



# Warrawi Jubilee



# **WARRAWI JUBILEE 1916-1966**

An account of the establishment and development  
of the Methodist Missions in Arnhem Land,  
especially GOULBURN ISLAND.

Prepared by  
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## **Cover Design:**

WURRPAN (Emu-Grass).  
Connected with the BANUMBIRR (Morning-  
Star) Corroboree.

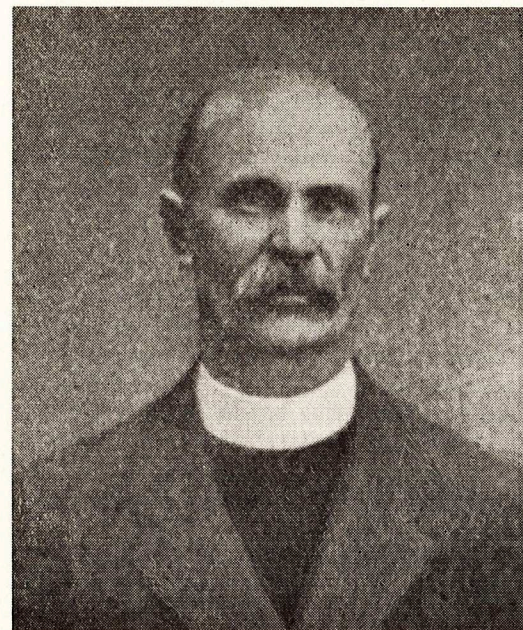
Artist — Burandai, of Milingimbi.

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**Rev. James Watson**  
Pioneer Missionary.



# WARRAWI JUBILEE

AT WARRAWI, the Maung name for GOULBURN ISLAND, the Methodist Church of Australasia commenced its "Mission amongst the Aborigines of the Northern Territory" in 1916.

The people of the Maung tribe, in whose territory the mission was established, were joined by other surrounding Aboriginal peoples in the programme of Christian worship and instruction, schooling and medical treatment, gardening and trepang fishing which the missionaries instituted.

Seventy years had elapsed since the last organised attempt by the Methodist Church, in other parts of Australia, to establish a mission to Aborigines; none lasted long enough to celebrate a jubilee.

## EARLIER MISSIONS

In 1815 the Rev. Samuel Leigh, first Wesleyan Minister to be sent as a missionary to New South Wales, had written to the missionary committee in England,

"If the Methodist Conference should think it right to send a zealous, holy, patient, and persevering missionary to be devoted entirely to the native tribes, I have no doubt but he would be gladly received and well supported by the inhabitants of the colony."<sup>1</sup>

As a result of this appeal the Rev. William Walker was sent to Australia; he opened a school at Parramatta; with a Mr. Cartwright he "followed the wandering tribes" for a time; and later his assistant, Mr. John Harper, tried to establish an agricultural mission in the Bateman's Bay area.

In 1831 the Rev. Joseph Orton arrived in Australia with special instructions to work amongst the Aborigines. By "March 1833, he was proposing the establishment of a mission for them. With each passing year, he became more concerned for the dispossessed black race and ashamed of the white man's record. What had happened in his new district would fan his crusading zeal for his black brothers to a white heat".<sup>2</sup> Following his visit to the Port Phillip District and his later representations to the Governor for a grant of land, the Revs.

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in "White and Black in Australia", by Canon Needham, p. 68 (S.P.C.K.).

<sup>2</sup> "Joseph Orton", by Rev. J. Russell Orton, p. 11 (Vic. Meth. Hist. Society Lecture, 1965).



Benjamin Hurst and Francis Tuckfield set up a mission station at Buntingdale, 80 miles west of Melbourne in 1836.

Neither of these ventures lasted more than about ten years, due to the disintegration of the Aboriginal tribes, to the disruption of their life by the extension of white settlement and to the ravages of disease and vice causing a rapid decrease in the Aboriginal population.

The Northern Territory mission may be seen in perspective as one of the later expressions of the Modern Mission Movement which began towards the end of the Eighteenth Century. In the comparative isolation of Arnhem Land and due to many influences not operative in the Nineteenth Century, the work has flourished and has been signally blessed by God; it is thus with a deep sense of privilege and in profound gratitude to God that the North Australia District celebrates its first Fifty Years.

#### IMMEDIATE BACKGROUND

During the first decade of this century there was a growth of interest in and Christian concern for the Aborigines. Significant events in the years preceding 1916 had a bearing on the Northern Territory mission.

1910—The World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh, with its challenge to world evangelism and its call for continuing co-operation between the churches influenced the thinking and statesmanlike vision of men who prepared the way for the new venture.

1911—The Commonwealth Government took over control of the Northern Territory of South Australia and therefore for the first time assumed direct responsibility for the welfare of Aborigines. Australia-wide interest was aroused in those living in the isolated areas of the North.

1912—Early in this year an Interdenominational Committee of the churches active in or interested in Aborigines missions was formed in Melbourne. The visit of the Rev. N. Hey, Superintendent of Mapoon Mission in North Queensland, was the occasion for the calling together of representatives of the churches—Anglican, Baptist, Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian. This Committee conducted negotiations with the Federal Authorities, then based in Melbourne, for the allotting of spheres of work in the Northern Territory.

1913—The Methodist Church made the important decision to commence the mission. The General Conference, meeting in Brisbane in June, resolved as follows:—

“That the General Conference commence a Methodist mission among the Aborigines of the Northern Territory, the said mission to be under the direction and at the cost of the Missionary Society.

“That we accept the proposed sphere of such mission as suggested by the Interdenominational Committee in Victoria.

“That the developmental plan as already agreed upon may be modified if necessary, so as to provide for the effective carrying on of this work, and that power be given to the Board of Missions to effect this modification.

“That the Board of Missions be authorised to make a special appeal for the funds necessary to establish and carry out the proposed mission among the Aborigines.”

1914—The Rev. J. G. Wheen, General Secretary of the Department of Foreign Missions, did a great deal of preparatory work, consulting Reports by the Rev. J. R. B. Love (Presbyterian Commission, 1912), Prof. Baldwin Spencer and Mr. A. H. Brown, and gathering data concerning the situation in the Northern Territory.

On the day that England declared war on Germany and the Great War began in earnest, 4th August, 1914, members of the Interdenominational Committee waited upon Mr. Attlee Hunt, Under Secretary of the Department of External Affairs, in the Federal Offices in Melbourne, to submit proposals for the allotting of spheres of missionary activity in the Northern Territory amongst the various churches. This was an application of the Comity of Missions principle which was accepted at that time by the major Protestant Missionary Societies.

#### A GENEROUS GIVER

In 1915 definite steps were taken to choose a site for the new mission and to plan its nature. Because of war conditions, financing the venture was difficult. It was therefore a tremendous help to the Board of Missions to receive a large donation from a Methodist Layman in South Australia, Mr. R. J. M. McBride of Koorunga. His gift of £250, which proved to be the first of several large donations, was specifically for the establishing of a mission to the Aborigines.

Mr. McBride, as a young man of 25 years, arrived in Adelaide in 1856 with five shillings in his pocket. The following



extracts from a biographical notice about him published in the "Encyclopaedia of South Australian History", 1910, probably give a clue to his interest in the Aborigines: "Mr. McBride's next enterprize was a contract to erect a stockyard at Winninnie for J. & A. Hallett, capable of holding and working 3000 head of cattle, which was successfully accomplished by the aid of two men and a tribe of blacks". "Aided by some rough sketches received by Mr. McBride from the blacks, Mr. J. W. Tyler (McBride's first employer) took up some 700 square miles of country, which he called 'Bimbowre' and employed Mr. McBride to bring up the first sheep to stock his run." Another factor in his giving was his friendship with the Rev. J. C. Jennison, who had taken a keen and active interest in the Northern Territory Aborigines and who later joined the staff of the mission.

In a letter to Mr. McBride, dated 18th February, 1915, the General Secretary wrote, "I have today received from the Rev. J. C. Jennison a cheque for £250 being an amount which you have very kindly donated toward the establishment of a Methodist Mission to the Aborigines in the Northern Territory. Mr. Jennison has told me that your wish is that as soon as the Board has received a sufficient amount to warrant it establishing a mission station there shall be no unreasonable delay in making an announcement". Mr. Wheen gave an assurance to this effect, pointed out the difficult financial situation faced by the Board at its Annual Meeting, and indicated that despite the fact that the missionaries and mission Secretaries had voluntarily accepted a 10% reduction in their salaries—"a gift of something like £1,300 from the mission staff"—there was "still a large deficiency", and a special appeal was proposed. To conduct this the Rev. James Watson visited the various States, inspiring people with a vision of the great need and drawing an adequate response for the commencement of the work.

#### SELECTING A SITE

At its meeting on 2nd July, 1915, the Board of Missions decided to send the Rev. James Watson to the Northern Territory to make a survey and report. He was at Charters Towers, in the course of deputation work as N.S.W. State Secretary for Foreign Missions, when he received the telegram, "Board decides you visit Northern Territory. Letter follows. Wheen."

In the letter was an outline of the main points about which the Board required information, (1) "the general character and extent of the sphere allotted to our Society by the Interdenominational Committee; (2) "the probable number of Aborigines in that sphere and the localities where they are most likely to be reached and influenced; (3) "a site or sites for a

mission, especially in regard to accessibility by land and water; distances, mode and cost of travel for passengers and freight; proximity to white population; nature of soil and its suitability for gardening and for sheep and cattle; (4) "the commencement of the Mission—the number and status of agents; the best class of work to be done, evangelistic, educational, industrial, etc.; the plant required, houses, churches, schools, boats, etc.; also the initial Capital Outlay and the permanent Annual Expenditure." The letter concluded, "I am glad that you have been commissioned by the Board to make this tour. I trust that you may have the satisfaction of knowing that you have been able to guide the Board and the Church to some satisfactory and practical effort for the social and moral uplift of the Aborigines."

Letters of introduction to the Administrator of the Northern Territory, Dr. Gilruth, were provided by the Minister for External Affairs (as the result of an approach by the Rev. J. W. Burton, State Secretary in Victoria), and by the Rev. Dr. E. H. Sugden, Master of Queen's College, Melbourne, who was a personal friend of Dr. Gilruth's. Mr. Watson was also to see the Chief Protector of Aborigines and other Government officials in Darwin to enlist their help, as well as the Methodist Minister, the Rev. A. E. Laphorne.

Soon after receiving these instructions, late in July, Mr. Watson, armed with a "First Saloon Return Ticket", sailed for Darwin in the S.S. "St. Albans". He was well received and greatly helped by the officials whom he had to interview. By 17th August, he was able to send an Interim Report to the Board. From then on he made a very thorough investigation of a vast tract of country, "having travelled by means of launch, canoe, horses and bicycle from Bathurst Island in the West to Liverpool River in the East, and South to the Roper River"—as he noted in the first entry in the Goulburn Island Visitors Book. For the information of the Church, he wrote a lively account of his travels; this was published in four parts in the *Missionary Review*, December 1915, January, February and March, 1916, under the title "Rambles in the Northern Territory".

The journey to Bathurst Island Mission was made by courtesy of the Administrator, Dr. Gilruth. An official party was organised and Mr. Watson invited to travel with it—"in a scow (inelegant word), having reference to a vessel with flat bottom, for navigating rivers, and driven by petrol motor power". After visiting the Roman Catholic Mission on Bathurst Island and Fort Dundas on Melville Island, where they met the renowned Joe Cooper, the party crossed Van Diemen's Gulf to the East Alligator River and made their way to Oenpelli.



Mr. Paddy Cahill, the manager of the Government experimental cattle station there, made four horses available, and Mr. Watson went on an exploration journey of 250 miles with the Aborigines Nabulora, Cecil, Paddy and Nalambil as his companions. Nalambil was but 10 years old, and his job was to lead the pack-horse.



Mr. Watson and his Aboriginal guides.

Sunday, 30th September, 1915, found Mr. Watson back in Darwin after his "first trip to the Alligator River and Goulburn Island country", and on that day he "preached to a full audience, including His Excellency the Administrator, the Under-Secretary for External Affairs, Judge Bevan, Lady Gilruth and other members of Government House".

He then made a journey by train to Pine Creek, and from there rode by bicycle to Elsey Station and back, riding solo—a hazardous 350 miles round trip. Attempts were made to dissuade him from such a ride in October, especially as a young man named Fletcher had only recently "done a perish" on the same stretch of country.

For his journey by bicycle he was helped by Eddie Reichenbach who had broken the cycling record, Adelaide to Darwin,

in 1914—a record he said he still held in 1951. Mr. Reichenbach stayed on in the Territory, changing his name to Ted. Ryko—because of anti-German feeling during the Great War.

Writing from Bundooma, via Marree, S.A., 1st December, 1951, Mr. Ted Ryko said, "In 1916 (actually it was 1915) I very enthusiastically helped Rev. J. Watson when he came to Darwin to find a place to open a mission to Natives.

"I worked all night to prepare his bike before he went by train to Pine Creek to cycle to Newcastle Waters. But he near perished and finished up in Hospital, and gave up the Inland plan and later went to Goulburn Island.

"He had the place built up when I was his first visitor there at Christmas 1916. We went East to explore in his Vessel and we found Milingimbi site."

Mr. Watson had been appointed a Protector of Aborigines by that time, and it was in the course of his duties, to enquire into reports of trouble between Crocodile Islands groups of Aborigines, that this journey East was undertaken.

All through these journeyings, Mr. Watson was finding out all he could about the Aborigines. Having lived with them day by day he came to appreciate them as "people whose lives should be enriched from the treasures of knowledge, and especially the knowledge of God; people whose minds should be freed from the bondage of superstition and fears of the devil devil. Strange that the Methodist Church should have neglected such interesting people all these years. I wonder why?"

Two paragraphs from Mr. Watson's account of his "Rambles in the Northern Territory" may be quoted to indicate his judgment of people generally amongst whom he was recommending that work should begin, and his appreciation of their personal qualities.

"My own impression is that there has been a very considerable modification and improvement in the case of the blacks along the northern coast of the Territory, as the result of contact with the Malays and Macassars, who, for centuries past, have exploited those coasts for trepang and pearl shell. I cannot escape from the impression that these people whom I met are the very antipodes of the 'gib it bacca boss' type found in other parts of Australia, more especially those who have been in contact with white people."

"Then take the patience and persistency of my ten-year-old aboriginal boy, Nalambil, as, day by day, he leads the pack-horse in and out through the forest, the heat intense, beating down on his bare body, the work unaccustomed during the middle of the day (when the black man seeks a shady tree and



sleeps, in his own country), the flies pestiferous and persistent, the attractions of the chase as a mob of kangaroos appears in sight, or a bevy of emus or native companions invite pursuit, or it may be the country is stony, and the bare toes 'stubbed' against the outcrop; but none of these things move this boy; one thing he does, and that without murmur or complaint."

Nalambil, son of Nabulora, was later on known as Daniel. He died in 1965.

Writing in the "Missionary Review" of September 1915, Mr. Watson stated in an article entitled "Concerning Munitions", "In Australia there are said to be from 40,000 to 80,000 aboriginals, the remnants of the original possessors and inhabitants of this continent. Opium, grog and vices have been doing their deadly work of decimation, and to us, as a Methodist Church, has been allotted some 16,000 to 20,000 of these people. We ought to have been amongst them fifty years ago! No! men and women of Methodism, 'We are nowhere near the end of the war'. It is the time for girding on the armour, not laying it aside."

As a result of Mr. Watson's enquiries, South Goulburn Island was selected as a suitable site for the mission; he made a report to the Board of Missions and recommended that his selection be approved. The Board agreed, and final preparations were made. As was natural, the Rev. James Watson was chosen as the Superintendent of the new mission station.

A further large gift was received from Mr. James McBride, £500 this time, during the final preparation period. In a letter of thanks, dated 1st May, 1916, the General Secretary said, "It seems a somewhat venturesome thing to enter upon a new enterprise like this in the midst of such times as we are passing through, but we all believe that God is directing our Missionary Society to this work. We have no doubt, therefore, that His hand will be with us."

#### PIONEER MISSIONARY

The Rev. Jas. Watson had been a member of the party of missionaries who pioneered the work in Papua. Under the leadership of the Rev. (later Dr.) William E. Bromilow, and with Revs. S. B. Fellows and J. T. Field and a Missionary Carpenter, Mr. G. H. Bardsley, he had sailed for Papua on the "Lord of the Isles", departing from Sydney 27th May, 1891.

Twenty-five years to the day later, 27th May, 1916, he and his missionary colleague, Mr. A. E. Lawrence, sailed by S.S. "Tasman" for Darwin. The arrival at their selected mission site and the events of the actual founding of the work are recorded in a brief historical note in Goulburn Island Visitors Book:—

"Mr. Lawrence and Mr. Watson arrived at Goulburn Island on Thursday, 22nd June, in the 12-ton 'Venture', accompanied by two other luggers with materials for house buildings, and stores. Immediately on arrival, search was made for a building site, and the present location was chosen, the reasons for such choice being (a) Water supply, (b) Garden soil, (c) High elevation for house, (d) and a safe and convenient anchorage. After three years, no better site has presented itself." (The entry was evidently made about the end of Mr. Watson's term on Goulburn Island.)

"On Monday, 26th June, the landing of goods and materials was commenced, and speedily and safely effected. A hut, at what is now the trepang station, served for a few days, while the pioneers cut their way through dense undergrowth to the site of the present house.

"Huts were then built, and occupied by the two missionaries, wherein they and the perishables were accommodated, pending the erection of the two-storied house. The rats were responsible for many disturbed nights, and considerable damage to our flour. Busy days followed, the erection of the house proceeded, and was ready for habitation in September. The blacks came in good numbers, and rendered invaluable service in the various operations."

The "Venture" was a converted pearling boat owned by Messrs. A. E. Jolly & Co., Darwin. It is probable that this firm also owned the other "two luggers" mentioned by Mr. Watson. Mr. Percy Kelsey of A. E. Jolly & Co. had been appointed as the Agent of the Mission, and for a number of years he remained a loyal friend.

In mid-August Mrs. A. E. Lawrence and Miss A. Corfield, the first Teacher in the District, sailed from Sydney on the S.S. "Houtman", and arrived at Goulburn Island on the "Don" on 5th September. Mr. Watson's record for that day is interesting—"On Tuesday, 5th September, Mr. Lawrence and the writer were chatting about the probable arrival of the ladies a week later and had 'turned in' about 11 p.m., when a gunshot was heard in the bay, and cries from the blacks announced the arrival of a launch. We at once concluded that the launch had as passengers Mrs. Lawrence and Miss Corfield, and to the lonely men's delight such proved to be the case. The best that could be offered was a bark hut, and a 'shake down', but after the tumbling about of the little 'Don' it seemed like heaven to the ladies, who slept soundly till morning, when the ubiquitous bush rat, having obtained entrance to the mosquito net, caused a commotion which ended badly for the rat.



"The ladies shared the hardships and discomforts incidental to those early days with commendable courage, and cheerfulness."

The pioneer party landed on a small beach on the south-east coast of Goulburn Island; a stately casuarina tree nearby has since that time been known by the Aboriginal residents as "Watson's Tree". For some years Thanksgiving Services were held at the spot, and in 1963 a bronze MEMORIAL TABLET was erected there, the inscription reading:—



The tree, unfortunately lost all of its foliage and branches in a cyclonic storm some few years ago.

After only a year's missionary service, Mr. A. E. Lawrence went down with tertian malaria and the Darwin medical authorities advised his return to New South Wales. In November 1917 he was succeeded by Mr. W. Fletcher, who served at Goulburn Island until 1921. Miss Corfield served until 1920, being assisted for part of her term by a Miss Tinney and Miss May Brose. She was transferred to the Fiji District in October 1920. Miss M. Matthews followed Miss Corfield as a Teacher, serving from 1922-1929. Good foundations were laid in the teaching of English, for it is noticeable today that there is a number of Goulburn Islanders, taught in those first years, who read well and fluently.

## ORAL TRADITION

The events of the exploration of a site on Goulburn Island and the later establishment of the mission made a great impression upon the Aborigines; they are still remembered by the oldest residents, and they have passed into the oral tradition of the people.

Their memory is that Watson's Tree was the place where Mr. Watson landed in 1915 in his search for a mission site. He slept the first night under the casuarina tree. He crossed Mission Bay by canoe to Wigu, where he met a Mr. McPherson, a Trepanger who was camped there. He then travelled around Goulburn Island, marking possible sites. He decided on the present site as probably the best, put a mark there, and told the people that he would come back. He then crossed the strait to the mainland and travelled by horse-back to the Liverpool River.



When Mr. Watson returned the next year, with the three boats loaded with building materials and stores, he sailed into Mission Bay. During his absence, Mr. McPherson had died and had been buried at Wigu by a Manila-man, Captain of McPherson's boat, the "Scotchman". This boat later became the property of the mission.

Many Aborigines were camped at McPherson's old camp in June 1916, and when they heard of Mr. Watson's return they were frightened and made for the mainland. Mr. Watson had



gathered three or four Aborigines about him; he asked them to work for him; they agreed, hesitatingly, for they were uncertain of his intentions. Other white men, trepangers, etc., had argued and had had fights with the people and had been cruel to them.

After a while, they found that Mr. Watson was a different sort of man, and they became more confident. The large number of Aborigines on the mainland opposite Goulburn sent scouts (miyulk) at night to find out what was happening and to report back. These "spies" learned from the few workers, "He is a very good man. He gathers us together and tells us about Jesus. He has a picture roll, showing us Jesus as a baby, a young man, crucified on a cross and then rising again. He pays us for our work with flour, sugar, tea, tobacco and naga material."

It was not very long before Goulburn Island was packed with people, from Gumadir (behind Junction Bay), from Oenpelli, from the Liverpool River and beyond, and from as far west as Port Essington.

There was plenty of work to be done. The shore-line from Ililari right along the cliffs and skirting Mission Bay to Arawir was dense with mangroves, and the present mission site was thick with "dry jungle" growth, eucalypts and tropical under-



The "J. M. McBride" at anchor, Goulburn Is.

growth. All of this had to be cleared, and the Aborigines, including some Malarg people, worked with a will to prepare a cleared beach-front and coastal mission site.

At first the missionaries lived in bark huts, pestered by mosquitoes and bush rats. The Mission House that was built was two-storied, with sheer walls and but one door as entrance, so as to provide security for the occupants. After about ten years of use, the block-house appearance was altered and the house made into a single-storey structure; the materials from the upper storey were used to make a spacious enclosed verandah around the central rooms.

It is remembered that the Captain of the "Don", the night Mrs. Lawrence and Miss Corfield arrived, September 1916, was a Chinaman named Jimmy Hayes. Mr. Watson's fondness for the sea, and his trips to Darwin, Roper River, and Groote Island have a place in the stories told through the years. Especially recalled is his voyage to Thursday Island, when he brought back with him from Mapoon Mission the Baduans Yoram (and his wife Rosie), Matasia, Kapiu and Sam Doy.

#### MISSIONARY MARTYR

The Rev. L. N. Kentish, in fulfilment of his duties as Chairman of the District, was travelling on the Naval coastal vessel "Patricia Cam" in January 1943 in order to visit and bring encouragement to the mission staff carrying on under difficulty at Milingimbi, Elcho Island and Yirrkala. He did not reach Yirrkala. When the vessel was nearing the base of Wessel Island, 22nd January, it was bombed and sunk by a Japanese float-plane. Mr. Kentish was taken prisoner and flown to a Japanese base—possibly Saumlaki in the Tanimbar Islands. He was later taken to Dobo in the Aroe Islands where, on the order of Sub-Lieut. Sagajima Mangan, he was executed. The date is believed to have been 4th May.

Thus Mr. Kentish is numbered amongst the missionary martyrs of World War II.

His work and witness live on at Goulburn Island, and his memory is perpetuated in KENTISH MEMORIAL GROVE. This was dedicated on 11th August, 1953, by the Rev. Dr. Alan Walker during his Mission to the Nation visit to North Australia. Reporting the dedication, the Rev. Alf. Ellison wrote, "Many days of loving preparation were spent in the KENTISH MEMORIAL GROVE in July this year, and the day of dedication by the Rev. Alan Walker was a day of gladness as well as a day of sadness. Gladness for the fact that Jesus Christ has become a real and wonderful Friend to many of the people of the Island, and sadness because one of His finest missionaries lost his life so tragically."



## OUTLINE OF DEVELOPMENT

For the first ten years or so of the mission, the Dormitory system was adopted as a method of civilising the people and providing a means of evangelisation. Correspondence in the 1920's indicates that there was insistence upon every child coming to Goulburn Is. mission entering one of the dormitories provided. Soon after his appointment as Chairman, the Rev. T. T. Webb abolished this as a mission policy. Instead, he laid down that it was essential to make a study of the Aboriginal way of life, to **understand** the people; to **respect** their life and culture, seeing each aspect in relation to the whole; and only on these bases to engage in a programme of **positive witness** to Christianity, seeking to convince rather than coerce.



Girls' Dormitory.

Breaks in the appointment of teachers (1925-1928, 1935-1950, 1958-1961; see Appendix A.) were unfortunate and limited the effectiveness of the formal education of the people. Since 1963, the School has been taken over by the Administration, and this will mean greater continuity and effectiveness.

Agricultural and stock work have fluctuated. After many years of serious doubt about the value of Goulburn soil, things improved in the late 1930's and early 1940's; the war, of course, disrupted development. The mission profited greatly by the special interest in soil science of the Rev. Alf. Ellison; the potential of the place was proved beyond doubt and there has been considerable progress in these last years—as the lists of produce, both stock fodder and fruit, vegetables and grain for

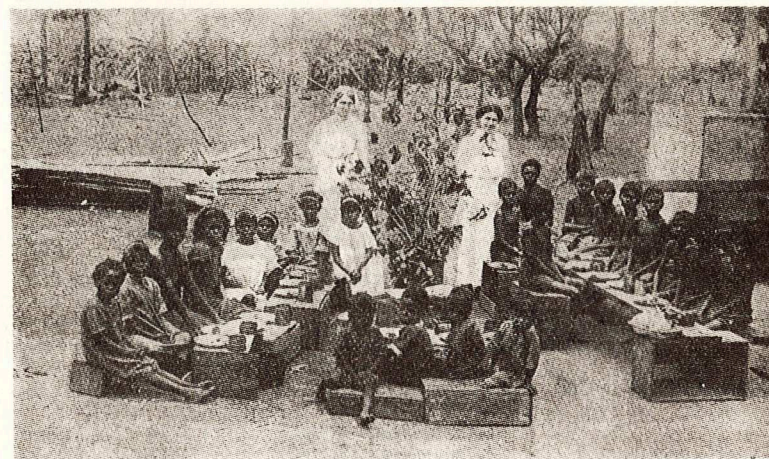
local consumption by staff and people, as submitted to the Annual Synods have shown.

There is considerable handcraft skill—in pandanus ware, and in wood-carving, turtle shell and pearl shell polishing. Over the last fifteen years or so several prizes have been won at the Darwin Show.

Goulburn Island has had its share of difficulties due to the intrusion of Japanese pearlers, and there was severe limitation of the mission's programme for the duration of the 1939-1945 war. During this period several of the mission people maintained a motor-launch ferry service to the R.A.A.F. radar post on North Goulburn Island—an invaluable contribution to the nation's war effort.

The policy has been to use the local Maung language as much as possible, in teaching in the junior grades in School, in Sunday School and in Church worship. The Rev. L. N. Kentish was one of the first to gain a mastery of Maung, translating several hymns, passages of scripture and portions of the liturgy. One of the tragedies of war is that his work in this respect, as in all of his fine leadership of Goulburn Island and the District, was cut short. Latterly, Sister Heather Hinch has become fluent in Maung and is working on a Grammar and Dictionary and Bible translation.

Over the years the people have entered with greater interest and understanding into the whole life of their mission station, fulfilling positions of trust and responsibility as Storemen, Teaching and Nursing Assistants, Cooks, Foremen in the



Christmas 1918.



garden, etc. Many have revealed leadership ability. A Village Council was formed in 1962 for the purpose of encouraging political ability. Philip Magulngir was the first Northern Territory Aboriginal to cast a vote when the franchise was granted in 1964—he voted by Postal Vote from Western Australia, where he was engaged in deputation work.

The culmination of fifty years of missionary endeavour is seen in the participation by some of the leading men in Local Preachers' Training Courses, 1965 and 1966, and in the acceptance of Lazarus Lamilami as a Candidate for the Ministry in 1965. After several years as a Pastor, serving at Maningrida, Croker Island and his own home island, Lazarus is now in training for the ministry — the first within the District to do so.

"What hath God wrought!" —John Wesley.

"We'll praise Him for all that is past,

And trust Him for all that's to come." —Joseph Hart.

"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever."

—Heb. 13: 8.

## Appendix A.

### MISSIONARIES APPOINTED TO GOULBURN ISLAND.

1916-1918	Rev. James Watson, Superintendent and Chairman.
1916-1917	Mr. A. E. Lawrence, Lay Missionary.
1916-1920	Miss A. Corfield, Teacher.
1917-1921	Mr. William Fletcher, Lay Missionary.
1918	Miss Tinney, Teacher.
1919	<b>Rev. Gordon A. Burgess</b> Superintendent and Chairman.
1920-1921	Miss May Brose, Teacher.
1920-1926	Rev. L. D. Keipert, Superintendent, Chairman for 1920.
1921-1922	Mr. Arnold Hamer, Engineer, Captain "J. M. McBride".
1921-1922	Yoram, Kapiu, Matasia and Sam Doy, Baduan Lay Missionaries.
1922-1929	Miss M. Matthews, Teacher.
1925-1928	Mr. H. E. Read, Lay Missionary.
1927-1929	Mr. Sam Rilstone, Temporary Worker (G. Is. and Milingimbi).
1929-1930	Rev. Reg. Bye, Superintendent.
1928-1931	Miss O. Lambert, Nurse (also Milingimbi).
1928-1931	Miss H. Taylor, Teacher.
1930-1937	Rev. G. T. Goldsmith, Superintendent.
1932-1940	Mr. Gordon Sweeney, Lay Missionary, Surveyor.
1932-1935	Miss Grace Tester, Teacher.
1934-1935	Rev. W. S. Chaseling, Superintendent (Relieving).
1935-1943	Rev. L. N. Kentish, B.A., B.D., Superintendent; Chairman of District, 1940-1943.
1933-1948	Kolinio N. Saukuru. Ordained 1945. Also Milingimbi, Yirrkala. Carpenter, Agriculturist, Captain.
1937-1942	Vereniki Veitarogivanua, Catechist.
1940-1945	Rev. Fuato Taito, Superintendent. (Also Darwin, Croker Is. and Milingimbi.)
1941-1943	Mr. S. ("Bosso") Brown, Voluntary Worker, Orchardist.
1938-1951	Mr. Rupert J. Kentish, Agriculturist. (Also Milingimbi, Yirrkala and Croker.)
1938-1944	Mr. Harold C. Thornell, Agriculturist. (Also Milingimbi and Yirrkala.)
1937-1942	Rev. T. C. Toft, L.Th., Supt. (Also Yirrkala and Darwin.)
1943-1947	Rev. A. H. Muller, Superintendent.
1946-1957	Rev. A. H. M. Ellison, Superintendent.
1945-1958	Miss J. Procter, Mission Sister. (Also Croker, Yirrkala.)
1947-1953,	1963—Mr. R. Beazley, Farmer. (Also Mil., Croker, Elcho.)
1948-1954	Sister Ivy Robb, Nurse.
1949-1952	Mr. Bruce Whalan, Farmer.
1950-1954	Miss L. Flanagan, Teacher.
1950-1961	Mr. Colin F. Swain, Farmer. (Also Croker, Milingimbi.)
1950-1965	Rev. Taniela Lotu, Superintendent. (Also Yirrkala.)
1951-	Mr. Robert Ingram, Builder. (Also Milingimbi and Croker Is.)
1952-	Mr. Colin Wright, Mechanic. (Also Elcho.)
1955-1958	Miss Rae Reese, Teacher.
1955-1957	Sister F. Gaby, Nurse.
1956-1965	Mr. J. E. Kraak, Engineer. (Also Elcho Island.)
1958-	Mr. J. T. Neville, Farmer. (Also Milingimbi.)
1958-	Sister H. Hinch, Nurse, Linguist.
1961-	Mr. R. L. Hocking, Farmer. (Also Croker Is., Milingimbi and Yirrkala.)
1961-1963	Miss M. E. Tainton, Teacher.
1966-	Mr. F. J. Eygenraam, Mechanic.
1966-	Mr. V. C. Johnston, Builder. (Also Milingimbi and Yirrkala.)
1965-	Rev. B. A. Clarke, Superintendent. (Also Darwin.)
1966-	Mr. Geoff Leak, Clerk-Storeman.



## Appendix B.

### THE FIRST FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

"METHODIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF AUSTRALASIA."  
ABORIGINES MISSION.

Payments made in Sydney on a/c. of, 1916, up to date (1/8/16).

GENERAL			
April 20	Petty Cash . . . . .	2	6
May 16	Fares to Darwin, Rev. J. Watson and Mr. A. Lawrence . . . . .	30	12 0
" 17	Outfit, Rev. J. Watson . . . . .	10	17 2
" 17	Asbestolite O. (less 13/4 allce.) . . . . .	128	11 0
" 24	W. A. Mitchell, smith, tools, etc. . . . .	10	0 0
	H. Travis (less 8/6 error) . . . . .	24	13 9
	Petty Cash . . . . .	5	0
	Book Depot, stationery . . . . .	3	17 1
June 1	Morgan & Co. . . . .	413	12 2
	Morgan & Co. . . . .	5	10 0
	Morgan & Co., Buying Commission . . . . .	10	9 6
	Freight . . . . .	128	13 2
	Cartages . . . . .	4	7 0
	W. M. Ford, 2 boats . . . . .	88	0 0
June 2	Petty Cash . . . . .	5	0
" 15	Epworth, stationery . . . . .	1	2 11
" 29	United Insurance Co. . . . .	13	0 3
		873	18 6
	Less refund trav. ex's Rev. J. Watson . . . .	19	5
		£872	19 1

Sydney, 1st August, 1916.

PERSONAL			
J. Watson . . . . .	92	6	8
A. Lawrence . . . . .	50	0	0
	142	6	8
TOTAL . . . . .	£1,015	5	9

## Appendix C.

### CHAIRMAN OF DISTRICT LIST.

(Dates are inclusive.)

1916-1918	Rev. James Watson.
1919	Rev. Gordon A. Burgess
1920	Rev. Louis D. Keipert.
1921-1922	Rev. J. C. Jennison.
1923-1925	Rev. James Watson.
1926-1939	Rev. T. Theodor Webb.
1940-1943	Rev. L. N. Kentish, B.A., B.D.
1943-1957	Rev. A. F. Ellemor, B.A., B.D. (Acting, 1943-5).
1958-	Rev. G. J. Symons, B.A., L.Th., A.A.S.A.

From 1916 to 1925, the District was listed in the Minutes of Conference as: Aborigines Mission District (Northern Territory).

From 1926 to 1928: Northern Territory District (Aborigines Mission).

From 1929: North Australia District.

The Rev. Gordon A. Burgess, who had formerly served for five years in Papua, and who had fought against ill-health in his family until he could be cleared medically to return to the field, was appointed by the Mission Board Annual Meeting, February 1919, to South Goulburn Island as Superintendent, and as Chairman of District. He booked his passage to Darwin on 25th March, but became ill and died of pneumonia on 30th March. His name appears in the N.S.W. Minutes of Conference for 1919:—

XIX. Aborigines Mission District (Northern Territory).  
Gordon A. Burgess, Chairman.

228. South Goulburn Island—Gordon A. Burgess.



## Appendix D.

### FOUNDING OF OTHER NORTH AUSTRALIA STATIONS.

Date Commenced	Mission Station.	Superintendent
1921-3	Crocodile Islands, Elcho Is., Milingimbi,	Rev. J. C. Jennison.
1924	Darwin (as O.M. Appointment),	Rev. H. Stanley Jarvis.
1935	Yirrkala.	Rev. W. S. Chaseling.
1941	Croker Island,	Pastor K. R. Wale.
1942	Elcho Island,	Rev. H. U. Shepherdson, M.B.E.

### NOTES.

**Milingimbi**, in the Crocodile Islands, was selected by the Rev. Jas. Watson as the site for the second station; it was approved by the Board; serious questions were raised as to its suitability, and the work commenced at **Elcho Island**, late in 1921. In 1923, due to the oil bore activities of the ELCHO ISLAND NAPHTHA PETROLEUM CO. LTD., occasion was taken to return to the originally-chosen site.

**Yirrkala**.—In 1924 the Rev. James Watson advocated the opening of a third mission station at Melville Island, Gulf of Carpentaria. This is now known as Bremer Island, N.-W. of Yirrkala. Ten years later, the present site was selected by the Rev. T. T. Webb. Yirrkala Mission, with the Rev. Wilbur S. Chaseling as founder and first Superintendent, was the church's answer to the public outcry for punitive measures against the Caledon Bay Aborigines, following the murder of Japanese pearl-ers and Constable McColl in 1933.

**Elcho Island**, 1942, began as an out-post of Milingimbi, the saw-mill and other valuable equipment being transferred there for greater safety during the war. The position was reviewed at the end of the war, and the Board approved development to a full mission station.

**Croker Island** children were cared for first at Pine Creek by Sister Olive Peake, then at Goulburn Island while building proceeded at Croker. For the duration of the war the children were cared for at Otford, N.S.W.

**Darwin**.—Known as Palmerston until 1901 and later as Port Darwin, this appointment was under the South Australia Conference until 1900, and under the Queensland Conference until 1923. In 1924, Darwin was taken over by the Overseas Missions Department, for the greater cohesion of the work. Darwin thus became increasingly the headquarters of the District.

**Maningrida**.—A Methodist Chaplain, Rev. Gowan Armstrong, is appointed to the Government Settlement between Goulburn Island and Milingimbi.

**Acknowledgment** is made to the Mitchell Library of N.S.W. for access to Methodist Church (Overseas Missions) Correspondence, etc., and thanks are expressed to all who have supplied helpful information.



