The Woman behind the Man
Mrs Alexander Kennedy
Di Perkins
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I am attracted by the zest of this story. It is real. Indeed, this whole stirring saga reveals the authentic background which pushed John Flynn into action with his outback 'mantle of safety'.

I couldn't put the book down, because it is enlivened throughout by very revealing and interesting sociological insights relating to the pioneering days, with refreshing sidelights on contemporary history. Di Perkins, for sure, displays a rare sense of fellow femininity in uncovering the soul of Marion Kennedy and in showing up the things which made her a real person in her own right - sexuality, old-time discreetness, maternal instincts, inherited morality, self-pride, and the rest. She paints her picture in earthy but gentle colours. Her empathy is matched only by her frankness. With uncanny imagination she literally puts her feet in the footsteps of Marion Kennedy as she journeys she knows not where. It is no fairy tale. You can hear the creak of waggon wheels, the rattle of camp ovens, the flapping of tents, the tinkling of horse bells at night, the crying of babies. The drama never ends, and tragic sorrows are just part of hard-won gains.

The confrontation with the Aboriginal inhabitants out on the frontiers is a problem which Di Perkins does not dodge. Marion Kennedy is honestly portrayed as a child of her time, who is not yet aware of the reasons why the Kalkadoons spear white intruders who camp on their water holes. She is abashed by the harsh reprisals, but her own concern and agonising prayer is for the safety of the home and children, while she freely allows her humanity to show itself when Aboriginal families come to camp near the Devoncourt homestead. She comes to love training the house girls and answering calls for help.
The story of Marion Kennedy, however, must perforce revolve around the exploits of her husband Alexander Kennedy - unbending Scot, redoubtable dominion builder, and compulsive pioneer.

There was a kind of proud determination about Kennedy which kept on impelling him forward. He was born to overcome, a man of integrity, but not swayed by easy sentiment. Tame the north, settle the land - these were the goals of the Anglo-Saxon pioneer. And Alexander Kennedy was right in the vanguard. Di Perkins has captured the vital character of the wife who bore his children and who never quailed in supporting him. It is quite exciting then to see Marion Kennedy as no one has yet portrayed her. She is made of stern stuff. But she can hug and cry. She can see passion in the eyes of her man and respond with joyfulness. She can send her children into the wide world with free minds and hearts. She can bear loss and sorrow in utter loneliness. She is quick to discover that quiet courage is the secret of meeting real life. She is queen in a domain she herself has chosen and no one can take it from her. But she is still a woman of her time with her own inner beliefs which give her feelings of satisfaction and fulfilment. She has a crown of her own - in being a pioneering woman at the side of a pioneering man.

I like the whole story because it has all the 'raw smells' of the real bush in the tough days before there were any signs of the pedal wireless and the flying doctors.
As an inaugural history project, Mrs. Kennedy's biography has been a challenge and, simultaneously, a source of immense satisfaction. Working with one particular person I have developed a deep empathy for her and the conditions under which she brought up her family. It has been my endeavour to see her first as a real person, a woman with feelings and thoughts which frequently, however, lay dormant. In resolving this dilemma, it has been necessary to combine both new findings about Victorian sexuality, and my own personal experiences as a woman. The normal constraint of conforming to established historical facts, has been observed.

Several aspects of Mrs. Kennedy have been brought into perspective: her role as pioneer, a woman, and a European. The last-mentioned introduces the most controversial element: how to weigh up the pioneering woman's role, in the treatment of the Aboriginal people. As a woman pioneer in the frontier north-west, her trials were not unique. She was one of those stalwart women who laid the foundations for future European civilisation, accepting harsh environmental conditions uncomplainingly. Isolation strengthened inter-personal dependency; a crisis situation prevailed if these close bonds were severed.

Newspapers, archival primary source material, secondary manuscripts and articles have been gleaned to accumulate sufficient information to see the trend of Mrs. Kennedy's life from a woman's point of view. Hudson Fysh's biography of her husband contained little information about Mrs. Kennedy herself but a comprehensive interview she gave to the Queenslander in her twilight years contains significant detail.

Therefore with somewhat limited primary source material, it has been necessary to use all available oral sources, with all the qualifications which must go with this historical medium. Accuracy, coloured impressions, deliberate omissions or distortions are of major concern to academic historians. In this particular case I have relied on one specific witness who was brought up in the Kennedy household, Mr. George Thorpe. Mrs. Kennedy's grand-daughter, Mrs. Christina Brown from "Mayfield" Duchess,
has provided a valuable insight through stories passed down by her father, Hope; her time as a child with her grand-mother at "Bushy Park" and her holiday visits in Brisbane from boarding school, have all added to the picture. Mr. Donald Clark-Dickson, Mrs. Kennedy's great nephew has also contributed.

Many people have allowed our modest work to come to fruition: Mrs. Christina Brown has been one of the mainstays behind this project; friends and family have selflessly given essential support and encouragement; my brother Bill Beach has acted as our metropolitan liaison officer; Ansett provided an opportunity for me to look through Hudson Fysh's work at Mitchell Library in Sydney; the Mount Isa and District Historical Society financed the printing; Dennis Shephard has kindly sketched the maps, generously shared his Normanton newspaper reports, and meticulously scrutinized the text for historical errors; our local Genealogical Society has been of assistance; Bruce Green and Barkly Computers have been a tower of strength with the computer collation; Mount Isa State High School has provided facilities; the Cloncurry Shire Council, Mitchell Library, and Mount Isa Mines have assisted with the photographs. I am grateful to Wendy Purvis, Gayle Beard, Chris Fewings and Marion Dent who have played the difficult dual-roles of editor-friend.

Reverend Fred McKay has been a close friend of the Kennedy/Brown family for half a century; it was he who buried the Kennedy ashes at Devoncourt. Since John Flynn wrote the Foreword for Mr. Kennedy's biography, it is eminently fitting that his successor, Reverend McKay, should do likewise for Mrs. Kennedy. Reverend McKay's beautiful warmth and compassion has provided support for countless outback families over the many years.

Ultimately it has been my aim to represent Mrs. Kennedy as close to reality as possible, with respect but without exultation, with compassion yet with circumspection. Originating as a personal project some years ago, it has developed into my Achilles heel, a prelude to a broader study of woman's position in the north-west.
INTRODUCTION

The year was 1936, the month December. In remote north-western Queensland, Australia, preparations for an auspicious dedication had been in hand for several months.

Europe assuaged its guilt for harsh reparations deals, and turned a blind eye to contemporary political events. Hitler was riding on the crest of a nationalistic wave, and had re-occupied the Rhineland, the Danish Corridor and re-armed his people. Dispassionate reporting from Britain on premature nazi atrocities isolated Hitler from anti-semitic activities. The Depression had, understandably, de-sensitised normal perception and correspondingly decreased national means to financially remonstrate.

Stalin consolidated his regime in communist Russia while most parts of the western world experienced a phenomenal crystallization of socialist, quasi-communist, groups who agitated for political transformation to achieve economic revival. Indoctrinated by Christian fear and fresh with the memory of the red revolution in Russia in 1917, society was polarised in its concepts of determining the path of future civilisation.

Culturally, it was an era of scientific explosion: from the eugenics fanatics to the average person who was being inculcated with the belief that "progress" rested with them alone, individually. National sovereignty depended on the aggregation of individual strengths. A marked self-pride and self-sufficiency had, paradoxically, been accentuated in many rural areas. Concomitantly, Government control permeated all facets of life - from the macro control of diseases by inoculation right through to admonitions to women to be better wives, more fecund. In this way only could external aggressors be controlled.

Women had gained the franchise in most parts of the world. While the Great War had seen many women enter the work-force to fill empty spaces, most of them graciously retired to domesticity once the men returned. Many a household budget was trimmed by the women and many meagre family
incomes augmented during the Depression by womenfolk; this, however, did little to reduce sex-stereotyping of attitudes. It was though a time of gradual change for women: they were leaving the Victorian mould of ultra-domesticity and learning that perhaps their sole mission in life was not one of procreation and egg-nesting.

In north-west Queensland, a Qantas plane brought ashes in from Brisbane to Cloncurry for burial. During the Great War Cloncurry had experienced peak expansion: the boom price of copper precipitated beavered activity by two main competing companies in the area, Hampden Consols and Mount Elliott. Unfortunately, the basic structure of these companies, was inherently self-destructive, since excessive dividends were declared to confirm investment-potential. Resultant liquidity problems and competition for remaining mines in the district at inflated prices, ensured their demise.

The Copper City suffered the indignity of witnessing the bumptious growth of her Silver City rival, Mount Isa, which assumed a guise of sophistication as an integrated-company policy provided amenities, unprocurable in Cloncurry. Government assistance was constantly exhorted to inject a revival into the north-west district and thus bring a resuscitated resurgence to the tired body. Invective was flung at the State-owned smelters at Chillagoe, gouger frustration being vindicated by revelations of corruption within Labor party ranks by the Mungana scandal.

Cloncurry was in a state of limbo - smaller towns such as Julia Creek were racing ahead in entrepreneurial skills and boasted as many banks as its much bigger sister, Cloncurry; even Quamby commanded better race meetings, with higher attendance and better stakes. Although centralisation was the growing order of the day, this stately town sensed it was not going to be a focal point in that movement and clung tenaciously onto shire council facilities, agitating strongly that outlying towns as far away as Camooweal and Burketown should contribute handsomely to ailing Cloncurry Hospital funds. It was in essence a fight for survival.

Properties surrounding the township had been bedevilled by drought for years but 1936 brought relief floods in its wake. Fire-ploughs were resurrected as the tall, healthy grass dried, presenting a threat to the wide plains, and
retired to ignominy with the onset of more rain. In the boggy conditions, horses and carts were taken out of mothballs, once more taking precedence over their motorised usurpers. Optimism for the future was unquestioned.

At the junction of the Cloncurry-Camooweal route, and the turn-off to Devoncourt Station, the consecration of ashes was to take place. The commanding, grey, granite obelisk was in character with the imposing character of Alexander Kennedy, the entrepid pioneer. Mr. Hugh McMaster, Manager of nearby Devoncourt Station had obligingly brought the weighty monument from the railway station to its ultimate resting place.

Reverend Fred McKay, an Australian Inland Mission patrol minister, eulogised Kennedy's battle against isolation and the Kalkadoon: he was an explorer, paving the way for future generations by his unimpeachable service alongside F.C. Urquhart, making the bush a safer place. Together they were extolled for their rugged faith, industry and thrift; their example was essentially a challenge to contemporary and future generations. From Sydney, Reverend John Flynn praised the recklessness of Kennedy in confronting the unknown with God's guidance, saying "they went forward calmly - frequently blundering, frequently losing, but ever forward".¹

Mrs. Marion Kennedy was revered for rearing three sons in the loneliness of the bush and for sending one of them to the service "of her country in the Great War". Her kinship attachment to her sister and the devastating tragedy which befell them was recounted. The irrefutable nexus between this event and Kennedy's participation in establishing Qantas was tacitly acknowledged. Reverend McKay elaborated those unique qualities possessed by Mrs. Kennedy that "make Queenslanders newly proud of their 'Women of the West'".

Symbolically, the cask containing the ashes was loyally wrapped in the Union Jack. Their proud heritage was integral to their determination to succeed at all costs. The wide disparity between the acclaimed achievements of each member of the partnership went unnoticed. Woman's role was automatically acknowledged, her contribution to posterity undisputed, and reiteration of her unique worth was therefore unnecessary.
In 1936 this discrimination was accepted; now in the days of Equal Opportunity and Anti-discrimination, feminist discerners query this stance. The following biography is an attempt to unravel the true dimension of one woman's position in a remote area where isolation itself produced complementary inter-dependence. Their inter-meshing of these skills created a blueprint for effective frontier survival.

In recognition of their personal contribution, the following testimony was recorded for posterity:

**ALEXANDER KENNEDY**

Born at Dunkeld, Perthshire, Scotland, November 11th 1837, died at Brisbane, 12th April, 1936, in his 99th year. Cremated Brisbane April 14th, 1936. The ashes and duplicate records are contained in caskets cemented into this stone. The original records are held by the Queensland Historical Society, Brisbane. Pioneer and Pastoralist. Left Plymouth (England) August 6th, 1861. Arrived Gladstone (Q), Nov.11th 1861. Sailing ship "Persia" 1600 tons. First passenger carried on Qantas Air Mail Service, Nov.3rd, 1922. Original owner Buckingham Downs and Linda Downs 1877, and Calton Hills 1878. Owner Emmet Downs (Blackall) 1876, Noranside 1878, Devoncourt 1887, Bushy Park 1908. One of the original owners Duchess Mines 1898.

Also the ashes of

**MARION KENNEDY**

Age 89 years
Honored Wife, Pioneer Friend.

This stone erected by the family.
"THE BURYING OF THE ASHES"
L - R: Mr. Jim Brown, Bill Kennedy, Mrs. C. Brown (child Fay), Mr. Jack Kennedy, Mr. Norman Kennedy.
Courtesy Mrs. C. Brown
Mrs. Alexander Kennedy was born at Manchlin, Ayrshire, Scotland in 1846 as Marion Murray, daughter of Peter and Euphemia Murray; her mother's maiden name was McCall. In accordance with the times, Marion was delivered at home by a midwife. Little would she have realised the exciting period of enlightenment into which she stepped: popular political and economic liberalism contained the seeds of democracy for the individual, and there was agitation for laissez faire principles in commerce. The great French philosophers and Adam Smith paved the way for man's emergence out of bondage.

Devastating crop failures in staple foods, precipitated a mass exodus from Ireland and England in particular to more promising fields. Malnourished Irish emigrated, settled in impoverished, and discrete enclaves in American cities. The mid 1840's was the threshold of a second wave of mass emigration from the "Old Country", America and Australia being favoured as lands of opportunity. Gold discoveries gave further impetus to the demographic flux of which Marion's parents were part, since agricultural and pastoral pursuits were recognised as lucrative occupations in the wake of these rushes. In 1847 they emigrated to Gisborne, north-east of the city of Melbourne, Victoria where Peter Murray pursued his farming career, successfully, during the ensuing 17 years of residence in this fertile area near Mount Macedon.

**VICTORIA**

Marion's childhood was interspersed with romantic interludes surrounding the euphoric discovery of gold at Ballarat and Bendigo in the 1850's, towns close to Mount Macedon. Tracks connected the closely-settled communities and the main road to Bendigo near Mount Macedon, through Gisborne, was
LOWER VICTORIA

Routes to the gold diggings, 1850's
deeply padded. Most traffic was on foot, and Marion perceived with astonishment many women and children accompanying their menfolk; personal comforts and cleanliness were alien to their thinking.\textsuperscript{4}

She also encountered many dishevelled, heavily-bearded prospectors whose bright eyes were the only indication of their bubbling optimism. Unbeknown to her, many had forsaken professions to capitalize on the acknowledged wealth of the fields. Marion was protected from direct frontier roughness and observed only the positive spin-off effects of these discoveries. Her father had become moderately comfortable through selling his farm produce to them, albeit indirectly.

The calibre of characters met on the goldfields would have been significantly different from the gentlemen considered her due, as the following confirms:

\begin{quote}
At the outset the bad characters bore but a trifling numerical proportion to the general population, but now, although the preponderance of the well disposed, and of those who are friends to law and good order, is still overwhelming, the number of thoroughly hardened and dissolute characters has greatly increased. It notoriously includes a number of the most determined and desperate ruffians in any community...\textsuperscript{5}
\end{quote}

Sly grogging was prevalent, prostitution accepted, and general lawlessness enjoyed by most. Racial tensions created by the presence of the Chinese introduced a new dimension into the ethnic mix, and Marion savoured the hushed revelations around the hearth in the evening when her father retired with his pipe. He empathized with the latent concept of the Antipodes for the English, a precursor to the White Australia Policy which was formalised fifty years later. Life certainly flowed at full pace in Victoria in the 1850's; not only was the climate more hospitable than chilly Scotland but people seemed less fettered, free to forge a new mould of man.

Education was the minimum undertaken in her time, with primary schooling entailing approximately six years. Gisborne school was built in 1853 to cater for the significant population increase as a result of the gold rushes. It was a primitive bark construction, rebuilt later in weatherboard.\textsuperscript{6}
Murray appreciated the value of education and subscribed generously to the public call for financial support.

Contemporary views were that woman's role in life was that of wife and mother, so formal education consisted primarily of skills she would need for this scene of domesticity. Science was considered alien to woman's nature; whereas man's psyche was one of exploring, inquiring, challenging, woman's was submissive, accepting, and perfecting. The Victorian era dictated decorum, protocol and class distinction. For women, accepting their position both within the family and within society at large, there was no psychological agonising over the role of woman and their individual rights - the feminine implications of enlightenment took almost a century to permeate wider society.

Marion's formal education was sufficient to equip her to instruct her own children later during their formative years, yet priority would have been given more to her informal education in the home. As the eldest child, she assumed adult responsibility for the well-being of her siblings, assisting her mother constantly with the daily tasks of maintaining a household with no domestic help. Washing, ironing, sewing, cleaning and cooking filled the hours for Marion and her mother well into the night. With more education than her mother, Marion frequently assisted with financial matters and quickly became cognisant of market mechanics.

Bush-ranging followed in the wake of gold discoveries, denoting both the lawlessness of mining communities and also a grass-roots call for greater sharing of wealth. The Eureka Stockade in Ballarat in 1854, again provided an educational insight for Marion as she listened to her parents discussing the issues involved. They commented on the miners' camaraderie, the polarisation of ethnic differences with fierce Irish resistance to English domination; and the effectiveness of democracy against bureaucratic rule. This was a particularly important time in Australian history when there was a strong enunciation of the ideal that Australia's wealth should be freely available to the small man, and, concomitantly, that man's opportunity to use his physical being to test lady luck should not be inhibited by non-productive bureaucracy.
Her social parameters, however, were securely circumscribed by her vigilant family. Coming from a staunch Presbyterian family, the Protestant work ethic was indelibly ingrained and contact was confined to the nucleus Scottish community which gathered at the local kirk. Although many Scots settled in the Mount Macedon area, they were not dominant; their distinct culture bound them together. Without a doubt, Marion's morality remained unquestioned all through her adolescent years, despite her fantasies about the romance of being swept away by a swashbuckling, debonair, and rich digger. Her Scottish upbringing prepared her to accept demanding circumstances, if progress was to be achieved; she knew her future partner would have to possess characteristics of stoicism and spartanism.

Queensland became a separate colony in 1859. Saturation point had been reached in the Victorian and New South Wales land markets, as legislation operated to foster close settlement. Consequently, the 1860 Unoccupied Crown Lands Act of the fledgeling colony of Queensland, was in sharp contrast to the constraints of the southern acts. It aimed at pastoral expansion, especially in the light of demographic explosion due to the gold rushes, and to provide pastoral venues for growing highly-sought Australian wool. Incidentally, also, expansion would produce revenue for the infant colonial administration.

Burke and Wills (1860) expedition inflamed the romantic passions of Australians, especially Victorians, since their ill-fated expedition began there. Their tragedy precipitated subsequent rescue parties, resulting in new tracts of land in north-west Queensland enthusiastically being promoted as pastoral paradise. With so much publicity over the Burke and Wills fiasco, and the ardent emphasis on exploration, Marion was wooed, like her contemporaries, by the glamour of forging into a hostile, unknown environment.

Lured, similarly, by the promise of greater tracts of land which could give his children a greater chance of establishing themselves, Peter Murray proceeded to Rockhampton in 1864 by boat, with his family, to pursue his dreams. The five boys (Peter, John, Frank, Hamilton and Campbell), together with Marion's youngest sister, Euphemia, were caught up in the promise of the new northern land; they were to find their Mount Macedon
community comparatively more refined than the nascent community they approached.

ROCKHAMPTON

Rockhampton, a township situated on the demarcation line between temperate and tropical zones, had come into existence following the Canoona gold-rush in 1858. Ten thousand people flocked to this reported find as the gold in Victoria began to wane. When the whole event was recognized as a giant hoax, the culprit had a rope around his neck in a short time and would have swung but for the timely arrival of the Gold Commissioner. 8

Frontier rawness was still rampant when in 1861, a new arrival by boat described Rockhampton as a town in which

The streets were quite unformed and stumps and trees stood here and there in the rough thoroughfares. Bullock teams moved about what are now the main streets. I have seen a team well bogged to the axles in what is now East Street. 9

By the time the Murray clan arrived on 7 June 1864, it had assumed a civilised veneer, with The Rockhampton Bulletin confirming its entitlement to "community-status", the population having reached respectable figures. A Separationist Movement was already mooted, with southern disquiet about the use of Kanaka labour, and the north hesitant about surrendering all their potential richness to a distant controller.

Predominantly of English extraction, the bulk of settlers anxiously awaited news from Back Home, the four month turn-around of mail seeming an eternity. English Mails for 1871-2 left via Marseilles and Southampton and information relevant to these Mails featured prominently in The Rockhampton Bulletin of 1871; 10 this paper was essentially functional, with little social commentary. It also has to be remembered that patronage of the paper was limited, supplies of paper scarce, illiteracy common, and time for perusal precious. Personal communication was the primary medium for social happenings.
Most newcomers still hankered for the lochs, mountains and green fields of home and endeavoured to simulate these "Old Country" characteristics in every facet of their living. In contrast, the Murray clan felt little of this nostalgia; they assumed an Australian-identity, having lived through the crucial formative era of the evolution of the national identity. Their resolve was to look to the future, but still the rudder of their cultural heritage surfaced in their tenacious determination to work and save, and to retain an impeccable degree of refinement in manners and dress.

Marion's father was intent on establishing himself as one of the landed gentry, although his goals were initially curtailed as he did not select land on the Agricultural Reserve until 1869. During this five-year interim, the family settled in Alma Street, Rockhampton, moved to a dairy farm at "Tarrangaba", and finally to "Matcham" owned by the Archer family. Much of the family necessities were grown on the family estate, with the boys proving an ever-increasing labour asset. Their ultimate home, by 1869, was "Fitzroy Park" and "Pandora", Government granted land.11

Although Peter Murray was slow to establish himself, his industry and that of his children had rich rewards. By 1875 his sons had selected blocks, including some on the "Gracemere" resumption but by the turn of the century they were spread far and wide over the northern part of Queensland, owning pastoral selections around Springsure, Clermont, and Blackall. George Sutherland who drove a mob of 8,000 sheep from Rockhampton to the Barkly Tableland in 1865 mentioned a place they encountered "at the head of the Sutter River, a place afterwards taken up and stocked by the Messrs. Murray Brothers near Rockhampton."12

Accepting the challenge to diversify, Murray grew sugar cane on "Pandora", so successfully that by 1880 he sold to a group of Rockhampton investors who formed the Pandora Sugar Company; their subsequent installation of a crushing plant and machinery from England was affirmation of Murray's innovatory skills.

His entrepreneurial skills also emerge as he sold the property of "Fitzroy Park" (later "Alton Downs"), to the Government in 1899, subsequently acquiring "Mount Lookout Station" on the Suttor in 1901, as aforementioned.
At this stage, he must have been a man of advanced years, yet he remained keen to improve his position.\textsuperscript{13} Records show his sons were of similar ilk, bond leases and indentures testifying to their enterprise.\textsuperscript{14}

It is important to examine the attributes of Marion's father, so we can more closely understand her expectations and acceptance of her husband. In smaller communities, it is customary that those who achieve financial success, also play a significant part in the socio-political structure. Both Marion's father and her brother John fulfilled this function. John was appointed a Magistrate for the Colony of Queensland 14 July 1873 \textsuperscript{15} and later a Member of Parliament, so the Murray family were assuredly an integral part of the Rockhampton administrative structure.

The usual dwelling in this period was slab construction with bark roof, shutters or windows providing the link with nature. Local material was preferred to minimise costs, breakages, and delays. Initially Peter Murray built his home on "Fitzroy Park" but the cottage was later removed to the adjoining "Pandora", using wheels made from tree trunks. Improvisation was a bush attribute, which Marion witnessed and mentally embraced as she enjoyed the concept of their moving home.

Marion's role on the farm was typical of that followed by all women: essentially supportive, with perhaps some Kanaka assistance in the house. This provided a relief from the concentrated domesticity in the south, but then the hot, tropical weather engulfed them with indescribable lassitude so their capacity for work was severely impaired. Initially homes were built on the frontier to accommodate women and children, and the accoutrements of civilisation grew only as time and money permitted. Needless to say, family desertion on the frontier was a natural phenomenon and the Rockhampton Benevolent Society was vocal in seeking support for the victims in 1871.\textsuperscript{16}

Having household help was reminiscent of the comfortable middle-class lifestyle enjoyed in the Old Country, but frequently sacrificed when families embarked on a new lifestyle in the distant antipodes. The north, at least, afforded this opportunity for indulgence: there was no moralising about whether these South Sea Islanders were exploited - the employment was seen as benefiting them, by exposing them to "Christian culture". Marion's
concept of indigenes was unobtrusively formed at this time, her first contact with dark-skinned people.

Two black-white crises occurred in close geographical proximity to Rockhampton which exacerbated the whole race situation, polarising feelings and tempering attitudes towards the Aboriginals. October 1857 heralded a blood-letting massacre by Aborigines on a remote homestead in the Dawson Valley, the home of the Fraser family. It was of unprecedented dimensions, thirteen people slaughtered. Despite intermittent affrays between the settlers and the natives, this episode whetted the appetite of those keen to exterminate this native vermin, particularly since some of those who died in this Hornet Bank tragedy were innocent white women and children. Protection of womenfolk, who were the amplification of concepts of civilisation, was one of the major concerns of frontiersmen.

Cullin-la-ringo, 1861, on the Nagoa River, was the scene of another Aboriginal rampage and the ripples of shock through outlying communities elicited a uniform response: hatred grew out of fear, and a resolution was made that extermination was the only viable means of ensuring European safety and expansion. With seventeen lives to avenge, many of them white women and children, imperative calls were made to strengthen the Native Police Reserves in isolated areas. It is only by considering the strength of the reaction to these two particular events that we can hope to unravel the black-white relationships which ensued in frontier areas during the next 75 years. Marion Murray was to experience the difficult transitional period between frontier and civilisation. During this period, her attitude towards the Aboriginal people metamorphosed and by tracing this development, it can be seen that Marion's gender played an important part in her beliefs.

Marion's social opportunities were limited by her isolation on the farm, and her family commitments. Undoubtedly her contacts were frequently restricted to those with the same background as herself, attuned to the needs of the "Mother Country", and moreover, with the same religious affiliations. The Protestant-Catholic schism operated most sensitively when potential suitors came on the scene.\textsuperscript{17} It was therefore natural that Marion should form a friendship with a chap working on the adjoining property, "Cuena". He was nine years her senior but possessed all the attributes she held dear - he
was fearless, adventurous, confident, and capable. Moreover, he was Scottish and Presbyterian. She knew her father would approve the union as this suitor had accrued a respectable bank balance, and appeared determined to succeed at all costs. His name was Alexander Kennedy.

Kennedy had arrived in Rockhampton by boat in 1861 at the age of 24; he was born in Perthshire, Scotland, and was from a hardy breed, with royal connections. One of his clan married the daughter of King Robert II in 1457, while one of his more infamous ancestors roasted the Abbot of Crossraguel in a vault, to gain possession of church lands. The motto of the Kennedy clan was "Aim at the End". With this strong heritage, Kennedy ventured to Australia by himself, with an indomitability of will that ensured ultimate success. Initially employed in Rockhampton clearing stumps in the main streets, he then worked for another Scot called Peter Macintosh on the Dawson, close to Hornet Nest where the atrocities of 1854 were still recounted with trepidation and anger.

A confrontation with his employer saw Kennedy posted to a property in the Springsure district, "Weilwandangie", an adjacent property to Cullin-la­ringo. Here he inspected the graves of those murdered in the previous year. In the Dawson and at Springsure, Kennedy witnessed an over-riding fear of the Aboriginals, in the wake of their seemingly-unwarranted massacres. He could not, however, emulate the fears which prevailed. To a reckless Scot who had come out to Australia specifically to forge a new life, and to conquer all obstacles, subordination of the "blacks" was just one more challenge he had to meet. And win he would. The Kanaka workforce at "Weilwandangie" ground to a halt, refusing to work, but by with-holding rations until they changed their attitude, Kennedy provoked revolt. Armed with spears they advanced upon the property store, only to be dispersed by Kennedy, mounted on his horse, wielding a stockwhip. His employment in this area lasted until the late 1860’s, following which he moved to "Cuena" near Rockhampton.

An independent, self-sufficient man, he had met few women in the isolated areas, fewer still who were free to be courted, and no-one until Marion Murray who could match his limitless energies. In many ways, Alexander possessed similar traits to her father, and she was immediately attracted to this tall, gallant gentleman. Their courtship was brief; both felt the
conviction of their emotions, and ready to accept their lives be united as one, till death did them part.

The marriage of Alexander Kennedy and Marion Murray was celebrated in August, 1871, officiated by Reverend J. Carson, a Presbyterian Minister, on the property "Pandora". Marion was 24 and Alexander 34. This was the average age for nuptials, as the breadwinner shied away from matrimony until he had sufficient funds behind him. No records in local newspapers exist of this auspicious occasion, although the newspapers were primarily functional with weddings being given only a cursory coverage. Births, Deaths and Marriages were charged at a uniform rate of 2/6 each notice, so this monetary factor may have acted as a deterrent, in light of their Scottish frugality. It could be assumed it was a quiet wedding, with little more than family present.

Mrs. Kennedy's attire on this day was a fashionable white grenadine dress which was frilled and bustled. Alexander Kennedy's grey suit was tailored in Rockhampton especially for the occasion. The ceremony took place on the property, and it is hardly likely a photographer would have been present. Despite there not being an extant photograph of the wedding itself, another of Alexander and Marion who was dressed in black satin is instructive.

Marion Kennedy's demeanour is firm, and resolute. Her mouth shows the conviction of her decision; her self-sufficiency is exhibited by her stance yet, it is, ironically, an unwitting validation of her duty to her husband who remained seated. Far from the diminutive fingers of a social middle-class woman, her hands are definitely those of a worker. Except for the fur trimming around the sleeves and bustle, there is no ornamentation; this austerity was second-nature to a woman destined for an exacting pioneer life.

Putting practical common-sense before romantic dreaming, Alexander and Marion postponed a honeymoon until more propitious times returned. This was symbolic of their entire journey into the outback - today's sacrifices laid the foundation for tomorrow's progress.
Marion and Alexander Kennedy
Courtesy: Cloncurry Shire Council
Following their marriage Kennedy continued his hand at sugar cane farming at "Cuena" (later "Alton Downs"), which became part of the Murray holdings. As has been documented above, Peter Murray successfully grew sugar cane throughout this period, so Kennedy's assertion that it was unprofitable for Kennedy himself to do likewise must be seriously questioned. It could be postulated that a man of Kennedy's independent calibre resented restrictions necessarily placed on him by the Murray family, and the conformity it may have enforced. The harsh climatic conditions during the early 1870's, however, could have precluded any real opportunity to succeed.

Peter Macintosh, Kennedy's old employer, had received money from his brother in the Old Country to launch once more into pastoral pursuits. His new property was situated on the Barcoo, of approximately 500 square miles, called "Lorne". Kennedy was enlisted to ensure the investment was successful and Marion's first journey into the outback began. She and Alexander travelled with the Macintosh family 30 miles by train to Westwood, and the remainder of the 500 mile journey by horseback and buggy. No concessions were made to gender and both women took their turn in the saddle, retaining their dignity by riding sidesaddle, as was the custom. Their tailored, long skirts were practical, yet hot. Pack horses lurched on under the weight of the luggage, which had been restricted to basic necessities and supplies for many months.

No formed road, and no distinguishable track guided their weary way over the 500 miles. Trees were blazed and marked to denote the direction, but Marion felt within her silent heart that they really were explorers, though safe because their men would protect them. Camping at night, she marvelled at the gradual change in vegetation, and the variety of wildlife. Increasingly, the horizons crept lower and the sky opened further, kindling a freedom in Marion which she found exhilarating.
The crippling drought at the close of the 1860's decade had departed and the land had miraculously regenerated. Once again, man had taken heart and believed that the prolonged drought which had precipitated mass exodus from the land, was a rare occurrence. The cycle of investment boomed and banks were willing to believe the buoyant optimism of settlers; many banks had profited handsomely from mortgage relinquishments in the previous downturn and were well-equipped to finance investment. One of the features of re-occupation, however, was the prevalence of company-owned properties, at least in the north. Peter MacIntosh was enthused with the new prospects for his venture, confident that Kennedy would transform his section of the wilderness.

No expense was spared in the construction of Lorne Homestead - Macintosh flaunted his optimism that man had conquered nature and her quixotic quirks. A generous roof gave an opulent appearance to the homestead which was surrounded by wide, low verandahs, creepers creating a delicate privacy and lowered temperatures.

Comfortably settled in her new home, with Alexander eager to prove his expertise to Marion in establishing a flourishing sheep property and confident in his ability to quell any form of insurrection which arose, Marion revelled in her domestic role. Kennedy's acquaintance with Kanakas both on the Dawson and at Springsure, together with his instinctive distrust of the Aboriginal, resulted in his use of Kanakas in preference to Aboriginals on "Lorne". Marion was grateful for this colonial assistance, secure in the knowledge that there was no love lost between these South Sea Islanders and their indigenous counterpart. Murder of squatters Welford and Hall on the Barcoo in 1872 reinforced the delicate nature of frontier relations. Marion had little knowledge of contraception, and waited anxiously for signs of her fertility, knowing how pleased her husband would be to receive an heir. Almost eighteen months after marriage, squeamish mornings and unaccountable sleepiness, gave her the signals: somehow a baby would complete her nesting urges and bring a new dimension into the narrow social context in which she lived. Aware of high maternal mortality rates, primarily due to non-existent or poor health facilities, she chose to ignore
the possibility of any complications. As her abdomen enlarged, the heartbeat became regular and by gently rubbing the tummy and removing the bumps, so convincingly disguised by the multitude of material layers, she felt an affinity with this little being - this extension of herself, a minute part of herself continuing on the chain of humanity.

Her religion was practical: there was a good God above who helped you and comforted you, but basically, what happened to you was in your own hands. How she implored Him and His Help, though, as labour pains quickened and the nurse had not arrived from Tambo. Alexander, her brave, fearless soulmate could not help her and refused to become involved with the whole process. She lay alone in their room, praying the baby would come soon. And soon he did, John Peter was born on 4 November 1873, with the Tambo nurse having arrived opportune.

Nurturing this new piece of humanity gave Marion a deep sense of fulfilment; somehow, she had completed the circle, from being born to giving birth. The infinite cycle. Contemporary mores dictated implicitly that you suppressed your prime feelings so you were further removed from the animal status, almost an unsaid vindication of Darwin's evolutionary theories. Little Jack, though, allowed her to experience the full measure of her motherliness. She enjoyed the warm feeling of lactation and she nurtured young Jack in the privacy of her room. Alexander was exultant they had a male heir, but otherwise, was preoccupied with the station and found little time for "playing" with the youngster. One of the male Kanakas acted as the nanny for baby Jack, giving him the benefit of his mellifluous voice and his relaxed warmth. Watching this little fellow grow up, Marion once more experienced joy about her role, and her womanhood.

Time was fully occupied making clothes for herself, Alexander and Jack, so Marion found little time to miss the company of other women. Essentially self-sufficient she, too, rallied to the challenge of the outback - ordering goods for 6-12 months and learning the bush techniques of improvisation, accommodating the changing seasons, and coming to accept any eventualities, she was psychologically well-adjusted. Despite the dearth of international news and its irrelevance to her present lifestyle, Marion was particularly interested in Queen Victoria and her continuing reign, awed by the
accomplishment of a grand woman for such a protracted time. News from the outside filtered through and was received with interest. Pastoral explorers passed "Lorne" and drovers with mobs of sheep asked permission to use their water holes.

As Kennedy tussled with the Kanakas, fearlessly asserting his role as boss, Marion Kennedy once more conceived. Again, she experienced the joy of quickening and looked forward expectantly to the arrival of a wee girl who would remain close to her all her life. The pains of labour dulled her anticipation of holding her daughter. Alexander despatched one of the stockmen hurriedly in to Tambo to summon the nurse. Although he was a little more relaxed with this impending birth, still the fear of losing his beloved wife struck unaccountable and, uncontrollable anguish into his very being. On 10 April, 1876, Hope Duff was announced into the world, another bonny child, and yet another boy. Marion felt a little let down that her daughter had once more eluded her.

As one life is given so another is taken, and in that same year Kennedy's benevolent employer, Peter Macintosh died. This created slight havoc since life was exceptionally comfortable at "Lorne". The property was to be sold and Kennedy sensed an urgency for settling close by and in light of this, purchased nearby "Emmett Downs". Seldom did Kennedy commit his money to an unprofitable end, but "Emmett Downs" was one such venture. "Lorne" possessed ample permanent water, so this variable did not enter Kennedy's calculations when he made the rash decision. Moving from "Lorne" to temporary dwellings on "Emmett Downs" with a newly born child, without the assistance she had received at "Lorne" with young Jack, Marion Kennedy felt the full crux of her husband's knee-jerk reaction.

"Emmett Downs" was sold to Stuart Brothers in 1876, and the Kennedy family rejoined the Murray clan in Rockhampton. This was, however, merely a break in the melody as Kennedy looked ahead and far and beyond. His belief that the north-west was literally "The Plains of Promise" incited him to form a partnership with the husband of Effie Murray, Marion's sister. This partnership with Robert Currie permitted Kennedy to purchase stock and venture north; if a lease claim was to be successful, it was necessary to have stocked the specific land to ensure right of occupancy.
It was respite for Marion to spend some time with her family once more and to feel the warmth of a wider support group. New nieces and nephews had arrived in her absence. Marion felt proud to be able to show off her new baby, Hope, and young Jack who was speaking beautifully, as well as singing songs fluently in the Melanesian tongue. Especially she revelled in the bond which developed between her and her sister Effie, who had married just a few months prior to herself. Their two children, Bobbie and Jean, were placid, well-mannered children, good company for her two boys.

Alexander and Robert Currie ventured north with the cattle, determined to carve out a healthy piece of this new country for their families. Twice they were deprived of preferred leases, one at Chatsworth and the other near McKinlay, but eventually they settled at Sulieman Creek. Kennedy had then to ride to Blackall to register his claim, a distance of some hundreds of miles, no mean feat.

Word arrived at "Pandora" that a property had been established and the women were to follow. Marion's heartstrings pulled. There was not the same kindling of excitement in this move. She now had the enormous responsibility of two small children with the definite prospect of privations and fewer comforts. Coming home to Rockhampton to a more closely settled area, she realised how harsh it would have been continuing to live at "Emmett" with temporary dwellings. The north west was, moreover, relatively untamed; it was literally frontier country where the Aboriginal problem had not been addressed, let alone solved.

Distance without transport meant she would not be home to see her direct family for many years. Her mother and father were getting older and, despite her outward bravado, she really needed them, especially since she had had the children and it was obvious how they loved their grandchildren. Still, one had to follow, and bear the consequences. At least dear Effie was coming.
Fond farewells were exchanged and a resolution to write, should there be a reasonable mail outlet. Jack and Hope were dressed in their best clothes, clothes substantial enough to withstand the stress of the long, long journey ahead. With so few possessions there had been little problem deciding which articles should go and which stay; clothes, cooking utensils, and linen were the limit. Pack horses would be used from Blackall to their new destination and one had to be respectful of these animals. It brought home to Marion the importance of human relationships and the relative unimportance of material things.

Giving that final wave as the train rounded the bend, Marion brought her gaze back inside the tiny carriage to her children and her sister, Effie. She looked at Effie and noted the apprehension straining beneath the surface and instinctively leaned across and hugged her comfortingly. Until now she had forgotten that this was Effie’s first real break with civilisation and Marion had not appreciated the enormity of the impact on her. The infants were excited about the train, although unimpressed with admonitions to bring their heads back inside. Both babies were contented as though they knew this was the journey of their lifetime.

Duaringa came into view. The railway track had almost doubled its mileage since she and the Macintoshes came out in 1872, Marion commented to Effie. Both looked ruefully at each other. Now this is where we really need our menfolk, moving the luggage over to the coach for Blackall. It is not easy with two babies and two toddlers, let alone the luggage. Still, the world is full of gentlemen and we will manage. There were some five minutes of apprehension and planning before both women were overwhelmed with attention, so seldom did the men from this area have the presence of two attractive women, even if they were married. It made Marion and Effie feel they were porcelain china, precious and fragile.

Marion marvelled at the speed of technology and the progress in transport. Her mind flashed back to their initial journey out into this area, merely following the tentative tracks, and relying on the marked trees for positive identification of direction. Now this coach followed tracks, and even though it bounced and jostled them around disconcertingly, it was far superior to riding
side-saddle for miles on end, and alternating in the uncomfortable buggy. The magic faded as she recalled with nostalgia the colonial life she had enjoyed at "Lorne". Still, she had to be brave and not show her concern to Effie. Marion felt bound to protect and cushion her sister against the harsh environment.

Each night was greeted with enthusiasm as it spelled respite from the tortuous confinement; the children revelled in the freedom they were allowed and played games together. Both babies slept surprisingly well in the circumstances: the varied forms of accommodation provided at the coach stages were primitive in the extreme. Effie was fussy about meals offered, yet Marion knew they were heaven compared with the meagre meals they themselves would have to prepare in the years ahead. Each forty mile coach stretch was measured anxiously, as the dust swirled past the turning wheels. It seemed to Marion they were on a continuous cloud, which transported them past a monotonous panorama of eucalypts and casuarinas. Although she had only seen this country in good seasons, it was easy to visualise how harsh this area would be without its respectable clothing of vegetation.

Blackall. .... What a welcome sight - there was Robert Currie, looking very brown and very dusty. Effie was jubilant to see her man, and the children squealed with delight. Jack also claimed Uncle Robert affectionately and young Hope wondered what all the fuss was about. Marion felt fulfilled watching this happy re-union knowing how deeply Effie felt the break from Rockhampton; she knew this man-woman bond was essential for both parties to survive harmoniously on the frontier.

Currie had left Kennedy on Buckingham Downs and headed south specifically to accompany the women north. As he purchased a spring cart, a waggonette, and horses for the property, he felt aristocratic and important, but as he had ridden over the stony, intractable terrain, he did not foresee problems which could arise bringing the wheeled carts back. Kennedy and Currie had two Aboriginal stockmen to assist with the cattle on the northward route, and their wives were to be of assistance to Marion and Effie in setting up a new home in the North West. Robert Currie expressed nothing but optimism and challenge to his wife and her sister; his reunion with his wife numbed his true perception of reality.
As a special treat for the children, boiled lollies were bought as a pacifying medium for the long journey ahead. It was November and summer temperatures promised to make it a desperately hot endurance ride. There was no cover on the spring cart but the large hats and discreet clothing would give protection from the scorching sun. Provisions were loaded and the children passed up into the cart.

Embers of trepidation, yet concurrently exhilaration, sparked through Marion, as she gave the reins a gentle tug and the cart started off. Perhaps it was being in control which gave her this sense of having her destiny in her own hands, or perhaps it was this independence which she rallied to. Resolutely, she put all negative thoughts behind her and spoke happily to Effie about the new home they could make and the fun they would have in teaching one another's children - both admitted their inadequacies with mathematics and laughed!

During the first two weeks travelling, close thickets of trees protected them and they marvelled at the gentle colours in magnificent gums which huddled near the watercourses. Occasionally a strident ghost gum stood proudly, alone, in a well-grassed enclave, seemingly confident it could stand alone, resplendent in its glory. The grass was flaxen in colour, dried off by the winter temperatures, and waiting for the rebirth after the wet. With European penetration of this country, Aboriginal custom of annual burn-offs was diminishing. As a succession of groups of kangaroos hopped away nonchalantly, the children were fascinated - a wonderful introduction to the unique fauna of the outback.

Driving behind Currie, Marion Kennedy watched him carefully follow the tracks of drays and hoof marks made by previous adventurers. Her respect and admiration for men per se strengthened as she realised that, if they were to be in the vanguard of exploration, these men could never afford the luxury of indifference or vacillation. Their approach had to be direct. Seldom was there any turning back.

A long stretch of river was encountered, pelicans dominating the upper reaches, lords of their domain. Bloodwoods verged the expanse and the dull greyness of the soil put Marion in a sombre frame of mind. Longreach was
later to be established in this vicinity but in 1877 there was no indication of future habitation.

Following tediously, tediously, Marian and Effie didn't voice their weariness. The children showed it, and the days became longer and hotter. At 115 degrees in the shade, the heat they were enduring was infinitely higher. Still the slight breeze created by their movement did reduce it marginally. While they perspired in their heavy layers of clothing, it occurred to Marion how inappropriately they were attired, out here in the wilderness, dressed for Victorian coolness. Still, they had to cling to this part of their heritage, regardless of personal physical discomfort.

One building, or rather, shack came into view. Built hurriedly on the open plains, it almost had a comic effect. Why would anyone live right out here? Little realising that their ultimate destination would be more remote, Marion momentarily wondered at the sanity of the owner, absent at this time. Undoubtedly this was the beginning of a township, provisions came for the settlers, then the hotels to give the social nucleus to the raw beginnings and then the town became established. This was embryonic Winton.

As the weeks progressed, the plains became flatter and the vegetation became more scanty with the trees more stunted. There was the occasional gibber plain, a harsh red, pebbly miasma of inhospitality. But then the relief of the creeks and rivers became more appreciated, especially with the splendid river red gums which spread their generous limbs over the pools of water. Flat-topped hills came into view, the cream and red earth merging to produce a paradox of heat and beauty. Alternating sections of gidyea, mulga and stumpy eucalypts tacitly acknowledged the capacity of the soil to determine the vegetation.

Camp was made at nights and sticks were picked up on the interminable plains to facilitate quicker cooking in the evenings. Everyone was very tired and it was essential to bed down early. The cooking fire was the sole means of lighting, no carbide lights or candles being carried.

Jack turned five on 4 November 1877, and his mother ingeniously cooked his birthday cake in a paper bag in the ashes. Marion was pleased that at least
she was able to give him this joy, since the five little sticks which decorated his cake were less than elegant. His pleasure was obvious and Marion realised he, too, was a man in the making who could make do without all the frills in life.

As they neared their destination, they encountered two stationary drays with provisions loaded on top. They were located close to a shimmering expanse of river named the Burke. Standing close to this conglomeration was a striking, bearded Englishman of Alexander's age who spoke with a disturbing charm; his relaxed manner made him seem almost a part of the landscape itself, attuned to its needs and its beauties. Bough sheds were erected casually nearby and Marion was apprised later that this was the beginning of Boulia. Marion sensed she would again come in contact with this stranger.

For the last stop before Buckingham, they camped on a river which was distinctly different from those watercourses further south: the bed was admittedly dry where they crossed, but the sand was pure and clean. The gums seemed more magnificent than she could remember and Marion noted the appearance of comely, thin-slivered leaved paper-barks, or ti-trees. Flocks of green parrots flashed across their path and, when they had set up camp for the night the white cockatoos and galahs gave a spectacular performance.

By instinct the children were drawn to the sandy river bed, oblivious of any potential dangers. In crevices, sheltered from the harsh sun, unbelievable mossy inserts revealed clumps of maiden hair fern, a token of gentler climes. Marion noted as she walked with Hope along the river bed, indications of high water marks and wondered, temporarily, at the wisdom of making camp in the luxurious sand. The skies were clear, Marion reassured herself. At last she came across a deep, crystal-clear expanse of water - a private heaven. Despite her revelation in finding such perfection, she traced her way hurriedly back to the camp as though sub-conscious foreboding had guided her.

Visions of tents and bough sheds confirmed their destination. Sulieman Creek was reached! Their journey was at an end! Alexander welcomed Marion with a warmth which she had never before felt with such intensity. His anxieties for
their safety had dominated his thinking for the past five weeks, since he knew they would be starting on their journey. Following their re-union Alexander spread his arms out to Effie whom he felt to be softer and consequently more vulnerable than Marion. His two little boys scarcely recognised him, so unkempt did he appear, and Hope's memory of him had dimmed considerably in the interval of several months.

Immediate attention was devoted to constructing more permanent abodes and within a short time crude buildings were erected, using bloodwood uprights, cane grass walls and reed roofs. Again, it was a case of utilisation of local resources, and improvisation. The floors were given a thick covering of antbed which had been pulverised, then puddled to a consistency similar to concrete. They were kept dust free to an acceptable level by the use of a wet mop each day. The new home was declared "very cool in summer and not too cold in winter...all things considered (we) did very well." To add some degree of decorum to the settings, bullock hides were spread over the floor, after cattle had been killed for consumption. Marion described their home as "nice and cool and comfortable." 24

The earth floors did have advantages as they facilitated the erection of beds. Four posts were driven into the floor, and a bullock hide was deftly stretched over them; this formed a very comfortable, convenient bed. A calico bag stuffed with grass was sufficient for a mattress. Stools were made for the children and jam tins fitted with straps became pannikins. Marion recorded that a "smoothing iron was an unheard of luxury. Clothes were just rolled up damp and clapped, an effective if somewhat primitive method of laundering." 25

Initially there were two rooms, with the Kennedys occupying one room and the Curries the other. Each set of two children slept in the one bed, head to toe. Bough sheds were used to provide further room space and cooking was done out in the open. Marion and Effie were assisted in the tedious, and continuously demanding job of cooking by "excellent Aboriginal girls" who came with the stockmen. They lived away from the main camp in their gunyahs, which were a conglomerate of boughs, constructed in circular fashion. Their dogs had travelled with them on the northward journey and reclined lazily outside these humpies.
Camp ovens were used for every conceivable form of cooking and Marion enjoyed learning the length of time to leave food cooking in the camp oven. It was quite an art knowing how hot the ashes and coals were and how deeply to bury the camp oven to gain maximum effect. Perpetually, she and Effie had to be vigilant since the open fires presented a dilemma with the children as the deceptive ashes looked cool but merely covered treacherous coals. Out here, without any medical attention, anything could happen and she and Effie would have to perform medical miracles.

Sometimes a kangaroo or plain turkey was shot to vary the larder and "fat hen" often took the place of vegetables. Otherwise, supplies were ordered on a yearly basis through Normanton, from which place they came by dray or camel. At this stage the northern railway had extended only to Torrens Creek. "Jam and tinned fruit were considered a luxury while the essential ingredient flour, was frequently weevil-infested and stale. The great stand-by was dried potatoes which came in tins and kept well." In the 1880's the price of tinned fruit in Normanton was 5/- per tin: admittedly they were Californian peaches, but it has to be remembered wages in these days were usually one pound per week, rising to three pounds in areas where labour was scarce.

Life at Sulieman Creek was harmonious, easy and enjoyable. Marion's companionship with her sister became indispensable, almost to the point where they could read each other's mind. As the men went out with the cattle, the women became soul-mates, teaching each other's children and inventing new ways of making their camp more comfortable. Hand-sewing all the clothes, they learned to reveal many of their innermost thoughts which would normally have been stifled in "proper" company, or even within earshot of their husbands.

Neither had expected teaching the young ones to present such a challenge. With provisions coming tardily from Normanton, it was difficult to order precisely the correct quantities of food, let alone know how much educational material they would need. With the guidance of school books selected before leaving Rockhampton, they felt proud of their modest efforts in inculcating the 3 R's, never stopping to query the applicability of this theoretical work when the lives of their children would be predominantly more practical.
"Boo lia — 'A Vanished Tribe' ". Photograph George Woods
Courtesy: Mitchell Library
Aboriginal weavers — Bouli area. George Woods Photographer
Courtesy: Mitchell Library
CHAPTER FOUR
NATURE PREVAILS

Their geographical isolation virtually eliminated contact with their Rockhampton roots. Monthly mails between Normanton and Cloncurry existed, but south of Cloncurry mail filtered through only with chanced travellers. Proposals for an extension of the telegraph line through Cloncurry, connecting Blackall and Normanton, escaped Marion's ears. As a family unit they were alone, but self-contained. The strength and completeness of their group grew daily.

Without warning, their halcyon days on Buckingham Downs were shattered. Alexander and Robert were away with the cattle. News filtered through to the domestic Aboriginals that there had been a massacre twelve miles away at Wonomo waterhole. Alerted to their own impending danger, Marion took out the old pistol she had been taught to use, but its rusty aspect gave her grave doubts about its capacity to perform. Huddled inside the vulnerable dwellings, Marion and Effie, together with the two trembling house-girls, speculated in subdued tones about the murders, the victims and the reasons. They specifically ignored the desperate ramifications of the murder - their safety.

A contingent of native police from Boulia arrived; it was essential the women were removed to a close-by settlement where their safety could be ensured. Unspoken was the fear that their moral beings could also be violated. The irony of black Native Police protecting them from black murderers did not occur to Marion. Thoughts flashed rapidly through her mind as she tried to remain calm. Their refuge was with Fred Margretts, a close neighbour.

After two disturbed nights, Marion welcomed Alexander, riding in with a triumphant air ahead of the Native Police; fears had been held for his personal safety. He explained that all was well again, the culprits had been found and dealt with, and they could return "home". As they sat around the campfire Marion was informed that four men had perished. An adjoining
property owner Beckett had employed Molvo, a Russian, who in turn had three stockmen to work with him to drove cattle. They had camped near Wonomo waterhole where Aboriginals attacked them at evening with woomeras and spears.

Kennedy and the Native Police had respectfully buried their bodies, crude railings erected and the note "Killed by Blacks 1878" engraved in the blazed inset. Little discussion followed about any provocation which could have incited this hostility; Marion was still unaware of the delicate balance between man and the environment in this desert area. She did not know that Aboriginal fertility had always been so finely attuned to environmental limitations: the desert land could only support a certain number of persons. Therefore she could not sense the hatred these natives felt for the newcomers with their livestock which sullied watercourses, creating a silt problem which stifled the natural springs which had nurtured their people for centuries. Water lillies and other delicate parts of the ecology died at the onslaught of white man. Their Aboriginal livelihood was endangered, and they resorted to the only means they knew of protecting it.

It occurred to Marion that she felt completely safe with her Aboriginal house-girls and the boys, and its irony came home. They, too, were regarded with hostility since they came from another area and Aboriginal lore stressed rigidly, tribe territoriality. This was the reason the Native Police Corps worked so effectively: they too were enemies and had to fight for their lives - even though against their own kind.

The two women retired with the children in the dark shadows, while Alexander and Robert kept vigil by the flickering firelight. Marion overheard their words of accusation against Molvo - "They deserved their fate. If they take advantage of their women, you can't blame them retaliating." She couldn't believe her ears. Fancy white men the same as Alexander sleeping with the Aboriginal women. Inconceivable. She felt confident Alex was not like that. Why didn't Alex tell her it happened with other men?

She was, however, safely asleep, when Alexander spoke with Robert about the chase after the "niggers". He described in graphic detail the exhilaration he felt in using the carbine on these vermin who had attacked his fellow-men.
His venom flew through the barrel, "dispersing" them so they would never more be a problem to this area.\(^{32}\)

Renewed effort was made to expedite the construction of permanent dwellings at Kennedy's Camp\(^{33}\) further down the Sulieman. Reinforcements of the frail grass dwellings were instituted but the Wonomo incident disconcerted Marion considerably. Firmly she subdued her fears as an example to Effie, who was heavy with child. Once more Marion herself felt a desire to bear her little girl and Alexander's passion assured her that it would be a love-child. Jean, Effie's child of two kindled Marion's innermost dreams.

Effie's labour came short and quick, Marion marvelled at the ease with which her sister had children, compared with herself. Imploring the help of God, Marion caressed her sister's bulging abdomen as the girls kept the children at a distance. Without proper utensils and without any knowledge of midwifery, except her own experience and what she had been reading in the wonderful Mrs. Beeton's cookbook they had brought with them, Marion felt overawed. As a "thrippenny" size opening revealed brown hair, Marion revelled in this exquisite power of woman! We really are an amazing race! Never did it occur to her that procreation was completely natural, all the animals procreated without fuss. She was ecstatic. Somehow seeing birth from the other end was a euphoric, breath-taking experience! A wee boy entered the world.

Marion's pride in delivery was unrivalled. Compassion for her sister and exquisite exhilaration at the whole beauty of birth engulfed her. To the children, it created no waves but they marvelled at the minuteness of the newcomer. It was good that the dwelling was more commodious now, and much safer.

Both Marion and Alexander wondered whether the newcomer had sparked Marion's receptivity as she felt movements some months after the home delivery. Of course this time it was to be a girl and then both sisters would each have three children, two boys and a girl. The months passed and Marion became very tired, more than she had in her other pregnancies. The heavy work was taking its toll. Things did not feel right and Marion felt pangs of
concern. The baby was not due for possibly another three months and yet there were pains similar to those felt at the onset of labour.

It was a girl, a beautiful little cherub - her one and only girl! She was so still and suddenly Marion's heart stopped. Instantly she realised her premonitions were right. The reality hit her and self-pity accompanied the tears. Why, why did this have to happen? She looks so perfect. Why, why, dear God. Thank God I have Effie here. Why doesn't Alex feel the way I do? How can he just accept everything. Oh God.

A simple burial. Buried deep with heavy logs across so the soul could rest, unmolested by dingoes. No-one would know.

Life must go on. The months passed by. Buckingham Downs had to be sold, and there were intentions to move to nearby Noarnside (later Noranside). The home there promised to be more solid and more secure, so both women were looking forward with anticipation to this relocation. Once more Marion felt ill in the mornings but dared not confide in anyone, since her grief at her baby's loss still obsessed her.

Noranside had a more permanent structure than Buckingham, with slab walls filled with mud, a rough shingle roof, and doors. It seemed Alexander was trying to make her more comfortable to atone for her spiritual low. Effie was a wonderful midwife, caring for her lovingly as she suffered this long, fourth labour. On 15 March 1880, Norman Alexander gave a happy squawk of protest at being rudely taken out of his warm cocoon, and Marion's heart melted. Her little lost girl blended into the past and she fell in love with this wee morsel.

The wet had not come as they expected and water supplies were low near the home; artesian bores were a few short years away, and Government success at Barcaldine ushered in a new age for the outback pastoralists. Both men were too busy to be carting the water in ships tanks from the hole twelve miles away, as the drought necessitated constant moving of the cattle to ensure they were near water and grass. Alexander, when he realised the
critical extent of the situation at the homestead, resolved the family should be transported close to the water hole. Now that the Aboriginal danger had been decreased, it was a sane decision, even if only for a short time. Neither Marion nor Effie were happy about this decision but accepted it knowing it was Hobson’s choice. Looking after the six children in tents, especially with a new-born baby and one toddler, would be an exceptional feat. Moreover, teaching three children as well would add more to the burden. Still, they needed their education and the water situation was critical.

Journeying to the waterhole, Marion witnessed man's ineffectual position in relation to Mother Nature. She alone controlled the country and produced the water so essential for survival. Man's efforts to counteract her forces were puny. The horses were tiring, and there was no water to quench their thirst. Only four miles to go but they had to make the load lighter for the horses - stepping down from the cart, carrying their babes, Marion and Effie encouraged their youngsters "don't worry, we'll soon be there", resting occasionally under a tree. It was a good thing they started out early in the morning. For eight months they lived here, returning only just before the end of the year.

In late 1880 the promise of rain for the outback was filled. Creeks ran and the grass grew, and optimism returned. Even on the edge of the Simpson Desert, a dairy was established outside Bedourie and cow's milk provided a welcome relief to the strong goat's succour for those remote inhabitants. North of Buckingham in 1879, the Carrandotta Pastoral Company had been formed, with the intention of creating the largest sheep empire in Australia. One of the participants was Oscar De Satge descended ostensibly from a French count and sent out to the Antipodes purportedly as a remittance man. Substantial sums were injected into this mammoth complex. Elaborate fencing programmes and buildings pre-occupied these men who forgot that this land had an inbuilt balancing mechanism, and Man knew not when or for how long the scales were going to fall in the other direction. It was financial suicide to judge the carrying capacity of this country by seasons experienced at only one end of the spectrum. They all knew of the exodus from the land in this area at the end of the previous decade when Mother Nature triumphed.
Noranside never felt home to the two women. Schooling the children was proving increasingly difficult and Alexander decided the women should move to Normanton while the men looked after the property. Several camps were springing up around them but no white women came with these ruffians, hardened by long years of primitive existence in the far outback.\textsuperscript{36}

Belongings were packed, the children sensing the excitement of the big adventure ahead; they knew there would be play-mates at the end of the trip and a real school. Effie could hardly muster any enthusiasm as her fourth child weighed heavily inside her; her movements were slow and she found the packing awkward.
CHAPTER FIVE

TURNING POINTS

January, 1881, and they were away. The spring cart, waggonette and pack horses were heavily laden. As the horses gently pulled away, the women smiled quietly at one another, patting their children's hats as the breeze blew back the rim. There was a lightness to their bearing - their pioneering days were nearing an end - they were going to civilization! Marion and Effie conjectured the bustling port of Normanton and chattered about their chance to have a normal social life, playing tennis and enjoying afternoon teas. Normanton, an important gulf port for the hinterland, glimmered brightly ahead.

Clinging close to the Burke, Kennedy looked for a suitable crossing. The downpour which had permitted the women to return to their Noarnside abode had also left substantial waters in the normally dry river bed. Perhaps there would be a firm crossing before they reached Rocky Waterhole on the mighty Burke. Chatsworth on the right brought back memories for him of his early introduction into this area, and he thought reminiscently of how events had gone since then. Black, ominous clouds rose quickly from the north around to the south and conversations assumed an apprehensive, stilted character. The rain began to fall and Kennedy's mind was set on making Rocky Waterhole crossing before the swells came down from the head-waters.

Reaching Rocky Waterhole, they saw the swollen waters coming swift and deep. It was impossible to get the horses and the cart across to the other side, let alone the families. Debris, and huge trees swept uncontrollably down with the surging torrent. The women avoided looking at one another, lest the other read their fears at this dilemma. Philosophically, Kennedy set up the tents by the river, feeling confident the waters would fall during the next few days and they would be Cloncurry-bound.

Days passed, and the nights were restless and damp. Lying awake listening to the relentless rain beating on the tent top, each adult wondered just how
much there had been in the head-waters. Only this would determine when the raging Burke would subside. Effie felt the head of her baby engaged for birth and was fearfully anxious about the impending birth in this wayside place; even Buckingham was better than this - at least it was a home of a sort.

Almost ten days passed. Food became scarce, and each of them experienced early symptoms of dysentery. It soon became evident that some of them were faring worse than others. Effie's youngest child, Bill, was lethargic and quiet. Effie herself suffered noticeably as her body strove to nurture the unborn child. Marion had nightmares; she remembered back to when they set out from Rockhampton - her feelings of protection for Effie were still so very strong. Alexander had been the one who convinced Robert the move here was safe for them all, so Marion felt personally responsible for her sister.

The night was dark and Marion woke instinctively. Robert was calling her. Things weren't going too well. He felt the baby was coming but Effie did not seem able to help. Marion's stomach knotted as she made her way to the adjacent tent. A light showed Effie, fearful and silently imploring. Her weakness drew the vitality from her face and Marion felt a clammy, weak hand reach out for her own. Within a short time the baby was born. Not a cry, just a helpless whimper. His hair clung to his wee head, his limbs perfect. Marion's heart broke suddenly, knowing the little chap's chances in life were slim. She placed him close to Effie, although she knew there was little sustenance there. Effie hardly moved, scarcely aware of the presence of this new little soul.

Marion watched helplessly as Effie slipped deeper and deeper into a trance, her mind wandering deliriously, calling feebly to her family. Her mind crossed the miles and years effortlessly in an attempt to find solace - a resting place. The night lengthened and young Bill became hot and restless. Marion moved from one to the other, praying silently, refusing to acknowledge possible outcomes. The deluge abated, and Marion fervently prayed help would miraculously arrive. Until dawn she worked frantically, soothing and wiping brows and gently caressing the limp hands; the wee morsel lay quietly beside his inert mother.
Consulting with Alexander, Marion mixed cornflour and water in a desperate attempt to give a binding to the stomach. Effie could scarcely swallow, while Bill immediately brought it back up. Alexander came in to break the news that Norman was looking pale and seemed to be deteriorating.

A day passed and still Marion tended her family. Somehow, both families had combined as one, with all the misfortunes they had overcome together. As the sun sank, Marion's spirits sagged. Again, she prayed for a miracle.

In the evening, Effie's newborn was scarcely breathing. His suction was tentative and weak, and he seemed to be getting only a little moisture from his mother. Seeing the little chap breathe so feebly, the last vestige of resistance was wrung out of Effie. As her failing became more apparent, Robert called Marion urgently. She sat beside the bedding, praying. Dear God, she never felt so alone. She never felt so helpless. This was her sister: her closest, and only friend. Silently she turned her head and wiped away the incredulous tears. Their existence together bonded them inextricably and Marion felt part of herself was being wrenched away. Suddenly, the response stopped: she was gone.

"We deliver unto Thee, God, what is yours".....Kennedy, under cloudy skies looked at his family and shivered with the knowledge of man's smallness in the wide circle of life. Marion nursed Norman, while Jack and Hope Duff clung to her skirts and sobbed quietly as they watched the three bodies being lowered into the lonely grave. Jean and Bobbie, though comforted by their father, were instinctively drawn to their aunt, as their new mother-figure.

Pain penetrated every part of her brain, yet she kept reassuring herself that Norman was miraculously saved; except for the mare fortuitously foaling and providing milk, her son also would be buried there. Nothing eased the burden. Never had she felt so empty.

**STARTING AFRESH**

The skies lightened and the river dropped sufficiently for crossing and they made their weary way to Cloncurry. It was a decent sized settlement which grew out of Ernest Henry's copper find in the vicinity some 14 years
My Mother maiden name was Euphemia McImay. She was born in Victoria. She married my Father Robert Cennie on May 23 1871. At Rockymount, my Talored came from Flatfour Mother died Feb 1881. On the way in to Cloncurry from Aramiside I was beared at the Rocky water hole Bukin-ghan Dowm. Two baby boys, one 2 year & the other at birth were buried with her by my Father & Uncle Kennedy.

Jean's record of her mother's death.
Courtesy Mr. Donald Clark-Dickson.
previously. Kennedy spoke with the irascible Ernest Henry himself in Cloncurry. It was resolved they would form a partnership with Powell to acquire Calton Hills, a rough area north of Cloncurry. Henry had seen good grazing areas there in his search for copper. Roger Sheaffe and Henry were men with whom Kennedy felt a close affinity; both were pioneers of the first order.

Henry had served time in the Crimean War, before travelling to the Victorian goldfields. His walk from Ballarat to Sydney in 1859, at a time when peril was rife on the open tracks, was only one of his many escapades. From Callandoon on the Queensland border, he made his way north with Dalrymple's group to explore the Burdekin area, subsequently taking up the Mt McConnel run. From there he established Hughenden Station, but could not resist the challenge to explore further. Unfortunately, his financial commitments and the pressures of the 1860's forced him to relinquish his pastoral empire. His exploration in the north-west, saw him assisting Landsborough in the evacuation of Burketown residents to Sweers Island in the 1866 Gulf Fever crisis. Henry himself contracted the disease but miraculously recovered; his 500 mile ride back to Hughenden soon afterwards testified to his resilience.

Subsequent rides out to this area produced initially iron-ore from Black Mountain near Cloncurry and then the Great Australian which yielded promising copper results. His spontaneous reaction was to ride to Rockhampton, boat to Sydney-London and attempt to raise money from acquaintances in the right circles. At this particular international crisis time, he had no luck. Instead he engaged a Cornish captain and thirty miners who came out ahead of Henry. Until the arrival of the Cornish engagees, Sheaffe had employed some station hands and a few Kalkadoons to begin the mining. Fort Constantine station had been formed on Henry's advocation to act both as a profitable investment for Sheaffe but also as a springboard for Henry's exploration activities. It was Ernest Henry whom Marion had first seen at Boulia: his entrepreneurial drive, while not always successful, showed through in his personal approach to life. Somehow his effervescent open-ness cut down all the Victorian reserve in Marion.
They spent merely two nights in Cloncurry, at the Royal Hotel, awaiting the coach to Normanton. George Seymour who became a staunch ally of Kennedy's, established this hotel on the banks of Coppermine Creek in 1872. Marion was accompanied to Normanton by Robert Currie who felt impelled to stay with the children during their bereavement period. This situation was agreeable to all since Normanton was still a wild town as newspaper reports verified - "We want a few magistrates in this portion of the Burke".

During 1881 Robert Currie sent Jean to a convent in Cooktown for the twelve months to make sure she was effectively taught until the Normanton school was completed. Being raised as a strict Presbyterian she rankled at the very thought of being imprisoned in a Catholic enclosure. The Normanton school was commissioned by 28.10.1881, much to the delight of the Gulf residents. The bushman's concept of education is visually captured by this clipping:

> It is not too much to assert that a man in these days who cannot read is like a deaf and dumb man, and one who cannot read is like a blind man.

Marion was captivated with the range of characters she observed in this township which grew apace with the establishment of the school, and the anticipation of the railway to the south. Premier McIlwraith was busy organizing tracts of land to be given to British investors who were to sponsor the inland railway up to the Gulf. The Gulf of Carpentaria was to be the gate to an Australian transport network.

Ernest Favenc, explorer and writer, commented on the willingness of residents to "swill medicine with an air of satisfaction that even the best whiskey would not produce." It surely was a frontier area. She noticed the capacity of the menfolk to drink to excess and saw, for the first time, pale coloured Aboriginal women who also staggered. The Chinese men seemed invariably to live with Aboriginal women, and she saw no Chinese women. Access to newspapers made her once more aware of the wider world, yet reinforced the precarious nature of her more immediate environment. This article especially made her appreciate Alexander's sobriety and hastened her resolve to join him as soon as possible:
Normanton: Edward Kelly, who died a few weeks back of excessive imbibition of alcoholic liquors was a young man. G. Fletcher who succumbed to the same fell habit was a man who would have been in the prime of life but for his fearful propensity for the fire water.\textsuperscript{41}

Continually, the Aboriginal menace was reiterated to her; a 23 year-old manager of Rocklands Station, Mr. Crawford was killed by his head stockman, and it was generally commented that "he went carelessly among the blacks and paid the penalty of his rashness."\textsuperscript{42}

Marion rested easy on the issue of her husband's fidelity but, conversely, feared for his safety, wondering how long he could parade his bravado before the belligerent Kalkadoons. Confrontations arose naturally when cattle occupied Aboriginal hunting grounds and spearings incensed Alexander more than the average squatter. Alexander had ridden up to Normanton in 1882, spent a night with his family, and caught the dilapidated coastal boat to Brisbane to confer with Commissioner Seymour, Head of the Police Department, on the dangerous state of the frontier.

Kennedy pressed home the economic sacrifices the Government would be making if they did not increase their policing forces, and then introduced the danger to women and children, the flag-bearers of civilization. Kennedy knew which priorities appealed to his government. Officially Kennedy was warned that the settlers had no right to make reprisals for white lives taken by the "blacks", but unofficially he was given carte blanche to do whatever he considered would "tame the north". This ruling could be quietly disseminated to other settlers who felt similarly threatened.

A Native Police contingent under Inspector de la Poer Beresford was subsequently stationed at Cloncurry which obviated the need for reinforcements coming from Boulia or the Etheridge. By this time the natives were so "cheeky" they were coming to the edge of the township of Cloncurry and causing great consternation.

Searching for the culprits of the murder of a chap called Butcher, Beresford and his native police corralled a group of myalls in a gorge at the head of the Williams River, 35 miles south-east of Cloncurry. During the night the blacks
retrieved a hidden cache of weapons and attacked the police; Beresford was killed and one of the native police hurried to a property to give the alarm. Inspector Urquhart was hastily seconded to quell the insurrections in the region. The troops were directed to set up camp on Corella Creek both to instil discipline which had been lacking with the influence of town-life and to prepare for rugged-terrain warfare. The Kalkadoons inhabited the northern hilly area of which Kennedy's property Calton Hills, was part, as well as the southern areas down to Buckingham Downs.

This mountainous country provided an ideal venue for attacks to be committed with impunity. Black perpetrators retreated into its inhospitable crags undetected, and rejoiced in the degree of success of their guerilla-tactics. Cattle were easy prey and frequently they staggered with broken spears imbedded in their skins. Corroborees were held, and enthusiastic chanting of "Kill Kennedy" inflamed the anger of Kennedy. He pursued them relentlessly and fearlessly.

The climax to this parry-and-pull warfare occurred when Charles White Powell, Kennedy's partner in Calton Hills, was killed by the Kalkadoons; his kidney fat was extracted and they jubilantly defaced the treasures he held dearest - photos of his family. Enraged at this murder and defilement of his partner, Kennedy joined Urquhart eagerly to avenge this baseless act. Undoubtedly reprisal figures were substantial, and Kennedy came close to losing his own life, as he battled with an assailant in a creek. Kennedy's greatest shortcoming, his inability to swim, almost spelled his demise. Powell's body was reverently buried on Mistake Creek.

Urquhart remained in the rugged Argyllas for two months, mopping up remnants of the tribe whom he considered responsible for the atrocity. There was such uncertainty of his fate in Cloncurry that word in the meantime was sent to England to inform Urquhart's parents that he had died. A Chinese shepherd was murdered on an out-station of Granada, on the Dugald River, and retribution was inevitable. Urquhart swung into action, determined to quiet this provocative tribe for all time.

The show-down occurred on Battle Mountain, Prospector's Creek, near Kajabbi. Whether the demise of the tribe was essentially effected in this
battle or whether the back was broken in the affrays up and down the Leichhardt during the previous two months, is debatable. Contemporary academic circles favour the latter, since Urquhart was always open in sounding his "successful accomplishments" of dispersal and records of that period reveal no hard evidence of a concerted battle.\(^{43}\) It would seem that since the bones which littered the hillsides for decades following this event included the bones of gins and piccaninnies, another theory could perhaps be postulated: just as the Bunya Festival was an important annual event where all members of the tribe gathered, so one could assume the Kalkadoons also had their meeting.\(^ {44}\)

Whether the battle itself was a pre-meditated act of assertive defiance on the part of the Kalkadoons, or whether they were caught off-guard, can still be debated. These notes from Fysh's work could perhaps give a third alternative: "After the Chinaman's murder: at last got them on Leichhardt and killed many. Left camp and on way back again visited scene gins, piccaninnies and dingoes were living on the dead."\(^ {45}\) One thing, however, remains certain: the power of the Kalkadoons was fragmented after this period. They were, in fact, living out the "passing of the Aborigines" concept which was popular at that time; now mankind could move onto a higher plane of evolution. It was 1884.

Knowing the tense-ness of the situation, Marion had been pleased to be asked to re-join her husband in Cloncurry. Their enforced separation had not been easy and she was happy the boys could be amongst the first pupils at the Cloncurry School. Marion was pleased to see Robert marry a widow, Mrs. Eliza Hillitt in November 1884, and it was his intention to remain in Normanton with his butchering business. It was a relief to know young Bobbie would have a good home, and Marion knew Jean would soon join her and Alexander. Marion had been a surrogate mother for the children since Effie's death and it was felt Normanton was not a good environment for Jean, now a growing young lady. Marion had nurtured both children but her rapport with Jean, who looked so much like her mother, was especially close.
CHAPTER SIX

SETTLEMENT AT THE CROSSROADS

Cloncurry was declared a shire in 1884 and began to assume all the attributes of an important centre, both for the mining and pastoral industries. The Cloncurry Copper Mining and Smelting Co., a Scottish-financed concern, acquired Henry's Great Australian Mine and promised to get Cloncurry moving. Cobb and Co. coaches serviced Cloncurry district, an indication roads were improving. Alexander purchased a block of land, and built a temporary abode for his family. It was a blessing for Marion to be closer to her husband, and the boys revelled in having new school chums.

Coming back to the Cloncurry area nearer their father certainly had benefits for them all. Jack and Hope were old enough to ride well and Alexander indulged them with a horse in town. Both promised to be excellent horsemen although Hope's frail constitution made Marion concerned about his riding out by himself. During holidays, the family travelled up to Calton Hills where Kennedy now felt assured there would be no more trouble. Marion began to relax and enjoy the company of other women of her station, yet she felt inhibited by her introverted shyness which became ingrained during her Buckingham days.

Meeting many of her husband's contemporaries, she felt admiration for these men who stopped never to question the validity of their actions: ignoring pitfalls, they lunged headlong into pastoral expansion, looking only for alternative venues should one venture fail. Seymour, Sheaffe and Henry were visitors to their home whenever theirs' and Kennedy's visits to Cloncurry coincided.

Henry and Kennedy, as incorrigible explorers, mapped out and rode the 200-mile track between Cloncurry and Camooweal, skirting up north of the Argyllas and coming down south to the Leichhardt before veering once more to the north, past Yelvertoft. Urquhart and Kennedy followed the same trail in 1884, the first one to use a wheeled vehicle, a buggy over this formidable terrain. This
“Gathering in Cloncurry”. Trio in second front row — George Seymour, Alexander Kennedy, Ernest Henry.

Courtesy: Mount Isa Mines Limited
route later became the coach road to the west: Kennedy was vigorous in his desire to civilise this harsh land.

Of Alexander's round of acquaintances, Marion retained a softness towards Ernest Henry. There was a flexibility about his bearing which she could not detect in the other men of standing: their contrasting rigidity was almost frightening in its intensity.

Preparations were put in hand for a partnership between Sheaffe, Henry and Kennedy to amalgamate Calton Hills and Devoncourt Station. "Devoncourt" had been taken up by Sheaffe in 1880, and it incorporated the first holding taken up in Kalkadoon country: Brown Brothers took up "Bridgewater" in 1874 but surrendered it later, due to shortage of surface water. A homestead was begun on Devoncourt by Kennedy in anticipation of Marion's move out there with the boys. Whiteants destroyed all wood except the pungent gidyea, so rough stone was used and mud buildings erected. Marion felt Queen of her realm as she settled into Devoncourt in 1887, the home being quite sufficient and an underground tank, with a handpump, assuring her of no recurrence of the Noranside dilemma. She expected temperatures to be slightly more than bearable, since Cloncurry recorded Australia's highest temperature on 16 January 1887, a breath-taking 127.5 degree Fahrenheit.46

In 1890, Kennedy employed Paine, a German renowned for his meticulous workmanship. He was adjured to leave the grog alone while he constructed a sturdy building but human frailty did prolong the completion of his remarkable project. He erected a handsome building - neatly-faced stone with limestone-sand mortared walls which were offset by an outstanding flagstone floor. Some of the floor flags were almost three feet in width and sat flat and neat. Marion was delighted with the outcome and both she and Alexander looked forward to the completion of more buildings on the same line; alas, Paine's weakness claimed his life before this could eventuate.

Since Devoncourt was the junction of the southern road to Boulia and the current western track to Camooweal it was considered an official "mail change". This route went through "Teddington Loch" (or "Bushy Park") near "Buckingham Downs". Marion accepted the duty of post-mistress 47 and in this capacity, she prepared meals for travellers, organised for mail to be collected
and delivered, and generally provided social respite for those on the coach. Her remuneration was six pounds per annum. Being the hostess, Marion was essentially the pivotal point of Devoncourt, a wide cross-section of people coming within her sphere. Providing meals for passengers was demanding and frequently interrupted domestic routines. A degree of regimentation was firmly entrenched, both to foster consistency in the Aboriginal staff and to achieve a standard of efficiency in the otherwise timeless existence. Meals were usually stews which could be easily added to, if numbers increased.

Marion was hard-pressed to perform her dual function of post-mistress and cook, with sometimes thirty meals to be prepared using the most primitive equipment with a restricted range of ingredients, and only the assistance of two "house gins". Undoubtedly morning and afternoon teas were customary, if the men were close to the homestead. Mustering time was both a busy and a dusty period, as the herds were yarded close to the house and the clouds of dust drifted lazily over onto the white sheets hanging on the lines. Chinese cooks came and went as the alluvial gold was found in the vicinity at Top Camp. Some were incorporated into the employ of the pastoral industry during the dry time but they scuttled off after the rain, once more anticipating the important find which they could send home to China. Their specific contribution to development of the outback is their gardening skills: many stations, including "Devoncourt", enjoyed healthy living as these industrious orientals worked miracles down near the creek-beds.

Alexander showed the depths of his racial intolerance and Scottish invectives flew loud and clear, as he found the Chinese cooks on another plane, steeped with opium. European cooks were unprocurable, as the north was still attempting to shake the ingrained belief that "white men cannot work in the tropics". This led to an endemic shortage of European workers, with the result that Kanakas were taken as far west as Boulia and as far north as Normanton to labour. Aboriginal cooks were unacceptable as their concept of hygiene did not reach Kennedy's standards. Japanese were the preferred cooks since they were meticulously clean, and accepted their subordinate role quietly. Demanding schedules and cultural isolation, however, ensured their terms of employment were short.
As well, Marion was confronted with a new context of the black-white situation with a camp of some 200 Aboriginals living down near the creek. They were an ideal reservoir for workers on the property - Alexander capitalised on their adeptness for managing the stock proficiently and came to value several members of the group. This was the first time he had used the local indigenes in his workforce.

Marion was told she could also select some girls from the camp to help in the house, which relieved her of some of the more mundane work. Her own boys quickly became adept at learning the Kalkadoon language and developed an affinity with their cultural ways, to the extent that Hope claimed to practise the "Kalkadoon" religion when he went away to school. According to King Moonlight of the Burke they used "perfect blackfella" language. 50

One particular child whom Alexander brought home from Chatsworth attracted Marion's attention - she was quite fair and very attractive, if cleaned up. Perhaps Marion's memories of her buried child at Buckingham stirred in her mind, or maybe a sense that this child was different from the rest. She was brought into the homestead confines and treated as part of the family. Her name was Ida, her father a carrier who had died at Urandangie, her mother taking itinerant hotel and station work.

This brought back to Marion the strange relationship which existed between the white men and the black women. Why did the Aboriginal women hold such allure to the white men? She had noticed some of them promenading around the homestead and once it occurred to her that there was something sensuously seductive about their movements, although she could not confide this to anyone. At times she envied their evident disregard for all the material encumbrances which constrained Marion herself. Her mental straitjacket of protocol and propriety forbade her discussing sexual matters, let alone openly flaunting her feminine attributes. It occurred to her that perhaps the white men did enjoy this Aboriginal naturalness, in contrast to the prim victorian purity. 51

Marion felt disconcerted afterwards when she learned Henry's deaf and dumb wife had left him to return to Warwick; ostensibly this was because she was unable to cope with the knowledge that her husband lived harmoniously with
Ida Thorpe — Cloncurry 1908
Courtesy: Mr. George Thorpe
Aboriginal women while in the bush. Marion's instinctive affinity with Henry, made her question her own intuitive powers about human nature. Alexander also spoke of De Satge, the count from Carrandotta who fathered half-caste children, the children retaining his name. It was a common practice for the black-white child to assume the father's name - a logical means of ensuring conscience recognition, though the father may socially disown them.

Marion could not understand these men at all, since she still felt, like her contemporaries, that the Aborigines were so far down the evolutionary scale. How she wished Effie were here so they could discuss this problem. Marion overheard Alexander speaking with a prominent acquaintance from Cloncurry whose daughter was to marry a stockman from "Devoncourt". When her husband was questioned about the qualities of his future son-in-law, Kennedy's reply was unequivocal: "He is one of the best stockmen I have ever had and what is more the gins speak very highly of him."52

John and Hope were sent away to a Brisbane school, to finish their education. When the boys returned on holidays, Marion's fears were alerted, lest her sons too possess those same failings exhibited by men whom she respected. She voiced her concern to her husband who recognised there was potential for trouble, with the boys undergoing changes to manhood, so he spoke sternly with them, telling them of the incidence of venereal disease down at the camp. To ensure they did not slip out at night, he snared a cow bell across the door which would announce any intended misdemeanour to the whole household. Forgetting his trap, Kennedy himself innocently set the noisy contraption clanging, to the amusement of all!

In the same way as Marion's family had done, Alexander participated in local affairs, being a Justice of the Peace for 50 years, a Member of the Divisional Board, the Rabbit Board and the Hospital Board. His fiery temper and pride caused many a ruckus, but he was intent on ensuring fairness and progress were maintained. His repertoire of anecdotes includes many which revolved around the hard, fast living which he witnessed while staying at the much-frequented hotels in Cloncurry.

Evidently prostitution was an early service of these frontier towns: "Japanese women used to come round and camp outside the town and let all and sundry
know. 10/-.

Camped at Cloncurry near cemetery. Kennedy had never seen Japanese women and his curiosity impelled him to ask his friend to accompany him. This friend was the local Magistrate and Kennedy had to explain his intentions were honourable. When they went into the tent his friend's dog became very excited and the lass called the barking animal by name. Kennedy was especially amused to learn "He always come here". Correct or otherwise, it created interest when retold by Kennedy at the table in the hotel, and he added for effect "Ooh, that dear leetle dog".

Marion became anxious to see her Rockhampton family again. She took Norman and Jean with her in the early 1890’s when the world was undergoing a protracted Depression. Many properties, including the Devoncourt-Calton Hills partnership had found markets tight, but having few debts, they were not pressed financially. Marion’s journey from Cloncurry to Hughenden was by coach, then by train to Townsville followed by a short boat trip to Rockhampton.

Embraced by her father, Marion clung to him tightly, as though she needed comfort to absolve all the hardship she had suffered over the intervening years. The loss of her mother seemed an unreal event to her compared with her loss of Effie which she still felt acutely. During their short stay Marion's affinity with Jean moved Peter Murray beyond words.

Household chaos brought insistent cries for Marion to return to Devoncourt, and she complied without hesitation. It was flattering to know she was indispensable, and she did love her new home. Even seeing the Aboriginals around the house was part of her happy home-coming, and she accepted her place once more. Shortly after their return an incident occurred which drew an instinctive response from her.

**LIFE IN THE BALANCE**

Word came from the camp that a little boy was badly burned and could missus help him? Alexander accompanied Marion down to the camp although he was muttering all the time "It's no good prolonging the agony, hit him on the head, put him out of his misery." What astonished Marion was the conviction with which he said this. They arrived there to find the little fellow was a "yeller-feller", a child of perhaps two years of age, burned severely all up the back and under the
arms. He had sidled up to a bucket with fire in it and his clothes had caught alight. He was in a very bad way, and it crossed Marion's mind that perhaps Alexander's solution may have been the kindest way.

Only when she noticed Ida had followed them down and was quietly watching in the background, did Marion feel some connection between the two children. Questioning Ida, Marion was told the child, George, was her brother. "Their mother had left him with the tribe and gone to work at the Quamby Hotel". Marion felt she had no alternative; a competent Aboriginal woman, Polly, who was known for possessing special medicinal skills, was selected and the little fellow was brought up to the house, in a valiant effort to save his life.

After examining her conscience, Marion felt happy that she had stood so firmly against her husband's advocations. It was the first time in their married life that she had defied him, and she felt justified. A human life was a human life after all, and only for the weakness of the white man the little fellow would not be here. We owed it to him. By conscience.

As the days passed and young George was confined to a dark room, with Polly hovering around mysteriously, Marion hardly dared to go over to inquire at his progress. His life still hung in the balance but at this stage Jean took an active interest in the boy so Marion received constant feedback. His progress was remarkable and it pleased Marion to know they had saved a life and that Ida would have a brother. Ida had become an integral part of the station life, a show-piece for the travellers on the coach. Marion made attractive clothes for her and made inquiries about sending her away to school.

George became part of the family, acquiring the manners and breeding of the Kennedys, an affinity which was obvious when he was warmly greeted in Brisbane in 1923 by Mrs. Kennedy. Attempting to recapture his memories of those times at Devoncourt, I prodded his memory:

She ... used to make clothes for the boys. They used to buy the trousers and she used to make shirts. Ah. Jesus, I used to cry too. She used to make them in the Turkey red stuff, you know. Oh, God, I would put one of them on, I felt like burning it....by machine, oh, these bloody old, red shirts, I can still see them now (laughter)
Although she didn't have a lot of success, "Miss Currie" endeavoured to detour George from the stockyards to the school-room. Marion was pre-occupied with the book-keeping, post office and general running of the property while Alexander was away, and it was this degree of competence that made her more a partner rather than merely a wife. Alexander and Jack discovered the Duchess copper mine on the southern border of their property, calling it "the Duchess" since Count De-Satge's woman rode past indignantly soon after the discovery of the outcrop.

At the cross-ways, Jean had the opportunity to meet numerous handsome young men one of whom turned her head and stole her heart. Both Marion and Alexander approved of this young man, Clark-Dickson, who showed fine horsemanship qualities and had worked on nearby properties. Great fuss was made in preparing for the wedding, which Marion felt was the wedding of her only daughter. This wedding was the first of a white girl in Cloncurry. It was anti-climactic for Marion returning to Devoncourt after the celebrations, realising how much she had depended on Jean's company.

Nature triumphed once more and a long, bedevelling drought persisted over the turn of the century from 1895-1902. This was called the Great Drought and, following the Depression, was the catalyst for many a pastoral disaster. Machinery for the new mining ventures for Hampden and Selwyn were held up on the southern bounds of the barren country, until the drought broke, thus provided water and grass for the teams. World prices also had to improve before there was the financial incentive to start operations.

The drought hit Devoncourt hard. By 1905 Kennedy and Sheaffe decided it was wisest to pass it in, but the proposition of moving from Devoncourt broke Marion's heart. To provide a permanent base for their family, Kennedy built a modern town house in Cloncurry, knowing how Marion felt at home there and how it was bound to prosper as a town with the imminent mining boom.

Duchess was sold by the Kennedy's in 1907 and this income source enabled Marion and Alexander to set sail on their postponed honeymoon to Scotland.
Scotland was very different from what Marion expected. Although she anticipated it would be cold, Marion felt her bones continuously ache as temperatures fell. Somehow a white Christmas was not quite what they had conjured it would be. Admiring the white plains, Marion appreciated the virginal purity of the expanse yet could not bare her soul to it. Her love of the magnificent, stately trees of the northern rivers forced itself into the front of her consciousness, and she realised that rugged country was part of her soul. Marion rationalised to herself that Scotland was not really her home - it may have been for one year and her parents had referred to it lovingly, but she herself was actually Australian. Alexander had left here as a mature young man so it was only right he felt attuned to its call.

Neither were the people as open as she would have expected; their courtesy, propriety and correctness was almost unnerving, as though she might do something to upset the social serenity. Her mind created a scenario of Ernest Henry amongst these folks, or of some of her folks from down at the camp: what pandemonium it would cause. It was only with the sharp contrast between herself and them, that Marion realised some of the expressive warmth of her house-girls and boys had carried over to herself. She felt more relaxed within herself, knowing this was a new, unexplored dimension.

Scottish family is essentially close, and Alexander felt his niece, Miss Elizabeth Dewar, would prove good company for Marion when they returned to Bushy Park, south of Cloncurry. Twenty years their junior she would be able to look after them in their old age and, perhaps, Queensland might yield her a worthy husband.

**BUSHY PARK**

Alexander proceeded ahead to their property near Duchess, called "Bushy Park", to prepare things properly for his wife's homecoming as well as his
Queen Nellie and King Jimmy at Bushy Park
Courtesy: Mitchell Library
niece's initiation into Australian bush life. Galvanised iron constructions with antbed floor looked more than comfortable to Alexander and it only took Marion and Eliza a week to introduce the womanly touch. Hope was there on the property with them, and in a few years acquired a wife from Burketown, Winifred Smith. Both Norman and Jack selected the local McLean girls whose parents the Kennedy's knew well as they were from the immediate vicinity. It seemed their family had found their feet and Marion felt she was beginning a new phase of her life.

One incident occurred which could have had disastrous consequence but one which had ironic undertones. On their homecoming, Marion asked Nellie to fetch the cream of tartar to make a damper and a plum pudding. Faithful Nellie added "me certain feller stuff makem damper jump up" but Marion did not query the authenticity of the powder. Following dinner they all began to feel extremely ill and word was sent to Jack that there were big problems at the home; he galloped there with a bottle of whiskey but this "cure" for Marion was almost worse than the affliction. Arsenic was always coloured therefore to permit easy recognition.

Mr. Thorpe recalled Mrs. Kennedy and an Aboriginal girl were always milking cows both at "Devoncourt" and "Bushy Park". He maintains that "when she was at Bushy Park she was milking twenty-two cows, then she would go home, have breakfast, get out this old separator and separate the cream from the milk...then you would see her next morning making butter with an old churn." She was an elderly woman at this stage, but hard physical work for her vintage was the norm.

The Great War arrived and Norman was sent off to War. Despite her confirmation during the Scottish trip that Australia was so far removed, not just geographically but socially, from the British way of life, Marion's patriotism rallied and she was proud of her son enlisting: she would sacrifice her youngest boy, Norman to the war, if it achieved the end result of peace in the world. His wife, Nell, would stay with Marion while he was away.

Prior to enlistment, Norman had managed the dairy at Aberfeldy near Duchess, coming back to "Bushy Park" when it was dry. The family bought the dairy as Duchess was at the height of its glamour during the war years
when copper prices peaked and gougers combed the hills. Spirits soared and hotels flourished; lawlessness was accepted and women were charged alongside the men with drunken-ness. Women had gained the vote in Australia, setting the trend for the rest of the world, yet Marion could not accept that equality meant they had to degrade themselves to the level of the men. It disconcerted her considerably and she renewed her efforts to instil age-old values in her grandchildren, whenever the opportunity arose. Starched white tablecloths and serviettes, she maintained, were the beginning of decorous living. She herself had retained high standards of domestic elegance, even though circumstances were frequently harsh.

Norman arrived back from the War. Thank God.

RETIREMENT

Their time had arrived to move closer to civilisation. Once more in 1917, the Cloncurry retreat would be in use, and the Kennedy's Senior contemplated an ultimate move to Brisbane. The sale of "Bushy Park" ensured there were sufficient funds to purchase a comfortable home to see them out for the rest of their days. Nostalgically, Marion looked around the home at "Bushy Park" and thought momentarily of all her previous homes and the wonderful memories she had of them all; "Lorne" with its wide verandahs and aristocratic feel; "Buckingham" and dear Effie; "Devoncourt" and her fulfilment. She dreaded leaving this country with its wide, blue skies and disappearing horizons; the rivers with their sandy trails and magnificent gums were part of her inner being. Still, one had to be realistic and practical.

Auchenflower was certainly "soft living". It was high set, in Chasely Street, on the side of a hill to catch all the breezes. With Eliza to look after them both, attending to business matters and the housekeeping, Marion was reassured they would live out their days happily. For the first time in her adult life, Marion and Alexander had time to spend socialising together and it was an art Marion realised she had scarce developed: used to making decisions and pre-occupied with demanding home-maintenance, she had never allowed herself the indulgence of tit-bit talk. It was an art she had to develop especially since she was considered a celebrity down here.
Alexander pursued his interest in development of the isolated areas and became one of the initial shareholders in Qantas; he was their first paying passenger from Longreach to Cloncurry in an open cockpit in 1922. His enthusiastic sponsoring of the Flying Doctor facilities which materialised at the Cloncurry base in 1928, was tribute to his wife and the sorrows she had suffered: through Effie, indirectly, fifty years after the tragedy, the Flying Doctor Service was born. A century after the tragedy, her descendants gathered together at the Rocky Waterhole, to pay tribute to the memory of Effie and her two little boys: a service was read and the pathos of the early pioneers and the sacrifices they made, once more became real. A commemorative plaque was erected on the spot.

**TWILIGHT**

Kennedy's biography was written by Hudson Fysh, founder of Qantas, during the Great Depression and it was this specific period which made Kennedy question the very basis of modern society and its trend. The monograph "Taming the North" is punctuated with challenges to the young ones to perform as the old pioneers had done - without fear of the future, but with a determined faith in their own ability to succeed, even if it necessitated changing course several times throughout their lives. He abhorred the men who sat, without backbone, down in the city, accepting government sustenance, unwilling to be independent doers.

His succinct words encapsulate the momentum of the success of such people as himself and Ernest Henry:

> In the conditions we had to sustain, we found the impulse and the incentive that carried us forward. Now there is not the coercion of a stern necessity. The spirit of manhood seems to have undergone some change. Down here in this city I see many strong men accepting Government relief with a spirit of dependence that is growing into one of degrading indifference.\(^62\)

He sensed the Pandora's box which Government welfare was opening, which was eating away at man's individuality and self-sufficiency. As a counterbalance, man came to accept that each person was entitled to a
minimum standard of living, and a warmer humanity accompanied this softness. Centralisation continued apace, despite his prediction that men would return to the country to eke out their existence. Property administration was rationalised by large companies, and there was an exodus from the land; subsequently, the Aboriginal people became fringe-dwellers of the larger communities and towns.

On publication of the first edition of "Taming the North", Fysh received much public support both for his historical revelation of the arduous lot of a pioneer and for his confirmation of the need to "tame" the Aborigines. Only two dissenting commentaries questioned his attitude towards the indigenes. Congratulatory letters not merely applauded Fysh's depiction of the black-white nexus but one communication recorded reprisals, equally as harsh as those carried out by Kennedy. The contemporary attitude of the 1930's had changed little from that held fifty years previously.

Marion had watched her husband challenge the very roots of Nature: a massive explosion-technique was tested to induce the swollen clouds to release their moisture on Devoncourt, and the natives themselves had been tested and tamed. His rancour against the middle-man receiving reward at someone else's expense, was as pertinent in the 1870's (with Macintosh), as it was with him in the early 1900's (Devoncourt):

Where the pioneers could have pulled through if they had been given an opportunity...the mortgagees, not the men who had borne the heat and burden of the day, reap the benefit.

Regimented and authoritarian in his mind and body, Kennedy's ritual cold shower at day-break continued until his death. He frequented the Constitutional Club, meeting old adversaries and proselytizing on solutions for the ailing economy.

Kennedy's unabating enthusiasm for flying, marked him out as different from his contemporaries. Not only was he a substantial initial shareholder in Qantas, but he took his annual air-trip, to savour the fruits of his dreams. As a man in his eighties and nineties, this created quite a stir. In his later years,
he remained doggedly intransigent in his concepts of "progress" while retaining his chivalrous ideals to womenfolk.

In her twilight years, Marion had time to reflect on her own life, and to witness its continuation through her grandchildren and Jean's children who came to visit regularly from boarding-school. Both Jack and Norman were settled in the new mining town of Mount Isa while Hope was close by at Redcliffe. Bob and Jean were happily married residing in the north-west. George married a lass Maude who was reared by Jack's family, and had recently come to Brisbane on a droving trip. Ida also married.

Raking up the leaves in the cool of the day, Marion felt physical work was part of her inner being. Faithfully each night at Chasely Street, Marion fed a brace of tame pidgeons; her capacity to nurture was ingrained. Balancing up the relationship she had with the Aborigines, Marion still felt disquieted at the intensity of Alexander's feelings for them. She had come to accept them as people, people who needed to be looked after nonetheless. On "Devoncourt" her affinity with them had developed. She deplored, yet accepted, the way they lived in their own culture down on the river bank. She could not understand it, but she accepted it.

Reverend Sam McKay came to visit them and Marion listened as he spoke animatedly about his work in the Gulf country and on the Cape; she endorsed the way in which the church was attempting to help the Aboriginal people, by "teaching them white man's medicine and industry." Marion realised the serious incidence of venereal disease which existed amongst many tribes, was an introduced vice, and once more she tussled with her unspoken question. Within herself, Marion still bore the guilt of white man's sexual indulgence; strangely, she felt the white men never felt this guilt. It was the women.

Nursing her husband with whom she shared so much but from whom she felt, in many ways, so different, Marion Kennedy realised an old way of life was disappearing. She felt a calm descend upon her: her life had been full, rewarding and a total learning experience.

On 1 September, 1936, within six months of the death of Alexander Kennedy, Marion followed quietly after her husband.
ENDNOTES

INTRODUCTION

(1) North Queensland Register 12 December 1936

CHAPTER 1

(2) Queensland State Archives, Death Certificate No.A 54 959
(6) Letter from Professor G. Blainey, 17 September, 1987
(7) Letter from Professor Blainey, op.cit.
(9) North Queensland Register, September 21, 1929, p.29
(10) Points of departure were noted as Rockhampton, Sydney, Southhampton, and Marseilles. The Bulletin, Rockhampton, 1871
(11) Letter from M. Hawkins to Mrs. C. Brown, 17 November, 1986
(12) Sutherland, Geo. Pioneering Days: Thrilling Incidents in the Early Sixties (Brisbane, Wendt, 1913), p.3
(13) The History of Rockhampton; further details unknown
(14) John Oxley, Costin Street, OM68-23 Papers 1871-73
(15) Queensland Government Gazette, 12 July 1873
(16) Rockhampton Bulletin, August 22, 1871
(17) Rockhampton Bulletin, 31 August 1871: "Wanted: A Steady Native Lad (Protestant)"
(18) Motto given by Mrs. C. Brown
Mrs. Marion Kennedy
Courtesy: Mrs. C. Brown
(19) Fysh, Hudson *Taming the North* (Sydney, Angus & Robertson, 1933) p.46

CHAPTER 2

(20) Laurie, A. "The Black War in Queensland" *RHSQ*, vol.vi, no.1, September 1959
(21) "Duff" was the maiden names of Alexander's mother: the well-known Scottish McDuffs of Shakespearian fame

CHAPTER 3

(22) Although Jack was born in 1873 and we would normally say it was his fourth birthday, it was the custom then to count the actual birth-day as the first birthday.
(23) *Cummins & Campbell Monthly Magazine* vol.5, no.94, Feb.1935, p.79
(24) Mitchell Library: ML/K21856
(25) *Brisbane Telegraph* 22 January 1934
(26) Ibid.
(28) Black, J. *Queensland Pioneer Book*, (Charters Towers, QCWA), p.65

CHAPTER 4

(30) *Queenslander* 27 July 1878, p.519
(31) This was a constant source of black-white conflict; see Laurie's "The Black War in Queensland", Boulia Centenary book, J. McConachy's "Buckingham Downs, "Gregory Downs Hotel Centenary 1977"
(32) Supposedly a young child who was wounded in the fracas was brought back to the camp at Buckingham: his name was Carbine and photos in the 1930's show him as an old man carting water.
(33) This place, 7 miles n.w. of its junction with the Wills, is marked on maps.
(34) Fitzgerald, Ross *From the Dreaming to 1915* (Brisbane, University of Queensland Press, 1982), p.146
(35) Bauer, F.H. "Sheep Raising in Northern Australia" in Australian Geographic v.7, no.5, 1959, p.172
(36) Fysh, op.cit., p.99

CHAPTER 5

(37) Queenslander 15 July 1882, p.70
(38) Ibid., p.593
(39) Ibid., p.70
(40) The Sydney Mail, 2 September 1882, p.371
(41) Queenslander 16 May 1883, p.927
(42) Queenslander 19 May 1883, pp.766-7
(43) Conversation with Dr. Paul Memmott, Aboriginal Data Archives, University of Queensland
(44) Concept of Ms C. Fewings, Mount Isa
(45) Mitchell Library, op.cit.

CHAPTER 6

(46) The Register July 26; year not shown
Devoncourt: R.O. opened November 3, 1886 and closed December 31, 1888 (Middle Branch opened). It re-opened in 1894 (Middle Branch closed) and closed October 1906 (Duchess Mine opened)
R.O.K. 1886 F. Horn 1894 A. Kennedy 1888 Mrs. A. Kennedy 1895 Mrs. Kennedy
(48) Black, op.cit., p.66
(49) Ivimey, A.J. Mining and Separation in North Queensland (Brisbane, Woodcock & Powell, 1888) p.87
(50) Letter from Mrs. C. Brown 13 June 1984
(51) Other theories of illicit relationships revolve around the "power theory" where the Aboriginals are seen as a conquered race and therefore rape is an acceptable thing; another modern theory is that since sex is sub-consciously a shameful act for men, they choose to inflict it on an object they despise.
(52) Mitchell, op.cit., letter from Wm. McCorquodale 11.6.1932
(53) Mitchell Library, op.cit.
Interview with Mr. George Thorpe, Wednesday 29 August 1984

Mr. George Thorpe maintains that Mrs. Kennedy was on her way to Charters Towers to put Ida into school when Mrs. Saltman, who owned the Gilliat Hotel, was very taken with her and was in need of a waitress; Ida then remained with her. Interview Mr. G. Thorpe, ibid.

ibid.

Notes in Fysh's work Mitchell Library op.cit., show Kennedy "bought" a house in Cloncurry in 1907, yet in another place it shows he "built" a house in Cloncurry.

CHAPTER 7

Mitchell Library, ibid.

In frontier areas, further south, poison was put into flour to deter the Aboriginals from stealing supplies.

Interview with Mr. Thorpe, op.cit.

This house was positioned where the Wesley Hospital Carpark now stands.

Mitchell Library, op.cit.

See Sydney Telegraph 30/12/33 and Sydney Mail 17/1/1934


This method was given so much credence by Queensland Meteorological Authorities that a cannon was transported out to Charleville, recommended by Wragge, to emulate the results.

Black, op.cit., p.63

Interview with Mr. Newman, "Kookaburra", 5.9.1984; Mimag, December 1962 "The Kalkadoons", Sydney May

Letter from Reverend Fred McKay 6 November 1987
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