast Asia Publication, Series No 7, Ateneo de Manila University Press, Quezon City, George Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1982.
- A. McGrath, 'Aboriginal Women Workers in the N.T., 1911-1939', Hecate, Vol IV, No 2, July 1978.
- F. Merlan, '"Making People Quiet" in the Pastoral North: Reminiscences of Elsey Station', Aboriginal History, Vol 2, 1-2, 1978.
- A. Powell, Far Country: A Short History of the Northern Territory, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 1982.
- M. Richards, 'Aborigines in the Victoria River Region: 1883-1928', Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies Newsletter, March, 1982
- F.C.G. Rose, 'The Pastoral Industry in the Northern Territory during the Period of Commonwealth Administration 1911-1953', Historical Studies, November 1953
- C.D. Rowley, The Destruction of Aboriginal Society, Penguin Books, Ringwood, 1978.

F.S. Stevens, Aborigines in the Northern Territory Cattle Industry, Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1974.

J.S. Stevens, (ed), Racism: The Australian Experience, Vol 2, ANZ Books, Sydney, 1972.

H.E. Thonemann, Tell the White Man, Collins, Sydney, 1949.

N.B. Tindale, Aboriginal Tribes of Australia, University of California Press, Los Angeles, 1974.

Manuscripts and Theses

D. Carroll, The Carrolls of Tyrendarra, unpublished family history, 1978.

R. Gerritsen, Thoughts on Camelot: From Herodians and Zealots to the Contemporary Politics of Remote Aboriginal Settlement in the Northern Territory, paper presented to the 23rd Annual Conference of the Australasian Political Studies Association, August 1981.

R.A. Hall, The Army and Aborigines during World War II, M.A. qualifying thesis, Australian National University, 1979.

J. Ingoldsby, 'Labourers Together With God' C.M.S. Missionaries in Northern Australia, 1908-1934, B.A. (Hons) thesis, Australian National University, 1977.

H. and F. Morphy, Yutpundji-Djindiwirritj Land Claim, Northern Land Council, Darwin, 1981.

Residents of Bamyili, Murranga, September 1977.

M. Richards, An Australian Frontier, B.A. (Hons) thesis, Australian National University, 1982.

P.B. Stiles, The North Australia Railway: Its History and the Effect of its Closure, B.A. (Hons) thesis, Australian National University, 1977.

Personal Interviews: Conducted in February 1983

Mrs Pam Agostini, Darwin
Mr Paddy Cavanagh, Maranboy
Mrs S. Fishlock, Mataranka
Mrs Mary Peterson, Katherine.

Personal Correspondence:

Mr Dan Carroll
Mrs Lores Bennett.