

Mungo

1901–1967



Willandra Lakes Region
World Heritage Area

mungo
national park



along its path
along its path
along its path



Australian Government
Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts

The text in this booklet has mostly been selectively extracted from three documents commissioned by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service that all tell important parts of the story of Mungo's cultural heritage since 1788. These documents are:

SHARED LANDSCAPES: ARCHAEOLOGIES OF ATTACHMENT AND THE PASTORAL INDUSTRY IN NEW SOUTH WALES. Studies in the Cultural Construction of Open Space. Rodney Harrison (2004). Sydney, Australia: UNSW Press.

WOMEN AND LANDSCAPE: NSW WESTERN PARKS PROJECT: AN HISTORICAL STUDY OF WOMEN AND OUTBACK LANDSCAPES for the Cultural Heritage Division of NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. Dr Johanna Kijas June 2003

CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT AND CULTURAL TOURISM PLAN , MUNGO NATIONAL PARK . Prepared for NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, by Godden Mackay Logan March 2003

Historic photos courtesy : Barnes and Stirrat family collection, photographer Ida Hope c1922-1960s, collection owned by Roy Stirrat, Barnes and Stirrat family collection and the Ted Lawton Collection. Also State Library of NSW as per credits attached to photos.

Walls of China Photo: Ian Brown

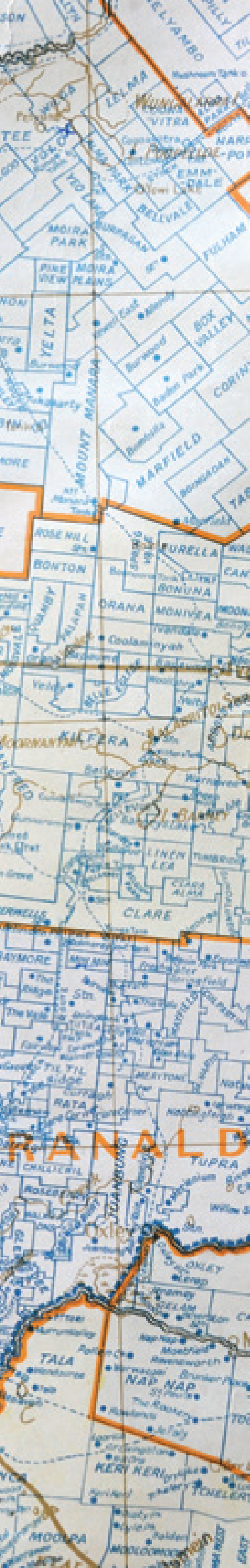




The first camel train to enter Wentworth 1913.

Camel teams were used to transport wool and other stores/produce up and down the Darling River between 1913 and 1934/35 during periods when the river was low and river boats could not run. Wool from old Gol Gol and Mungo was transported in this fashion after first travelling overland by either bullock or horse-drawn wagon.





..... Soldier settlement



The subdivision of properties that began before the First World War accelerated with the introduction of the Soldier Settlement Scheme.

This involved the purchase by the Federal Government of large parcels of Australian farming lands in order to divide them up and make these holdings available to returned soldiers.

The Soldier Settlement Scheme was devised to transplant returned soldiers from the cities, where they might prove a liability, to rural areas where it was hoped they would become self-sufficient.

State governments assisted the scheme with loans of up to £500 for buildings, clearing, fencing and stock. Land was made available through subdivided Crown lands, unsettled or leasehold holdings, farming allotments carved from state government purchased estates, and individual farms bought by the State Land Settlement Authority.

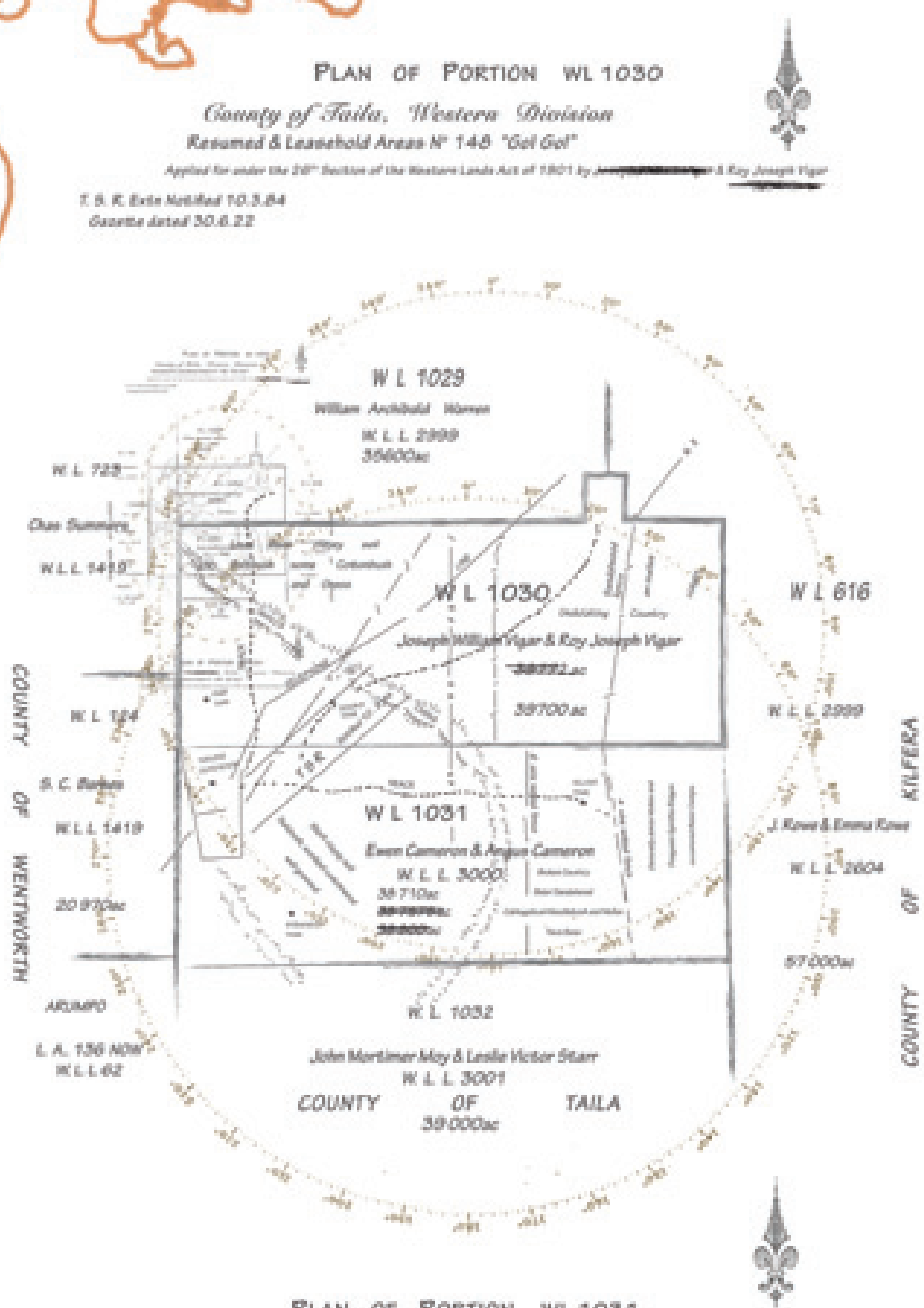
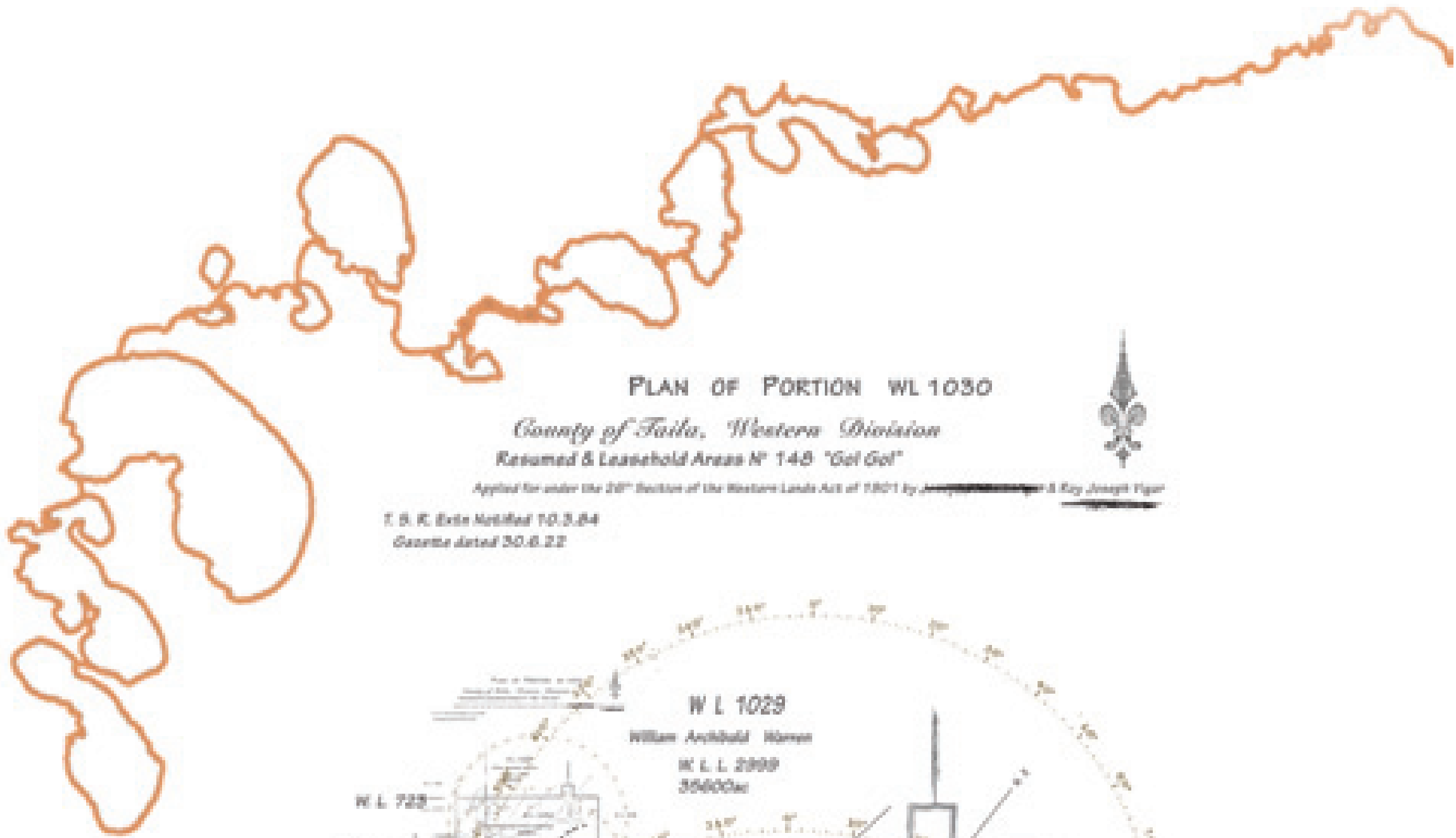
When a similar scheme was proposed to reward Second World War soldiers, a review of the previous scheme was held. It discovered a number of flaws, including the redundancy of the farming skills test due to the overwhelming numbers of returned soldiers, popular opinion and the press, post-war price increases for stock and equipment, and the inexperience of returned soldiers.

Problems had also been caused by the declining prices of agricultural commodities from the period 1924 to 1930, and the financial stress on state governments had not been adequately anticipated by either each state authority or the Federal Government, which had accepted the transfer of responsibility.

Schemes for closer settlement after the First World War generally 'failed miserably'. Blocks were generally too small, liabilities too great, and a desire to recognise a debt of gratitude for war service resulted in many inexperienced men being allocated blocks.

The Second World War Soldier Settlement Scheme stated that settlement should be undertaken only where economic prospects were reasonably sound, and holdings were of sufficient size to enable settlers to operate efficiently and earn a reasonable income.

The Soldier Settlement Commission sought large holdings for subdivision and properties 'occupied' by absentee owners. One of the immediate consequences was the break-up of many of 'the large fine-wool clips' of the Western district. Poor land and a lack of capital again ensured many failures.



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Mungo and Zanci

In 1921 Gol Gol Station was broken up under the soldier settlement scheme that followed the First World War.

This process created several new stations including, Mungo and Zanci along with the neighbouring Joulni and Leaghur Stations.

In 1921 the 16,000ha (39,520 acres) run, known as Mungo, was taken up by the brothers Ewen and Angus Cameron under the terms of Section 26 of the *Western Lands Act of 1901*, and thereafter was managed as an independent station with owner-occupiers.

Unlike some other soldier settlers, the Cameron brothers were fortunate in that their block was already improved, with the Mungo homestead, woolshed and associated buildings and tanks already in place.

The Camerons also had the advantage of having experience on the land before they took up Mungo, with Angus having been an overseer at Paika Station near Baranald.

Although the early years of their occupation were prosperous, with good years from 1922 to 1924, the brothers were hit hard by droughts through 1926–1928 and the property never fully recovered.

In 1934 the property was sold to Albert Barnes, who like the Camerons had considerable experience in the area, having been brought up at the Lethro property on the Darling River to the west.

Barnes later recalled that when he took control of the station it was in a bad condition, and he spent much of the first twelve months sinking tanks and mending fences.

During the same year, 1934, Albert married Venda Stirrat who was a niece of Roy Vigar of neighbouring Zanci Station.

This union served to make Mungo a centre for community activity in the area and to bring the two stations closer together in a co-operative way.

Indeed, in following years, Roy Vigar's second niece Jean married Alec Barnes of Joulni Station nearby.





The arrival of the Stirrat family at "Zanci" 1924.

Standing at the back at William Stirrat and his wife Ida. Ida was a sister of Roy Vigar who acquired "Zanci" in 1922..

To the left of Ida stands her daughter Venda who later married Albert Barnes and moved in next door at Mungo.

Left to right front row — Jean (who married Alec Barnes brother of Albert and lived at Joulhi), Nona, Don and Roger.



The original "Zanci" homestead circa. 1925 was built from iron and flattened kerosene tins. It had 2 rooms, and a small drop log kitchen (in right of photograph).

Cooking was carried out over an open fire and with campovens. The kitchen also contained a small wood stove. It was also used as a laundry with tubs and scrubbing boards.

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Zanci

In 1924 when Venda Barnes (nee Stirrat), her mother and siblings came out to live on her uncle’s soldier settlement property of Zanci, they all lived in tents until the first small house was built.

Venda’s memory of her mother Ida was of a woman



*who ...
“loved the outback. She loved riding – she could do all those things.
“Others will remember that she always had the table set properly – even in the tent – the linen, serviettes, cutlery and crockery.
“People did that in those days. She still kept the right*

way to live. She was very strict.

“She’d been a schoolteacher and she taught us all by correspondence.”

As with Mungo Station, Zanci had originally been part of North Turlee Run managed by William Nash until subsumed by the Pattersons at Gol Gol in 1877.

In 1921, like Mungo, Zanci was separated from Gol Gol under Section 26 of the *Western Lands Act 1901*, for a soldier settlement property run by Joseph William Vigar and his son Roy Joseph Vigar.

In 1922 Joseph Vigar was killed in a horse and buggy accident and Roy ran the property with the help of his intellectually disabled brother Harold.

While their pre-1921 background is similar, the fundamental difference between the new Mungo and Zanci Stations was that while Mungo had been substantially improved, with a house and woolshed plus associated buildings, Zanci had only fencing and a few water tanks with no substantial dwelling or other buildings.

This fact put the Vigers at a considerable disadvantage, for before the property could become profitable the necessary infrastructure needed to be built.

Of primary importance was a house. This pressing need became doubly important with the arrival at Zanci of Roy Vigar’s sister and her family –the Stirrats – in 1924.

While the first house was being built, the families lived in tents on the property close by the house site. It was completed by 1925 but was only ever meant to be a temporary dwelling until a more substantial homestead could be completed. It was built of galvanised iron and pressed kerosene tins, had only two rooms with a detached kitchen of drop-log construction.

By the early 1930s the second, permanent homestead had been constructed. Clad in galvanised iron, the single-storey dwelling had a timber frame built with locally obtained timbers. The homestead was part of a complex of buildings including a cool room, drop-log sheds, yards and an underground dugout, built in response to the oppressive heat in the area.





Above: Two family names are associated with the early days of Zanci. Roy Vigar (right) owned the property, and he was joined in its operation by the arrival of his sisters' family, the Stirrats in 1924.

Below: Zanci in 1925. A visit from the Warrens of Leaghur next door. Note the model T ford under the pines in background, and the tent which was used as a bedroom until a bigger homestead was built.



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Life at Zanci

“In 1922 Roy Vigar would leave Zanci in his unregistered T-model Ford 1 ton truck, just on dusk and get into Mildura at dawn. He would drive to a mates place and park the truck in the backyard, then go to the grocers and have his order home delivered, then leave Mildura at dusk and be home the next morning. He did this about twice a year and never got caught...”

“In 1924 Bill and Ida Stirrat sailed aboard the paddleboat Rubie from Renmark to Wentworth, then by horse and buggy with a sleepover under the stars to the outback Zanci Station. The oldest daughter Venda was 9 years old, with younger siblings Jean Roger, Don and Nona.

“This major move was due to Bill having tuberculosis and being told to shift to a drier climate. So they chose to go and live with Ida’s brother in the very dry NSW outback.

“On arrival at the property they had to erect tents to sleep in as there was only a kitchen made out of kerosene tins and corrugated iron with an old wood stove to cook on.

“The tents had bag floors that were swept with a straw broom once a day. The kitchen had a wooden floor, which was scrubbed on hands and knees once a day.

“Meat was killed on the property and all raw ingredients were bought from Wentworth, then Mildura twice a year in large bags and stored in a loft in the woolshed. Vegetables were grown only in the good years when there was plenty of water.

“They milked cows and had scolded or separated cream which was made into butter and sold. Venda recalls having to take butter to Garnpang Station 24 km away on horseback. This little trip would take her and one of her siblings all day.

“Ida was a real lady and the table had to be set with a tablecloth and napkins even when it was blowing a dust storm or 140°F in the shade. This practice would have made for a lot of washing.” – Colleen Barnes

The Stirrat childrens’ first play on the red sandhills behind the Zanci homestead circa. 1925.





Albert Barnes' new truck (his first motor vehicle, a 1927 Chev 4) is seen here at Zanci outside the two bedroom hut in 1935.

Pictured from left to right are the dog, 'Boss' Albert and Venda Barnes (nee Stirrat) and Alex Barnes and Jean Stirrat. Jean and Alex later married.



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Two brides Two brothers

The 1920s drought was a time of great hardship for many farmers across the Western Division.

This resulted in them being particularly vulnerable to the financial hardships of the Great Depression in the 1930s and many farmers were forced off the land.

Amidst these troubled time however, there were opportunities to be had for those who could still access some capital and acquire land in a buyers market.

Albert Barnes was one such fortunate soul. Hence when he married Venda Stirrat in the early 1930s the newly-wed couple were able to move into Mungo Station – right next door to Zanci where Venda’s father and mother lived.

Later when Albert’s brother Alec married another of the Stirrat family daughters Jean, they were able to purchase another adjacent property – Joulmie.

This influx of Barnes’ then continued into the early 1940s, when a third brother – Clarrie and his wife Gladys – then bought Leaghur Station. This ensured an extended family clan was well established around the Mungo hub.

These were difficult days for the young families making their way on the land as there was no ground water on any of the stations and access to Mildura was slow and unpredictable.

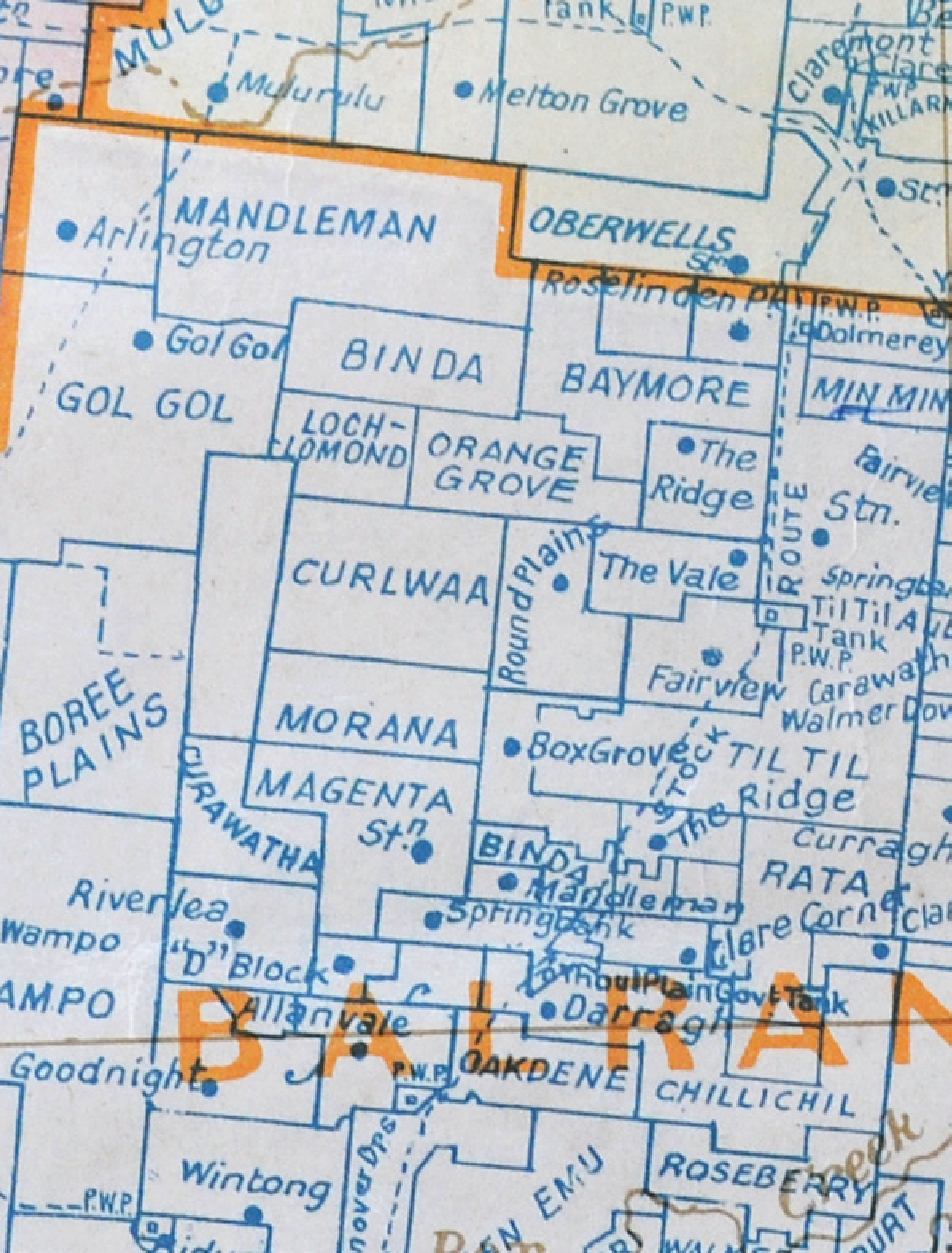
The families did however have an advantage in that because of their close links, they were able to share resources in such a way as to overcome some of the economic disadvantages that had resulted from the splitting up of the large properties into small, marginal units under the soldier settlement scheme.

One example of how the properties worked together is seen here with Albert Barnes’ truck being used to cart wheaten hay to a stack on his father in law’s property, Zanci around 1941.

Roy Vigar planted 30–40 acres of wheat in two successive years near the Mungo boundary. Kangaroos cleaned it up both times.



The map displays a grid of land parcels, each labeled with a name. The parcels are outlined in blue. Several parcels are highlighted with orange borders, including Kinross, Timpunga, Wandella, Minda, Peakka, Lethero, Studley, Flagstaff, Munagai, Petro, Cavan, Marma, Banoon, Woolong, and Munda. The map also shows the location of the Top Hat Hotel and the Top Hat Station. The name 'Top Hat' is written in large, bold letters across the center of the map. The name 'Wandella' is written vertically along the right side of the map. The name 'Wonga' is written horizontally across the middle of the map. The name 'Minda' is written horizontally across the middle of the map. The name 'Peakka' is written horizontally across the middle of the map. The name 'Lethero' is written horizontally across the middle of the map. The name 'Studley' is written horizontally across the middle of the map. The name 'Flagstaff' is written horizontally across the middle of the map. The name 'Munagai' is written horizontally across the middle of the map. The name 'Petro' is written horizontally across the middle of the map. The name 'Cavan' is written horizontally across the middle of the map. The name 'Marma' is written horizontally across the middle of the map. The name 'Banoon' is written horizontally across the middle of the map. The name 'Woolong' is written horizontally across the middle of the map. The name 'Munda' is written horizontally across the middle of the map. The name 'Top Hat' is written in large, bold letters across the center of the map. The name 'Wandella' is written vertically along the right side of the map. The name 'Wonga' is written horizontally across the middle of the map. The name 'Minda' is written horizontally across the middle of the map. The name 'Peakka' is written horizontally across the middle of the map. The name 'Lethero' is written horizontally across the middle of the map. The name 'Studley' is written horizontally across the middle of the map. The name 'Flagstaff' is written horizontally across the middle of the map. The name 'Munagai' is written horizontally across the middle of the map. The name 'Petro' is written horizontally across the middle of the map. The name 'Cavan' is written horizontally across the middle of the map. The name 'Marma' is written horizontally across the middle of the map. The name 'Banoon' is written horizontally across the middle of the map. The name 'Woolong' is written horizontally across the middle of the map. The name 'Munda' is written horizontally across the middle of the map.



MULU

Mulurulu

Melton Grove

Claremont
Claremont
P.W.P.
HILLARY

Stn

• Arlington
MANDLEMAN

OBERWELLS
Stn

Roselinden P.W.P.
Dolmurey

• Gol Gol

BINDA

BAYMORE

MIN MIN

GOL GOL

LOCH-
LOMOND

ORANGE
GROVE

• The
Ridge

Fairview
Stn.

CURLWAA

The Vale

Springer
Til Til
Tank
P.W.P.

BOREE
PLAINS

Round Plains

Fairview

Carawath
Walmer Dov

MORANA

Box Grove
TIL TIL
Ridge

MAGENTA
Stn

BINDA

Mandleman

Curragh
RATA
Core Cla

Riverlea

Wampo

AMPO

"D" Block

Allanvale

Thou Plain Govt Tank
Darragh

Goodnight

P.W.P. OAKDENE

CHILLICHIL

Wintong

ROSEBERRY

ROSEBERRY

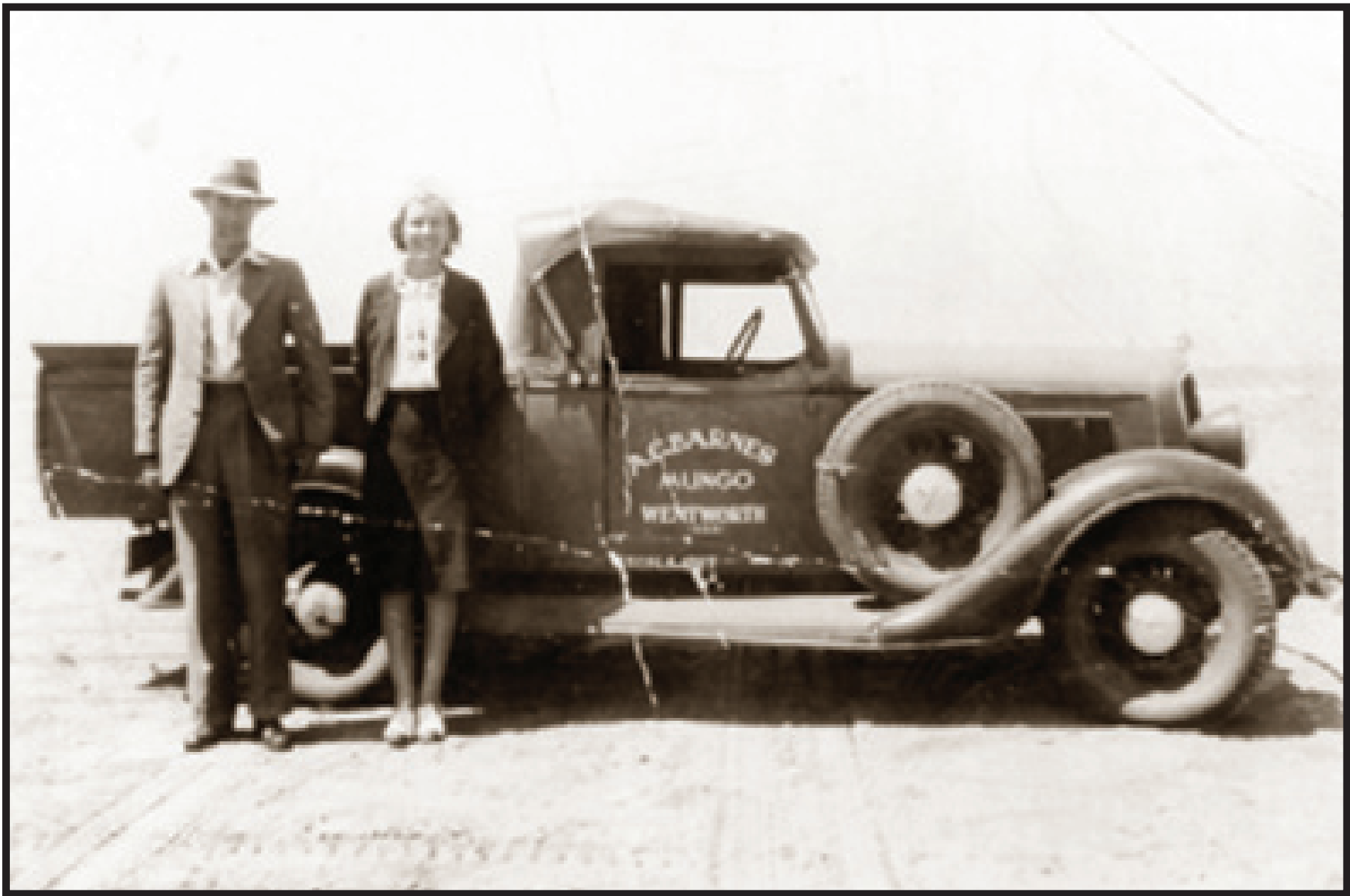
P.W.P.

over Dr

DON EMU

Creek

CURT



Above: Albert and Venda Barnes

Below: Albert and Venda Barnes in the process of enlarging the Scour Tank to serve as the main house tank with TD9 tractor.



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Mungo

In 1921 the 16,000ha (39,520 acres) run, known as Mungo, was taken up by the brothers Ewen and Angus Cameron.

Unlike some other soldier settlers, the Cameron brothers were fortunate in that their block was already improved, with the homestead, woolshed and associated buildings and tanks already in place.

The Camerons also had the advantage of having experience on the land before they took up Mungo, with Angus having been an overseer at Paika Station near Balranald. Although the early years of their occupation were prosperous, with good years from 1922 to 1924, the brothers were hit hard by droughts through 1926 –1928 and the property never fully recovered.

In 1934 the property was sold to Albert Barnes, who like the Camerons had considerable experience in the area, having been brought up at Lethro on the Darling River to the west.

Barnes later recalled that when he took control of the station it was in a bad condition, and he spent much of the first twelve months sinking tanks and mending fences.

During the same year, 1934, Albert married Venda Stirrat who was a niece of Roy Vigar of neighbouring Zanci Station. This union served to make Mungo a centre for community activity in the area and to bring the two stations closer together.

Albert Barnes undertook a number of changes to the station to keep abreast of changes in farm techniques and the changing physical nature of the region.

Much additional work on the property was made possible in the early 1950s through a combination of favourable rainfall and good wool prices.



In the early days of his work at Mungo, Albert's bike was a sure means of transport around the area. He is seen here after a successful fox hunt.





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Shearing



“When the Vigars arrived in 1922, they only had a little old shearing shed to work in. There was a Super diesel motor that ran the overhead gear for the two narrow comb handpieces.

“In 1947 they built the new woolshed where it stands today using part of the original Mungo Woolshed Wool Room. They used the Mungo oregon beams for the support of the overhead gear. They then bought a diesel powered Ronaldson and Tippet.

“Shearing time was by far the busiest time for the grazier.

“Weeks of preparation beforehand, moving sheep closer to the shed, cleaning out the shed and shearers huts and making sure all the mechanical gear worked.

“The wool clip was their main source of income and had to be done perfectly.

“As the sheep were shorn, they were put through the dip.

“After shearing was completed, they spent weeks cleaning up, droving the sheep back to their paddocks and organising the wool for transportation to market.

“Very long days for the owner and his workers –on the move before the shearers were out of bed and still out there after they were back in bed.

“The Mungo shed worked the same, but it had always been a huge shed. They could ‘shed’ more sheep overnight and have more in the yards.” – Colleen Barnes

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The Mungo Races

*When we heard of Mungo races
Well we thought we'd like to go
That is Rose and Ev myself and Joe
So we packed our beds and sallied forth
To see our outback friends
We took the trail up New South Wales
The trail that never ends*

*We didn't know where Mungo was
Except perhaps that we
Knew Mungo lay some half a day
From Les' place Turlee
But we didn't know where Turlee was
Perhaps twas near Garnpang
And then there was Arumpo, Top Hut
and Pan Ban
You take the lot and mix them up
Add Byrnes place in too
And Oh of course the Burgundy
A real old Irish stew*

*With hopeful hearts the car we start
Oh ignorance is bliss
We travel on for half a day
And then the track we miss
We travel on and on and on
But we don't find the Mungo Races ...*

*And so at length we reach the course
(The races are half done)
But we settle down to see the rest
And enjoy them every one
The riders are all station hands
The horses station bred
And the yelling in that clay pan
Turned the Walls of China red*

*When the races are all over
We make ready for the ball
And return to the Mungo Woolshed
ore politely termed 'the hall'
And some danced away till daylight
While underneath the stars
We spread our camping outfit
On the ground near squatters cars ...*

*If to meet with people such as these
Means getting off the track
I'd lose my way just every day
fro the fun of going back
(A. Tracey)*



Albert Barnes at his parent's property 'Lethro' on the Darling River with a thoroughbred before he purchased Mungo in 1934.



Above: the tennis court at Mungo

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The social network

Below: A cricket day at the racecourse on Lake Mungo circa. 1935. For a couple of years in the late 1930s a large clay pan on Joulni was used to stage horseraces. This was an major event with 10–12 horses racing. An S.P. bookie was in attendance the last two years.



“There was a fair bit of socialising in the ‘olden’ days. When the kids at Zanci were young they used to play tennis on the white clay pans near the house.

“When Venda and Albert moved into Mungo they erected a proper tennis court and this court was played on every Sunday with people coming from all over the district.

“Then when Jean and Alex brought Joulni, they had a tennis court too so they alternated Sundays. The ladies would bring a plate for lunch and everyone would enjoy a picnic lunch.

“Cricket was also played on Sundays, but only in the season.

“There were actually cricket clubs. These were Garnpang with whom the Zanci mob played, Marma, Prungle and Joulni.

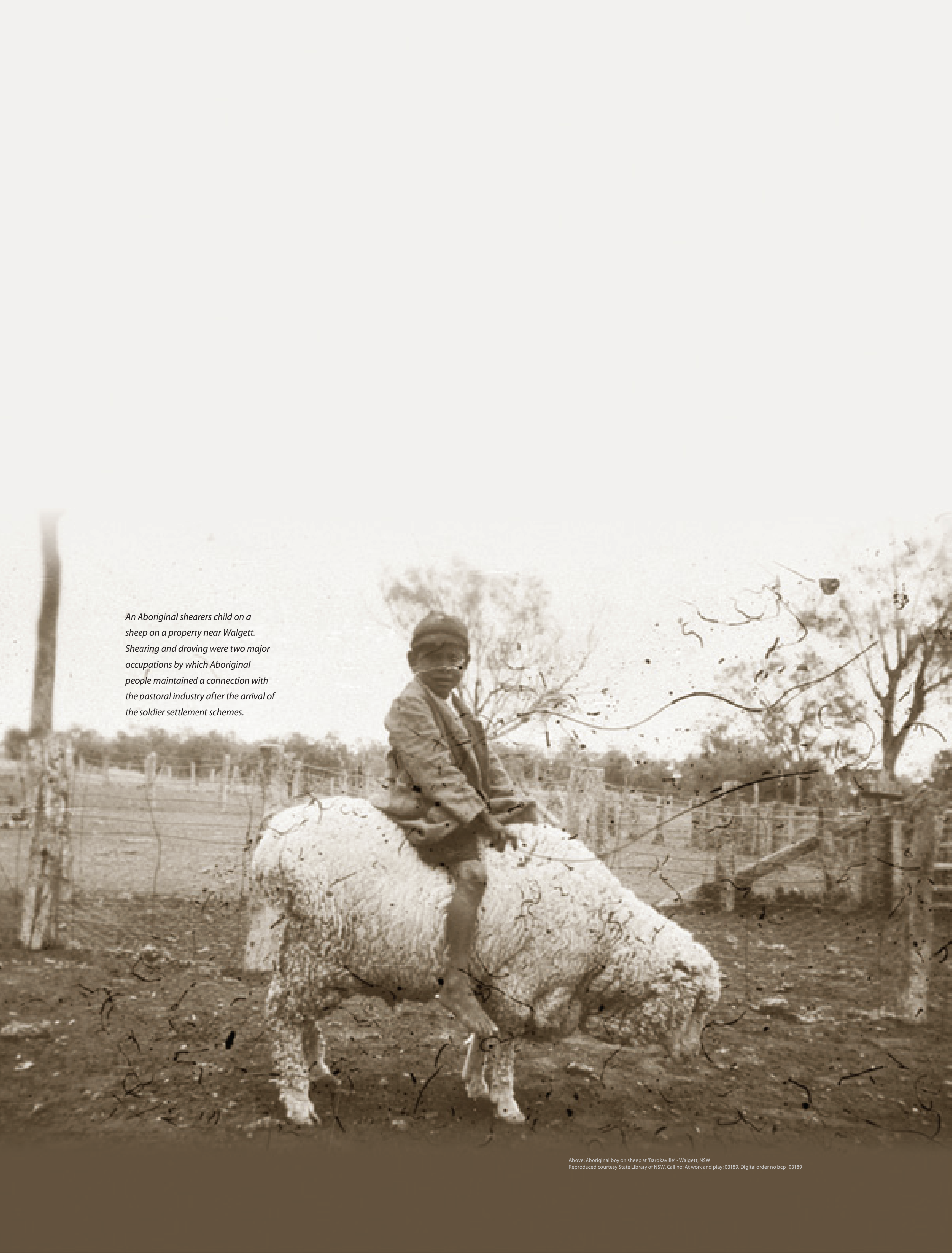
“They enjoyed the Lethero (a property on the Darling River owned by Albert’s parents). There was a picnic there every New Years Day, where they’d run all sorts of foot races and the men had a shooting competition. At night music and a dance in the hall entertained them.

“For one day in 1937 and 1938, they held the Mungo Horse Races. It was actually run on a flat at Joulni.

“This was a grand occasion with everyone dressing up and having a little flutter on the horses. After the races it was back to the Mungo Woolshed for a dance.

“The reasons for dances at the Mungo Woolshed ranged from 21st birthdays to anniversaries to a charity fundraiser for Marilyn Scadding as County Queen.

“The centenary of the Mungo Woolshed was held in 1972 and people came from everywhere. They dressed in period costume and a prize was given for the best-dressed couple.” – Colleen Barnes



An Aboriginal shearers child on a sheep on a property near Walgett. Shearing and droving were two major occupations by which Aboriginal people maintained a connection with the pastoral industry after the arrival of the soldier settlement schemes.

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Soldier settlement and Aboriginal people

TECHNOLOGY AND CHANGE

The introduction of mechanisation in the pastoral economy, notably the increasing availability and use of utilities and trucks, was an important factor which diminished the role of both Aboriginal and settler drovers and musterers in outback New South Wales.

The period from the 1910s to 1960s brought a new series of economic factors, the end of large-scale properties, and a lessening need for Aboriginal labour.

The subdivision of large pastoral properties and the decline in the proportion of wage labourers to self-employed small holders accelerated this process.

In the post-Second World War period, advances in technology – in the form of improved machinery, selective plant and animal breeding, fertilisers and pesticides – promised to revolutionise the pastoral industry.

However, by the late 1950s and 1960s, whole categories of jobs were lost as technology and industry structure shifted.

Mechanised harvesters, for example, eliminated the need for many workers in the inland wheat and coastal corn industries, while wheat silos eliminated employment for bag sewers. In the pastoral industry, trucks and motorbikes reduced the need for horsemen and women in both the sheep and cattle industries, while road trains virtually eliminated the droving jobs.

The Soldier Settlement Scheme, along with broader economic conditions, changed the social landscape of pastoralism for both Aboriginal people and settlers during the 1930s.

Intensive grazing, interference with water supplies, the shooting of native game and the post-war subdivision of properties, coupled with the 1930s economic depression, the intrusion of the Aborigines Protection (and later Welfare) Board and the dispersal of Aboriginal communities by these government agencies altered the social landscape.

Family-sized blocks needed few if any permanent workers and had neither the means, nor need, to support an Aboriginal camp – as the larger pastoral properties had done in earlier periods.

This was a time of increasing government control over Aboriginal people in rural areas.

By the 1930s, in most parts of New South Wales nearly all Aboriginal pastoral workers were either fringe dwellers or ‘clients’ of the Aborigines Protection Board.

The labour roles of Aboriginal women had largely been superseded, and pastoral work for men tended to be limited to contract shearing and stockwork.

By 1930 there was a major increase in the populations of supervised reserves, when large numbers of Aboriginal people found themselves out of work after it was made obligatory to pay Aboriginal workers the same wages as white workers.

The Aborigines Protection Board (1909–1939) and later Aborigines’ Welfare Board (1940–1969) forcibly removed Aboriginal people from ‘fringe camps’ to reserves and managed stations throughout this time.

By 1935, many Aboriginal people had been forced off smaller unsupervised reserves, many of them self-established farms, and the population of the small number of supervised reserves doubled.

The 1936 amendments to the Aborigines’ Protection Act dictated that Aboriginal people would be confined on reserves until they had been educated so that they could be assimilated into white society.

This was the first of three major contributing factors during the middle part of the twentieth century which challenged and severely undermined the relative stability of relationships between Aboriginal people and pastoralists that had been established during the period 1855–1930.



Wool room of original Zanci Woolshed just after the Second World War.

Wool loading at Zanci Woolshed in 1955



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The post-war wool boom



The importance of wool to the allied war effort in World War Two was such that Britain bought Australia's entire wool clip for the duration and shearers were prohibited from volunteering for war service.

By 1941 Australia was home to around 125 million sheep. This equates to approximately 16 sheep for every square kilometre of the continent.

The war was a significant event in the development of the Australian wool industry as it came at a time when synthetic fabrics were just emerging to challenge the dominance of natural fibres. This had resulted in a tax being levied on all wool sales in 1934 in order to establish the Australian Wool Board to promote (but not market) wool.

This marketing received a boost in the wake of the war as fashion houses like Christian Dior launched new looks using bountiful amounts of natural fabrics as a reaction to the austerity of the war years.

This demand for wool coincided with an easing of a decade of drought in 1947 to usher in a boom period for wool, aided soon after by renewed demand with the outbreak of war on the Korean peninsula.

By 1951 the entire British stockpile of 10 million bales had been sold and wool revenues were helping rebuild Australia's financial position in the wake of World War Two.

As the decade progressed new markets opened also and by 1962 Japan bought twice as much Australian wool as Britain did. With demand like this, investment in sheep farming continued to surge and by 1970 Australia was home to a record 180 million sheep.

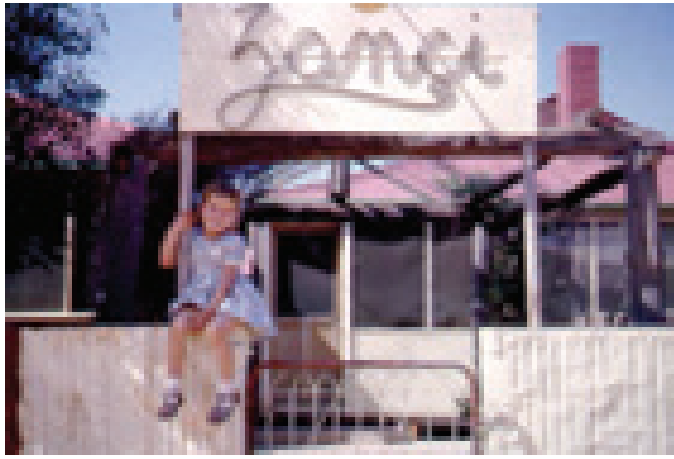
At this time the Australian Wool Corporation was intervening strongly in the wool market by purchasing all wool not reaching the minimum price at auction in order to later sell it at times of higher prices. Then in 1974 a reserve price was introduced to guarantee growers a minimum price for their wool.

This system survived through the end of the Cold War in the late 1980s when the collapse of Soviet markets meant that the reserve price scheme was suspended, leaving Australia with a problematic stockpile of nearly 5 million bales of wool.



Above: an abundance of grass at Mungo.

The end of the decade long drought in 1947 and the rise in the price of wool heralded a period of prosperity for sheep farmers.



Clearing bush at Mungo c. 1954

The 50s and 60s



Val Barnes branding sheep



1960s party at Mungo



Loading wool at Zanci in 1962



Tennis at Mungo c. 1960



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The Walls of China



Photos: Ted Lawton collection



From the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s two new activities came to the pastoral stations around Lake Mungo; scientific research and tourism.

A brief survey of books on the scenic wonders of NSW from the 1960s and earlier suggests that Lake Mungo and the Walls of China were not particularly well known before that time, at least outside the immediate area. The name ‘Walls of China’ had however been used to describe the area since at least 1896. This feature was described at that time in evidence for a lease appraisal given by John Patterson in May of that year.

Australian artist Russell Drysdale, who was a keen outback traveller, painted Walls of China on a visit there in 1945. This powerful image and others recording visits by photographic groups shows that the Walls were valued for their scenic values before the archaeological discoveries of the 1970s.

Baroona Tours was taking visitors onto the Walls in minibuses in the late 1960s and Junction Tours started taking tours in the early 1970s. Venda Barnes operated a shop catering for tourists to the Walls of China. The shop was located in a number of different rooms within Mungo Homestead and this required Venda to obtain a licence to operate the shop.

From 1968 scientific researchers, including those from the Australian National University, began investigations around Lake Mungo the results of which led ultimately to the creation of Mungo National Park and listing of the Willandra Lakes Region as a World Heritage Area.

HOLIDAYMAKERS

Air Safari to . . .

“Walls of China”

. . . Mungo Station

Air and ground tours of this historic station homestead, and fascinating 1000ft. high sand dunes and sand where exciting new discoveries on the origins of man have been made.

The Air Safari gives a superb view of the “Walls of China” which run through Mungo. After morning or afternoon tea an interesting guided tour by road around the area.

TOURS DEPART 9.00 a.m. Return 12.30 p.m.
OR 1.00 p.m. Return 4.30 p.m.

FULL COST - \$28.00

On DEAKIN AVE. & EIGHT ST.
MELBOURNE
PHONE: 23 2247



