



the CITATION

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY POLICE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NT POLICE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 1998

Dear Members,

As you have noticed, our Society has made little progress this year. We really do miss Glenys Simpson! Also, her former office at the PF & ES College was required for other purposes, and so we had a storage problem as well. But there is hope in sight.

In December, the Retired Police Officers' Association will move into accommodation at the Peter Mc Aulay Centre at Berrimah. They have previously offered to store the artefacts which Glenys acquired over the years. I am also optimistic that amongst their numbers, there will be sufficient interest in history (after all, they made the history), that we can move the administration of NTPHS onto a sounder footing.

In the meantime, I wish to thank Garth Macpherson for his sterling efforts with Citation, which has kept us together in lean times.

I wish all members well, and think we have something to look forward to in 1999.

Peter THOMAS

President Historical Society.



VALE : TREVOR MCKEW 20.7.35 - 24.10.98

Trevor McKew, 63 passed away in Adelaide on Saturday 24.10.98 after a long illness. His wife Lynette, daughter Marnie and sons Brett and Bevan, survive him.

Trevor was a member of the NT Police from 29th July 1959 to 28th October 1978. His service history included Darwin Traffic from 3-12-'59 to 16-6-'65, OIC Mataranka 19-6-'65 to 2-8-'66 then in Alice Springs General Duties from 3-8-'66 to 28-2-'69, OIC Traffic from 29-2-'69 to December '69; General Duties Alice Springs 30.12.'69 to 15-3'72 as A/Sergeant 3/c Traffic Alice Springs from 16-3-'72 to 14-6-'73 back to General Duties again from 15-6-'72 to 27-10'76 Trevor then went on long service leave and sick leave until he retired in 1978.

He was commended in March 1960 after disarming a male offender in Bennet Street, Darwin who was pointing a loaded rifle at another constable and two men in the station. He received the Commendation from the Territory Administrator who was also the Police Commissioner.

In 1974, Trevor received a Commendation from the Coroner in Alice Springs for his lengthy and painstaking enquiries in identifying a person who had drowned three weeks earlier.

WANTED

ARTICLES OF INTEREST FOR
INCLUSION IN FUTURE ISSUES
OF THE CITATION.

Please forward to:
Garth Macpherson
C/- Community Relations
P O Box 2630,
Alice Springs. N.T. 0871



MOUNTED CONSTABLE JOHN CLOW (JACK) MACKAY 6.3.1884-13.10.1928 of ALICE WELL POLICE STATION.

I am indebted to Bruce Strong of the National Trust in Alice Springs for allowing me to take these extracts from his book ALICE WELL : WAYSIDE STOP.

During a conversation a year or so ago, I mentioned to Bruce that I was trying to gather information on the old Alice Well Police Station. He said "Tell me about it. I've been working on it for years." Being a bit green in the historian world I gladly left Bruce to continue his research. Considering records (if any) of the era have disappeared, causing gaps in certain areas, the end result is a fine production on the short history of Alice Well.

I intend to extract segments from Bruce's work which concern the Police Station with it's most Prominent occupant. M.C. John Mackay. Again, many thanks to the author, Bruce Strong for allowing his work and photographs to be rearranged in The Citation. We appreciate the continued interest and support of all members of the National Trust.

Alice Well is located on Maryvale Station about 155 km south of Alice Springs. There appears to be no official documentation but Alice Creek is apparently named after Alice Todd, wife of Sir Charles Todd who was in charge of the construction of the Overland Telegraph Line (OTL) in 1870 when surveyor John Ross recorded the name. Construction teams of the OTL may have sunk Alice Well sometime after 1870.

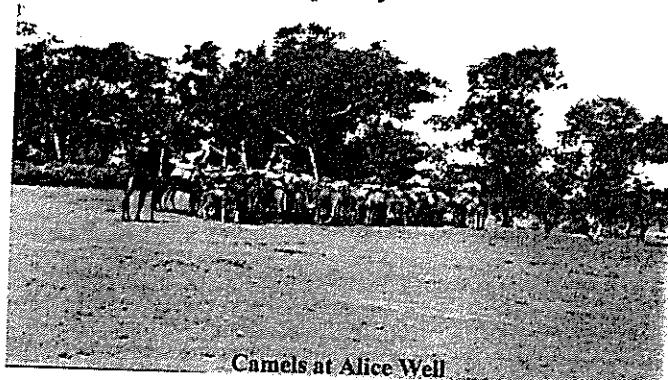


Alice Well

Explorer and surveyor Charles Winnecke made the first recording of its existence in 1880.

This is long after the OTL teams pulled out of the area. Another possibility is the leasees of Mount Burrell developed it to water their stock. It was

described as 47 feet (14.3 M) deep and timbered throughout. The water supply was 'splendid' to moderate and of good quality.



Camels at Alice Well

Gold was discovered in the Arltunga area in 1887 but prior to this, garnets (thought to be rubies) were located nearby in 1886. Around about this time, Frank Marsh set up a store at Alice Well.

In 1889, Charles Todd reported it would be an advantage to erect an intermediate station at Alice Well as it would facilitate inspection and repairs of the line.

This suggestion was ultimately rejected owing to the projected poor return from servicing the local stations and store.

On 1st January 1911 South Australia relinquished control of the Northern Territory to the Commonwealth Government. Construction of Alice Well Police Station commenced in late 1911 or early 1912. The builder was Gerhardt Andreas Johannsen who also built the Arltunga Police Station. The first occupant was Mounted Constable Charles E. Brooks who transferred from the Illamurta Police Station to Alice Well in May 1912. Mounted Constable John Mackay replaced him in October 1912.

When the Northern Territory came under Commonwealth control in 1911 police had to decide whether they would stay with the South Australian Police Force or transfer to the new Northern Territory Force. Originally, South Australia supplied the police to the Northern Territory on a 5-year transfer. Brooks elected to return to S.A. but Mackay chose to stay.

Mackay was apparently far from happy with the new station. He reported it to be in a state of disrepair and very untidy. There were signs of white ant infestation, harness in a poor state and some of the horses running loose in the bush



around Illamurta. He was able to report to Senior Constable Stott in Alice Springs in March 1913 that repairs to the police building had been carried out and he was satisfied it was in good repair.

In addition to his normal patrol duties, he was required to supply rations to aged and infirm Aborigines in the area and reported up to 50 in attendance being supplied flour, tea, sugar, blankets, tobacco, clothing etc. as well as medicines for colds and sore eyes.



On 1st January 1914, Mackay officially became a member of the NT Police Force. He either went on leave shortly afterwards or was on a temporary posting elsewhere because a Mounted Constable E. H. Kunoth was stationed at Alice Well. Kunoth found further problems with the building. Mr. Johannsen again carried out the repairs as well as constructing further buildings such as a kitchen, dining room, harness room, storeroom and verandah. These were reported as very satisfactory and according to specification.

Mackay was back at Alice Well by July 1914 and requested a cupboard to store his papers and correspondence in. His reason for making the application was due to a telephone being attached for general public use and the need for sending telegrams. Being on the main road resulted in a moderate amount of telegraphic work carried out in the office.

As the author points out, the picture of Jack Mackay so far points to a person who is continually fault finding. Other reports show him to be a generous and hospitable bushman who welcomed company. He was also reported to be in appearance, unlike a trained policeman as possible, (apparently, very laid-back) but behind that deceptive appearance, was a very active brain that could see through other men and a determination that ensured he accomplished his task. There are a number of writings commenting on the ability and generous nature of Jack Mackay who would often send travellers on their way with full tucker bags and produce from his own garden.

In 1917, a report indicates Mackay was married. The wife and daughter of Frederick Alfred Price, postmaster in Alice Springs passed through while travelling to join him. His daughter gave an account of she and her mother staying the night at Alice Well with McKay (Mackay) and his wife and that the two ladies became instant friends and spent the evening talking together.

Mackay closed Alice Well Police Station on 23rd October 1919 and took up duty at the Frew River Police Station in the Davenport Ranges east of Wycliffe Well. Not much is known of his time at Frew River where he commenced duty on 9th November 1919. In July 1921 he gave evidence to a Commonwealth Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works that the Wolfram Mines in the area were closing down. This apparently foreshadowed the end of his duties at Frew River.

Meanwhile, Mounted Constable B.W. Sherman reopened Alice Well and apparently, he had his family with him. On 16th September 1921 Mounted Constable D.A. Smyth briefly replaced Sherman until Mackay returned from Frew River on 25th September to once again take charge.

In 1923, it was decided repairs were needed on the well. A contractor, Christopher Meiers agreed to carry out the work. While he was working, the old timbers slipped making the repair work impossible. Fortunately, the Government Geologist L.K. Ward was in the area and he was able to confirm the timber below 28 feet (8.5m) had been displaced and there were large holes behind the lumber. He recommended a tender by Meiers to construct a new well at 283 pounds (\$566.00) be accepted. The work was carried out using salvageable equipment from the old well. In August 1926, it was decided the well needed deepening by another 10 feet (3m) and a sandbox fitted. The work was finally completed by February 1927. Further problems were incurred with the effect of watering stock and drought conditions at the time.

Mounted Constable H.F. Cameron replaced Mackay at Alice Well on 9th August 1926. Mackay was posted to Darwin and then Rankin River.

While on leave from Rankin River, Mackay was drowned at Port Pirie on 13th October 1928.

By 1930, Alice Well was no longer a lonely and desolated police camp.



Passenger trains were operating and motor cars were finding their way over the sand hills.

On 4th September, Cameron received a telegram confirming Alice Well Police Station was to be closed and police transferred to Charlotte Waters.

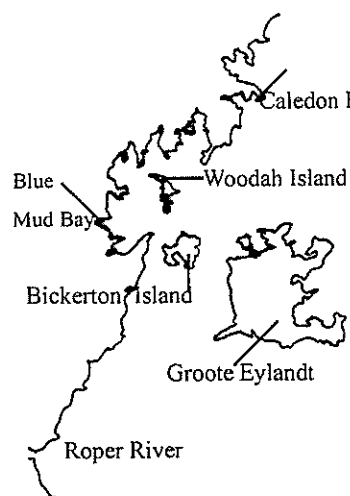
Alice Well was closed at 2 PM on 9th September 1930.

DEATH OF ALBERT STEWART MC COLL - WOODAH ISLAND, 1ST AUGUST, 1933

References:-

Documents held by the NT Police Historical Society, including newspaper articles of the day and reports by Mounted Constables Ted Morey, Vic Hall and Jack Mahony: "Patrol Indefinite" by Sidney Downer: "Dreamtime Justice" by Vic Hall; and "Man Tracks" by Ion L. Idriess.

On or about 17th September 1932, five Japanese trepang fishermen were allegedly murdered by Aborigines at Caledon Bay. Some months later, two white men, Traynor and Fagan who were travelling from Darwin to Thursday Island in an unsafe boat and with little preparation stopped to replenish their water and wood supplies at Caledon Bay.



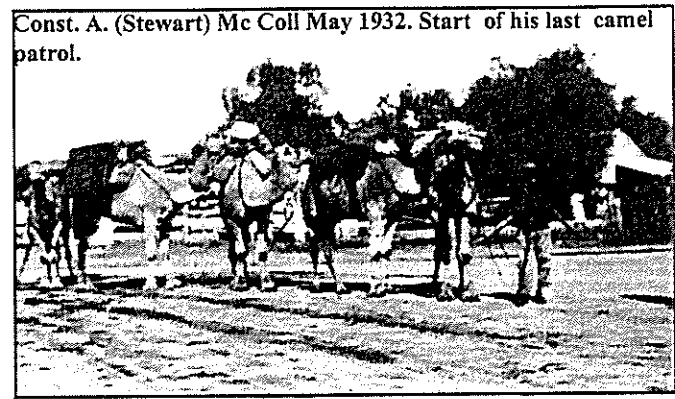
The same Aborigines who had murdered the Japanese fishermen appeared friendly and allowed Traynor and Fagan to stay for several days. Both men were killed during the night. The leader of the group of Aborigines was Tuckiar and he belonged to the Bulamumu tribe.

It was decided a police party should go out and apprehend the perpetrators but it was not known at this stage of the fate of Traynor and Fagan.

The party, under the control of Mounted Constable Ted Morey left Darwin on 2nd November 1932 aboard the Ketch 'Maree' to investigate the alleged murders.

The party returned to Darwin on 6th December and

therefore, no arrests had been made. At the end of the wet season, Mounted Constable Morey took charge of another police party that set out for Caledon Bay for Mataranka on 23rd June 1933. Other members of the party were Mounted Constables Vic Hall, Jack Mahony and six trackers, Big Pat, Reueb, Menikman, Locke, Dick and Roper Tommy. They had 11 packhorses and the 200-mile trip from Mataranka to Roper River took 10 days. Mounted Constable Albert Mc Coll who was stationed there at the time joined the patrol at Roper River.



The plan was for Morey, Mahony and trackers to travel overland to Blue Mud Bay. Hall and Mc Coll were to travel to Groote Eylandt aboard the mission boat and then meet up at Blue Mud Bay. The land party took longer than expected to arrive but so did Hall and Mc Coll.



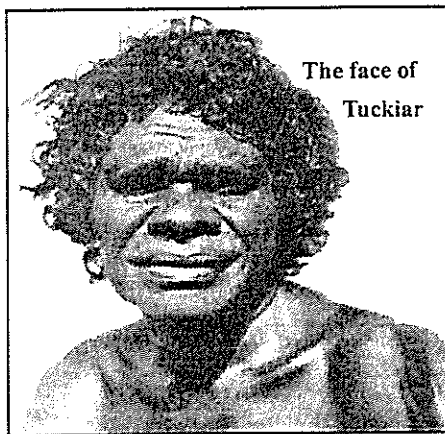
They rested for a few days then found the going very difficult with the jungle too dense to search and horses were soon done in.

They decided to travel to Woodah Island and seek help from Tuckiar and his tribe who they believed were still friendly and did not suspect them of the killings at this stage. A launch was acquired to transport the party across to Woodah Island.

On 1st August 1933, the party arrived on Woodah



Island in Blue Mud Bay. They left the launch guarded by two trackers, loaded up with supplies to last 3 days then proceeded with four trackers - Big Pat, Locke, Tommy and Dick to search the Island and make contact with Aboriginals. Woodah Island is about 23 miles long (37 Km) and 6 miles (9.6Km) broad at its widest part. They walked about 20 miles (32 Km) and arrived at a large Aboriginal camp in the open on the edge of a thick jungle towards the south end of the island. The camp was unoccupied but the fires were still warm which indicated the patrol was seen and the occupants had run into the jungle.



The face of
Tuckiar

The police still believed the 'Tuckiar Mob' to be on friendly terms and did not suspect them of the murders. While they were having a meal, the trackers informed them that a number of lubras were nearby digging yams. These women were surrounded, taken into custody and questioned through an interpreter in regard to the killing of the Japanese at Caledon Bay. Of the 5 lubras questioned, it transpired that 3 of them belonged to Tuckiar. One of the trackers reported a group of men approaching and Morey, Hall and Mahony along with two trackers entered the jungle leaving Mc Coll in charge of the lubras. There were still no suspicions in regard to this tribe's involvement in the murders. The patrol passed through the jungle onto the beach and saw a group of Aboriginals on a point and another group disembarking from a canoe.

When sighted, the Aboriginals ran along the beach while the police ran across the point to intercept them, a distance of about 150 yards but lost them in the jungle.

While returning to join Mc Coll, Mahoney became separated in the scrub.

Morey and Hall suddenly heard several shots and began running towards the sound. They then heard Mahony shouting out.

They arrived to find Mahony in a clearing, reloading his revolver and he explained natives with spears had attacked him. He had experienced a very near miss because a spear had passed close enough to his head to cut the pugaree of his hat. They then returned to where they had left McColl but he and the lubras were no longer in the camp.



Woodah Island, morning of Mc Coll's death.
Left to right : Vic Hall, Big Pat, Reuben, W.S. Mc Coll,
Meniken, Locke, Dick Roper, Tommy & Ted Morey

By now, it was possibly an understatement to assume the party realised they were not in friendly territory. They searched until midnight without success and camped until daylight. About an hour after daylight, they found the body of Mounted Constable Albert Stewart Mc Coll in thick scrub on the edge of the jungle. He had a gaping wound in his chest about 2 inches long and his body was lying in a large pool of blood.

A shovel nosed spear was lying on the ground a few paces away with bloodstains over the whole of the blade and for several inches up the shaft.

Mc Coll's revolver was lying along side his body. Two shots had been fired and the third had misfired. He was buried nearby and shortly afterwards, due to poor weather conditions, Hall returned the boat to Groote Eylandt and the land party returned to Roper River, arriving on the 19th August.

On the 19th January 1934, it was decided not to send another police party to the area as it was felt the missionaries may be able to convince the suspects to agree to travel to Darwin for trial. The proved to be the case.

On the 3rd August 1934, Tuckiar went to trial in the Darwin Supreme Court for the murder of Constable Mc Coll. Two days earlier, the Aboriginals Natchelma, Mow and Narkaya were convicted



of the murder of the Japanese and sentenced to 20 years imprisonment. Merara was acquitted for lack of evidence.

The case for the prosecution was poorly presented. The jury retired at 8:25 PM. At 9:55 PM they returned and the foreman requested further information.

They retired again at 10:10 PM and at 10:40 PM the jury returned and the foreman made the following statement:

"We have arrived at a decision and wish to bring in a verdict of guilty. I have been requested by the Jurymen to emphasis the fact that the jury is disgusted at the manner in which the Crown presented this case. There are many witnesses that could have been brought before the Court and have not been brought. The jury think there should be a protest lodged on that question."

Judge Wells replied: *"All I can say is that I thoroughly agree with you."*

Mounted Constable Mc Coll's exhumed body ready for return to Darwin. Tracker Locke, Clive Graham, Vic Hall & Ted Morey.



On the 6th August 1934, Tuckiar was brought up for sentence. Judge Wells sentenced him to death.

An appeal was lodged to the High Court of Australia, to quash the conviction of murder and sentence of death.

On the 8th November 1934, the Full High Court of Australia unanimously upheld the appeal, quashed the conviction and ordered Tuckiar to be released immediately. The Department of the Interior directed the administrator that Tuckiar be escorted as soon as possible to his home. He was placed in the Myilly Point Aboriginal Compound. On the 12th November 1934, Tuckiar absconded from the compound and was never heard of again. There is much speculation in this regard - hostile tribes, Big Pat the tracker, or Police themselves. That may be another story.

Mc Coll's remains were exhumed from Woodah Island and transferred to Darwin where he was laid to rest with a large number of towns people and police paying their last respects. Mounted Constable Sheridan, Graham, Mohony and Hall were pall bearers.



Mc Coll's funeral.

Albert Stewart Mc Coll was 30 years of age, no record of being married and had recently transferred to Roper River after serving in the 'Centre' for a time.

An article appeared in *Volume 1, No. 1, April, 1977 page 3 of "The Citation"* where a brief article describes his involvement with building the Police Camp at Brooks' Soak.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Keith E Mooney-Smith

Re Mounted Constable John Shirley

Two articles recently indicated that the first officer to die whilst on duty in the Northern Territory was John Shirley.

This seemed to conflict with my own date base which indicated that John Shirley should be the sixth provided a liberal interpretation of the word 'on duty' is preserved.

No 1. William Davis

William Davis was sworn in as Constable of the N.T. Police at Port Darwin on 19th September 1872 and subsequently attached to the Water Police.

On the 16th November 1872 he was drowned whilst *"taken away by an Alligator whilst bathing"* His Death Certificate (opposite) indicates that he was about 40 years old at the time.

No. 2. Henry Wilkinson

Henry was born in Canada on 29th June 1847 and arrived in Palmerston aboard the "SS Gothernburg" on 1st November 1873. He had signed up for



NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA

Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages Ordinance

10771

COPY OF ENTRY No.	7121	IN REGISTER OF DEATHS
1. Full name	William Davies	
2. Usual place of abode	Palmerston	
3. Date and place of Birth	1822 30 Nov Port Darwin	
4. Age and sex	59 ABORIGINAL	
5. Length of Residence in Australia		
6. Usual place of abode		
7. Usual place of abode		
8. Date of Death	29th Jan 1876	
9. Cause of Death	TAKEN AWAY BY AN ALLIGATOR WHILE BATHING	
10. Name of the Medical Officer	Paul Forstsch	
11. Name of the Registrar	J. Stokes Millner	
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sighted so a cause of death cannot be given.

No. 4. James Marshall Miller

James was born in South Australia on 28th November 1849 and joined the South Australian Police on 19th December 1872.

He arrived in Port Darwin on 1st November 1873 and served at both Palmerston and Pine Creek as a Mounted Trooper (Third Class) before returning south in 1877.

He returned to the Northern Territory in November 1880 and was posted to Pine Creek where he died of sunstroke one month later on 10th December.

No. 5. Alexander Grey / Grey Wood.

Alexander was born in Camden, Middlesex, England on 26th November 1854. He joined the South Australian Police and transferred to the Northern Territory in August 1880.

He was stationed at Yam Creek where on 9th June 1881 he apparently died of sickness and diarrhoea. N.T. Death Certificate 53/99/1 has not been sighted to establish actual cause of death.

Whether or not your readers agree with me that John Shirley should be relegated to sixth place is really inconsequential. The important part is that the five officers listed above died whilst serving members of the N.T. Police and deserve a place in its history.

Letter from Bob Darken

The September issue of the Citation was of much interest to me and congratulations to those responsible for that publication. I had the privilege in the thirties and forties to serve with the very fine men mentioned in different articles in the Newsletter, namely:- Vic Hall (Military Medal in World War 1) Tom Turner (when in town needed another Constable to look after him - Rum!!), Ted Heathcote (when on patrol could contact his wife by mental telepathy - so he said), Jock Reid (became Chief of Police in the ACT), Jack Stokes (a real gentleman, known to us as 'The Pope'), Alf Stretton (The boss and called Borraloola Alf), Jack Mahony (when Mc Coll was killed at Caledon Bay Jack was speared through the purargee of his hat), Gordon stott (a great friend and first class policeman).

Others who were in the force at that particular period whom I remember were:- Jim Edwards, Jack Kennett, Jack Lovegrove, Tom White, Ray

service with the N.T. Police Force at Adelaide on 11th August 1873.

He was stationed at both Palmeston and Southport and on 21st January 1876 was listed as Trooper (Third class.)

He was associated with the murder investigation of Walker at Blue Mud Bay and was part of the party who travelled to Roper river to investigate the murder of Telegraph Station Master Charles H Johnston.

He drowned in the Darwin River at Southport on 10th February 1876. One source indicates that he was in a state temporary insanity at the time.

However, no record has been found of any Death Certificate issued wither in the Northern Territory or South Australia.

No. 3 Charles Weston Lees.

Charles was born in Dublin, Ireland on 15th January 1847 and arrived at Port Darwin aboard the "Taratua" on 3rd March 1874. He had signed up for service with the N.t. Police Force at Adelaide on 16th January 1874.

He resigned in April the same year "for family reasons which necessitated he go to England."

On 28th July 1879, the Government Resident advised South Australia that Charles had applied to join the N.T. Police Force and that it was to engage him as a Mounted Constable (second class).

He was stationed at Pine Creek for a short while but died at Palmerson Hospital on 8th November 1880. N.T. Death Certificate 138/87/1 has not been



Bridgland, Frank Sheridan, Hughie Deviny, Lou Hook, Bill Mc Kinnon, George Murray, Reg Mc Caffery, Ron Hughes, Joe Mutch, Peter Bruin, Ron Brown, Tas Fitzer, Alf Johnson, Doug Johnson, Denny Smythe, Lionel Mc Farlane and Clive Graham.

Unfortunately all those good men I have mentioned above have now passed on.

At the time I joined the Force there were about thirty men all told in the Territory which was then the Commonwealth Police.

There are now only remaining five members of that period namely:- Peter Riley, Sid Bowie, Bernie Rochford, Dave Mofflin and myself.

During those early years the wives of the outback policeman played a very important part in the control of their particular Police area. Unfortunately quite a few have passed away but some are still with us:- Kathleen Morey, Lucy Bowie, Fran Riley, Eileen Fitzer, Vicki Darken, Eileen Stott, Kath Mahony, Edna Stokes, Joyce Johnson, Nancy Mannion, Billie Mc Caffery, Win Mc Farlane and Janie Graham.

These women, to my knowledge have never been recognised until recently or been thanked for the great work they did.

That is until the present Commissioner of Police, Brian Bates has done so on quite a few occasions.

Letter from Ed Ferrier

Pine Creek is a nice little town on the Stuart Highway about 150 miles south of Darwin. When I was a policeman there in 1953, there were about 300 people, roughly equal numbers of whites and blacks.

The late Jimmy Ah Toy's store was the supply centre for the area. (Jimmy had been born in Pine Creek) with the pub and railway station the other places of commerce.

The Pine Creek Hotel (Mine Host was a very nice chap named Bruce Coles) consisted of two Sidney Williams huts side by side and had it's own diesel-electric power plant and cool room. The buildings still stand. There was a one-teacher school, while the PMG depot, Post Office (now the Museum) and the Police Station made up the Government part of the town.

Mining was in full swing in those days and Saturday were busy times at the pub.

One group of four men regularly drank together and three of them consistently picked on the fourth, a pleasant easy going bloke who took all the rubbishing his mates handed out, apparently without resentment. I sometimes wondered how he could put up with it-very few men could or would take it like that.

Then, early on Saturday afternoon I dropped into the pub to see how things were going and there was mayhem a plenty. The victim of all the harassing was in action against his three mates, one of whom was already reposing on the bar floor. Over the other two, he was building up a handy point's lead.

In a situation like that, where no serious harm is being done it is not always prudent for a lone policeman to intervene immediately, as he is likely to have the fight the 'survivors' himself and it is better to let them run out of steam a bit first. Besides, the audience feels cheated if the show is stopped too soon. Accordingly, I looked on for a minute or two and then declared it over.

None of the participants, (including the chap who had risen from the floor) seemed to resent my intrusion and I shepherded them all outside to ask what on earth it was all about.

The 'victim' complained that one of his mates had called him a rotten driver and the others had agreed. He was not prepared to accept that accolade, despite the dreadful things they had been saying to him over previous months; and to which he had made no objection. His driving was his one area of sensitivity. He considered himself to be a very good driver and would not tolerate being told otherwise.

I settled them all down and after a couple more drinks they left to return to their mining camp. They still drank together on Saturdays but there were no further insults of any kind; the sparkle had gone out of it all. I made some enquiries and learned that the chap had regularly fought eight-rounders at Leichhardt Stadium in Sydney. A tough place to learn that trade. Obviously, he had known he could beat his mates any time he wanted to and accordingly never bothered, until the day they called him a rotten driver!

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND
HAPPY NEW YEAR
FROM THE EDITOR AND STAFF.