

### **Banyjima Native Title - Dhu and Dershaw families**

**Daisy Yijiyangu.** Daisy's children, Ivy, Billy and Susan were regarded as the children of a white stockman named James Swan from Victoria. Susan was born the year that James died in a riding accident at Mount Florance in 1904.<sup>1</sup> Billy was born on Mulga Downs in about 1895 and Ivy in about 1902. A neighboring young station owner, Harold Wyborn Parker, was the father of Daisy's last son, Jackie Parker, who was born at Mulga Downs in about 1910 (O'Connor 1991; Day 2004). In 1996 Kim Barber recorded Daisy's Aboriginal spouse 'Djimbangu', as belonging to the Nyamal language group. My information has always been that she wandered into the bush and died on Mulga Downs Station. According to Daniel Vachon, the anthropologist researching the Nyiyaparli native title claim, Nyiyaparli informants said Daisy's mother was of the Nyiyaparli language group (Paragraph 793; footnote 811).

The significant point is the lack of evidence of any filiative connections to country, as is the case in every other group so far discussed. Her children had exogamous marriages and moved away from the district. A 1923 report from Mulga Downs states: 'Ivy – female, age about 17, white father, single, uneducated, is employed in manager's house and sleeps and lives at the house, neither is she allowed to go to the native camp without permission.' The same report records that Porky [Susan] 'age about 19, white father' and 'William [Billy] age about 23, white father' both 'live in native camp'.<sup>2</sup>

Inspector Ernest Mitchell wrote in 1928 to the Protector of Aborigines in Perth recommending that Ivy Swan be paired with Nyiyaparli man, Kip, 'her natural protector'. Considering Kip's agreement to this arrangement, it could indicate that Ivy was the right social category for Kip and suggests that she was a Nyiyaparli woman. The letter also indicates that Ivy had no filiative protectors at Mulga Downs amongst the Banyjima people:

Young h/c female Ivy, mother of child Leslie born 9 Nov 1923. It is commonly accepted by all that the child is the son of Clarence Albert Rodriguez, one time Manager during Hancock's absence. ... Ivy twice told me she desired to marry a fb [full-blood] native called Kip. Subsequently saw Kip who says he is willing. As it is necessary to provide this woman with her natural protector, otherwise she is game for any whiteman... Ivy is working in the house tho child Leslie is very white, and is with her the whole time, she could have the child for another say 12 months.

In a subsequent report, Inspector Mitchell wrote again to the Protector. His letter again describes Kip as 'her tribal man', although the relationship had not worked because Ivy was 'too fussy for an Aboriginal husband', and that 'this was the only occasion that Ivy associated with Aborigines'. As a result Ivy was given permission to

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<sup>1</sup> James Swan died after falling from his horse on 10 October, 1904 aged about twenty-eight, and is buried on Mount Florance Station (*More Lonely Graves of Western Australia*, page 375).

<sup>2</sup> Police Dept Northern District, Tableland Station, February 15<sup>th</sup>, 1922. List of Half-Castes in Tableland Police Sub-District 52/18/22

marry a station worker, Frank Derschow. Both letters seem to confirm that Daisy's children were Nyiyaparli and had no links to the other Aboriginal people on Mulga Downs.<sup>3</sup>

Ivy Swan h/c female and her two children Leslie a quadron aged 5 9/11/28 Felix h/c by FBM Kip - Ivy lived with the latter, Kip, nearly 12 mos, and child, above Felix, was the issue - Ivy told me she could not possibly live with Kip, she put up a good trial, he Kip was too dirty, Kip did not like her. I suggested she on the other hand, was too clean, too fussy for an aboriginal husband. Kip left her he was not driven away. Ivy then appealed to Derchow to protect her, when Ivy became pregnant, Derchow appealed to the CPA for permission to marry her ...I charged Mr Hancock with being neglectful in regard to instructions, as the outcome of my last inspection, that the h/c Ivy should live with her tribal man FBM Kip to which they had agreed. To my surprise Mr Hancock told me this had been carried out and Ivy had given birth to as child as the result this child is obviously not the child of another whiteman. .. the h/c Felix was produced by Ivy as a result of my instructions, it would be cruel indeed to take advantage of her accident, as this is the only occasion that Ivy associated with Aborigines.

Ivy Swan had eleven children, all of whom took their surname from Ivy's white husband Frank Derschow. One son, Les, was born on Mulga Downs in 1923 and married Amy Coffin, whose son, Peter, identifies as Nyiyaparli. Susie Swan had her first child, Ned, to a white man when she was sixteen then Alice and Jack were born over the next four years, followed by ten children to Edward Dhu between 1925 and 1949. All her children bear the Dhu surname. The first eight were born on Mulga Downs/Cowra Outcamp.

Billy Swan was Daisy's son, born in 1895. Pixie Christian, Tommy Stream and Amy Dhu all told me that Billy Swan was a Banyjima man. Others are sure he was Nyiyaparli. He had several wives. One wife, Minnie, has been recorded as a Banyjima woman who died near Hamersley Gorge in about 1929. The children, Ethel Ashwin (4 children),<sup>4</sup> Marjorie Zonderbeugh (7 children) and Mervyn Sara (9 children)<sup>5</sup> were removed by the Department of Native Welfare in the 1930s and remained in the south of the state. Police Reports suggest that Billy Swan was not the father of these children as Ethel and Mervyn were born on Corunna Station in 1920 and 1922 respectively. Marjory was born in 1926 at Shaw Patch near Cooglegong. Their mother Minnie died about 1930 and the report states the children were cared for by 'Lucy who claims to be their aunt'.<sup>6</sup> After working on Bamboo Springs, Billy spent his last years in the Marble Bar district and died after a fall in 1987. His last wife, Dolly, died in 1999.

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<sup>3</sup> Derschow was a German immigrant and an internee during both World Wars, as his correspondence in the National Archives shows. Series K1171, Derschow, Frank (1430) [German Internee]

<sup>4</sup> I am told Wendy Ashwin identifies as Banyjima.

<sup>5</sup> I had some telephone conversations with Mervyn's son, John Sara of Bunbury, some years ago and I seem to remember he identified as Nyiyaparli

<sup>6</sup> Report from Protector, Marble Bar, to Chief Protector of Aborigines, Perth, 6<sup>th</sup> November, 1934.

In her Book "My Place (Morgan 1987:230-232) Sally Morgan describes how she met Billy Swan and his wife Dolly when they were living at Yandeyarra. Billy told Sally, " You belong to a lot of the people here. My children would be your relations. Tommy [Stream], he's close, and others too...You got your place now. We've worked it out..."

Dr Bill Day 2013