

## **The Aboriginal miners and prospectors of Cape York Peninsula 1870 to ca.1950s**

By GALIINA ELLWOOD  
*James Cook University*

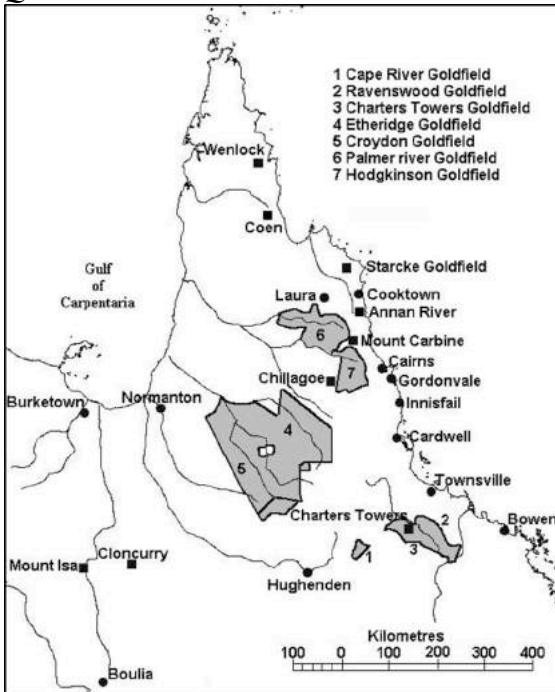
It is a common assumption among many Australian historians that frontier violence between Aboriginal peoples and colonisers was the norm. This, it is believed, was inevitably followed by resistance to invasion being subsequently crushed over varying periods of time and the remnant of traditional owners being then assimilated into the lowest rung of the European culture and economy, while being deprived of their civil rights by ‘protection’ Acts.<sup>1</sup> This is true of some times and places, but is not true everywhere, and particularly not on Queensland’s Cape York Peninsula where Aboriginal people were miners and prospectors of importance to the Queensland economy. So important were they that officials were apt to wink at their independence from government controls, an attitude helped by the isolation of the area from the control of officials in the bigger towns and Brisbane. Aboriginal prospectors and miners in the area found goldfields and tinfields, mined for tin, gold and wolfram either by themselves, for an employer, or with a white ‘mate’. Further, they owned or worked mills and prospecting drill plants, and undertook ancillary activities such as hauling supplies. What is more, their families have continued mining up to the present day. Despite their considerable role in the industry, they have been written out of the mining history of Cape York, a trend which has unfortunately continued up to today. This article, along with earlier work<sup>2</sup> is intended to redress the omission.

Cape York has always been considered a remote region. The death of Edmund Kennedy and many of his men on their expedition up the Cape in 1848 made the region seem unattractive to Europeans. The Lands District of Cook, which covers the Cape, was opened to white settlement in 1864, but only the southernmost area, in and around the later Etheridge Goldfield, immediately attracted pastoralists. In any case, by 1866 the grazing industry was in retreat in the north, beaten back by a trade depression lowering the price of wool, along with the realisation that the tropics were not suitable for sheep. By 1871, this forced the pastoralists to turn to cattle, but the nearest big markets for beef were the southern gold rush colonies of Victoria and New South Wales. Some of the northern graziers, however, had in mind the idea of attracting a market to their region by the same method: gold rushes. The Hann family of Maryvale and Bluff Downs on the Burdekin River, well south of Cape York, were the chief among them.

The Hanns developed a policy of prospecting for goldfields, with the advantages of having one of Australia’s few trained geologists, Richard Daintree, as a partner and the expertise of their Aboriginal stockman, Kulajerry. Kulajerry had already found the Cape River goldfield and he and Daintree explored the rough country around the head of the Gilbert River, finding gold in 1867 and sparking a rush to what became the

Gilbert Goldfield.<sup>3</sup> Prospectors moving north and west made a number of finds on what is now the Etheridge Goldfield. However, the biggest find was to be on Cape York.

**Figure 1:** Locations of major gold and mineral Fields in Tropical North Queensland.



Source: Based on Galiina Ellwood, 'Aboriginal prospectors and miners of tropical Queensland, from pre-contact times to ca. 1950', *Journal of Australasian Mining History*, vol. 12, 2014 p. 42.

William Hann was commissioned by the Queensland government to explore the Cape, which at that point had been traversed by very few Europeans: the luckless Kennedy expedition, and the Jardine brothers who had taken cattle to the new Government outpost at Somerset near the tip of the Cape in 1864. After leaving Maryvale in 1872, the Hann expedition evaluated the pastoral and mineral potential of the southern Cape more thoroughly. The group travelled from the most northerly pastoral station, Ezra Firth's Fossilbrook outstation of Mt Surprise Station, over the Rocky Tate and Sandy Tate Rivers. The main party went on to the Walsh River while Hann and Kulajerry explored what would become the Chillagoe district, noting indications of copper. The party went up to the Mitchell River and travelled along it,

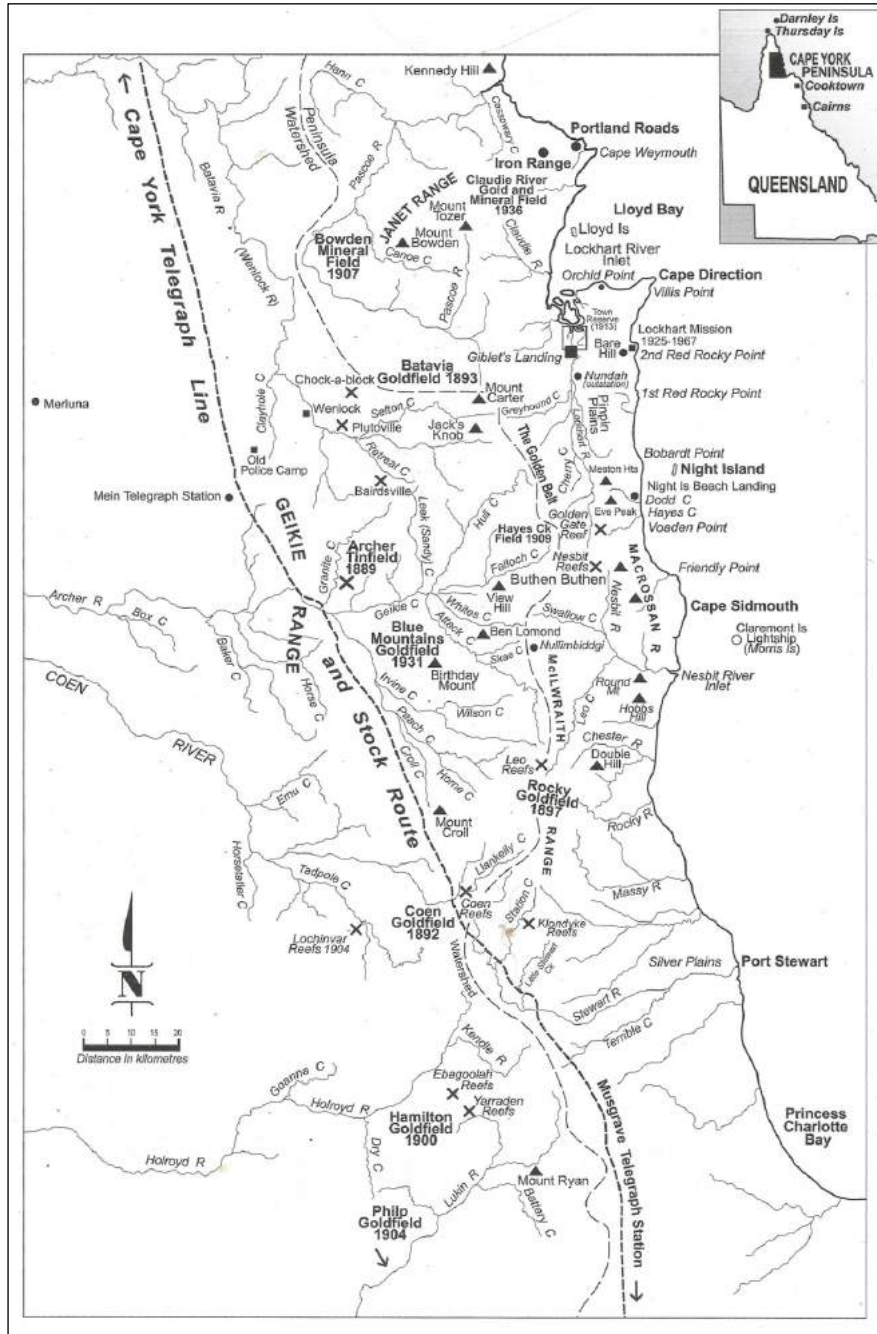
then up to the Palmer River to the later site of Maytown. They found gold on the Palmer River, then moved further north to the Stewart River near what later became Port Stewart.<sup>4</sup> From there they went east over the Annan River into the rainforests on the Bloomfield River, and thence to the later site of Laura and back to Fossilbrook Outstation. In the course of their travels they crossed nine future goldfields and mineral fields.<sup>5</sup>

Kulajerry's presence on the expedition was important because of his expertise in Aboriginal trade. Aboriginal society acknowledged particular expertise in people, and a trade expert like Kulajerry knew the trade routes for over 400km around Hann's Maryvale Station, and the languages of the groups bordering those trade routes. Kulajerry guided the expedition north until he encountered the only two languages he did not know: Lamalama, spoken around the Stewart River and along the Normanby River, and Guguu Yimidhirr, the language of Cape Bedford and Cooktown.<sup>6</sup>

The expedition's findings meant the colonial frontier pushed into Cape York when in 1873 prospector James Venture Mulligan confirmed that the Hann Expedition's gold finds on the Palmer were payable,<sup>7</sup> resulting in the subsequent alluvial goldrush becoming Queensland's biggest. At its peak, it attracted 6,000 Europeans and up to 18,000 Chinese.<sup>8</sup> The Palmer rush has acquired a reputation for fierce Aboriginal

resistance, but In fact, of the two clans whose territory covers the goldfield, one – the Kuku Mini - were relatively peaceful, given the lack of references to clashes between themselves and the invaders. The other, the Gugu Yalanji, did strongly defend their territory, for the good reason that it had some of the best ochre mines in the north,<sup>9</sup> and this being a valuable trade good, was worth defending. It also indicates that in common with the rest of Australia, Aboriginal people were already miners before white colonisation.

**Figure 2:** Cape York historical goldfields with the most Aboriginal prospectors and miners.



The Palmer rush was very rich, producing around 1 million ounces of good quality gold in the first five years, but the origin of the gold proved elusive, as the gold-bearing reefs found were small and not very rich, and it is possible that the gold was weathered from the sedimentary rocks of the Conglomerate Range.<sup>10</sup> Though the richest alluvial deposits were soon worked out, continued weathering and wet season turnover of alluvial soils produced reliable rewards for fossickers for years afterwards, including the Aboriginal stockmen and their families on the surrounding stations. In the summer wet season, when the stations did not need their labour, they set up camps on the high banks of the Palmer River and washed gold, a practice that has lasted up until the present day. Four of these camps were noted in Jillian Comber's report on the heritage sites of the Palmer Goldfield Reserve. One is close to and a little downstream of Maytown and is also near to the Aboriginal ochre mines. The next is near Edwardstown, a short distance from Maytown, a small settlement named for one of Hann's stockmen who became a butcher there. Another at Gregory Beach, used by the Mitchell family, is the most substantial, containing the remains of stone and corrugated iron huts and a broken mussel shell with a hole bored through it, meant for jewellery. Another is at the junction of the Palmer River and Gregory Gully, known as China Camp, belonging to two families of Aboriginal-Chinese ancestry, those of Willie Ah Bue, aka Willy Tung Sing, and Paddy Ah Bue. It has three Aboriginal graves, a refining oven for gold smelting, and a forge. Bulla Burton's grave at the junction of Thompsons and Nelsons Creek is evidence of the existence of another Aboriginal mining family.<sup>11</sup>

**Figure 3:** *Tommy Mitchell's Camp, Gregory Beach, Palmer River.*



Source: Jillian Comber, 'Palmer Goldfield Heritage Study (Stage 2)', report to the Queensland Government, 1991, pp. 278, 280.

The Aboriginal people of the Palmer were also employed on two of the attempts to mine the deep sand-beds of the Palmer River on a large scale, the Peninsula Gold Mining Syndicate and the Palmer River dredge. The Peninsula Gold Mining Syndicate was a sluicing operation and Aboriginal people worked on the lease and carried equipment for it between 1901 and 1913.<sup>12</sup>

A Cairns company, the Palmer River Gold Co. N.L., dredged the lower Palmer downstream of Palmerville between 1930 and 1935. The company was not very successful but won 3,584 ozs of gold. The dredge was swamped by floods in 1932 and it is uncertain when operations finally ended. Aboriginal men and women built rock dams and filled sandbags for temporary dams for the dredge.<sup>13</sup>

**Figure 4:** *Aboriginal women working on a temporary dam for the Peninsula Gold Mining Syndicate.*



Source: *Queensland Government Mining Journal*, December 1911, p. 618.

The Palmer rush sparked more exploration and prospecting on Cape York in the 1870s and 1880s. In 1876 J.V. Mulligan was reputed to have discovered the Hodgkinson goldfield, a hard rock mining field south of the Palmer. In fact, when he arrived on the Hodgkinson River there were already parties of miners, including an Aboriginal woman who they said had discovered the gold. Her name has not been recorded for posterity, and the miners ‘cleared out’ when they realised that Mulligan would start a rush.<sup>14</sup> However, the name of

John Green, known as ‘Darky’ Green, is well recorded. Green was an early arrival on the field, a miner at Mount Trial who was described as a ‘hatter’ but who also was remembered as owning the Union ore crushing mill. The mill had closed down by c.1888 possibly because of Green’s ill health, as the Government medical officer in that year mentioned him as receiving medical treatment.<sup>15</sup>

At the same time that the Hodgkinson rush was beginning, Gugu Yalanji and Gugu Nyungkul<sup>16</sup> prospector Romeo was finding tin at Mt Romeo on the Annan River in company with another former Maryvale stockman, Bill Baird. The Annan River tinfield was proclaimed ten years later, in 1886. A small town named for Romeo sprang up near his find, with a store, hotel, and a post office which finally closed in 1930.<sup>17</sup>

While goldmining on the Palmer, Romeo had teamed up with Baird, one of a number of Aboriginal prospector/miners who played a particularly important role in the remote Cape York Peninsula, where wolfram, gold and tin were worked. Alluvial tin, wolfram and gold were mined in the same way, and the milling techniques for gold and tin ore were quite similar. The only difference was that chemical methods such as mercury and (after 1894) cyanide were used to win the gold from crushed ore, while tin ore had the heavier tin separated from crushed rock as much as possible (‘concentrated’) before the bagged tin ‘concentrate’ was sent to a tin smelter for further treatment. It was therefore very easy for miners to move between these two types of mining, and this occurred for some of the Cape’s Aboriginal miners such as Romeo. Small scale mining for these minerals also required little in the way of equipment and capital, making it suited to Aborigines who were in the early stages of integration with the European economy, or suffering the poverty of post-contact assimilation. Alluvial mining using pans, sluice-boxes or cradles fell most obviously into this category, but hard rock miners could crush ore by hand in ‘dolly pots’, using the principle of the mortar and pestle. In the 1890s, Aboriginal women on the Starcke field – ‘as many as thirty sitting

in a circle and pounding the stone' - crushed their ore in discarded iron mercury containers.<sup>18</sup>

**Figure 5:** *Figure 5: Carting Sluicing Pipes from Lara to Palmerville.*



Source: 'Aboriginal carters for the Peninsula Gold Mining Syndicate', *Queensland Government Mining Journal*, December 1911, p. 620.

The Kuku Nyungkul and Gugu Yalanji of the Annan and Bloomfield Rivers took to tin mining very early, and Chris Anderson describes the way these people worked with European tin miners from the late 1870s. The Aboriginal people attached themselves to favoured European miners and worked for and with them, treating the Europeans like the 'boss' elders of their own society. The white miners would take the tin into town to sell, and bring back supplies.<sup>19</sup> This way, the Aborigines were able to fit into the white economy while being protected from rapacious or

murderous whites, and also dodge the increasing government interference in Aboriginal lives that continued after the introduction of the 1897 Protection Act.

In several cases the Aborigines went prospecting and mining on their own account. They owned and ran hand-drilling plants, and by this time they had adopted European names, making them harder for officialdom to identify as Aborigines, unless these officials were visiting the fields, which occurred only rarely. The very remote mining fields of the Cape were administered from Cooktown and later Cairns, and seldom received a visit from the Mining Warden, unlike the bigger fields further south.<sup>20</sup> Among other things, the Act regulated employment of Aborigines, requiring permits from the local Protector of Aborigines (usually a policeman) with the wages paid into Government accounts and doled out as needed. White miners employed Aborigines in various tasks from the beginning. In the 1890s Thomas Pascoe felt the need to deter possible attacks by Aborigines in the Pascoe River area with a gun, yet employed these same people to help him build a stamp battery.<sup>21</sup> In later years some of the white miners conformed to the system under the Act, obtaining 12-month employment permits for their Aboriginal mine workers. Joe Fisher of Black Cat Amalgamated on the Wenlock (formerly Batavia) goldfield stated that

As labour was extremely tight we employed Aborigines for surface work through the Protector of Aborigines, the Coen Police sergeant. Wages were paid to the Protector and the employer was responsible for food, tobacco and housing. Money was advanced to the Aborigines by the Protector at the annual Coen Race meetings... and at Christmas for clothing and spending money.<sup>22</sup>

However, they found that once officials were aware of the Aborigines' existence, the police sometimes came and took them away.

The drilling plants used by the Aboriginal drillers were hand boring plants which consisted of a tripod of tall bush timbers with a pulley wheel at the top, over which ran a rope. A drill head was attached to one end of the rope, and the drill would be raised by hand and dropped. This was painfully slow in hard rock, but evidence seems to indicate that it was being used to evaluate shallow alluvial deposits for tin dredging; one photograph showing such a drill rig is shown in Figure 6.

**Figure 6:** *Boring for tin on the Romeo Company and Carson Dredging Claims.*



Source: *Queensland Government Mining Journal*, 15 January 1908.

popular position on these leases was that of monitor operator! This is a skilled job requiring considerable technical expertise, and was the highest paid position on the lease.<sup>24</sup>

Norman volunteered in 1915 for the Great War but was refused permission to join up, as he was deemed to be a miner, an essential service. He was eventually accepted in 1917, his brother Charlie already having enlisted in 1916. Norman went into the 15<sup>th</sup> Battalion and then the Australian Veterinary Hospital before returning to Australia in 1919. During World War II he joined the Voluntary Defence Corps.<sup>25</sup> Charlie went into the 11th Light Horse and took part in the charge at Beersheba. He returned in 1919.<sup>26</sup> The Bairds were well respected on the Cape and Norman often acted

Because tin mining on the Cape occurred in such isolated areas far from white surveillance, families could develop tin mining traditions over generations. One such was the family of Robert Baird, brother of Romeo's mate Bill Baird. Robert married Dinah, a Gugu Yalanji woman, and their sons Norman and Charlie Baird founded a large Aboriginal mining family. Norman was born in 1888 at the tin mining town of China Camp on the Bloomfield River, and ran the family's tin mining leases and property 'Connemara' up to his father's death in 1907.<sup>23</sup> His Aboriginal workforce used hydraulic sluicing among other methods. This involved diverting water from a stream into pipes which ended at a 'monitor', a giant nozzle. This imparted enough force to allow the operator to wash down large banks of alluvial soil into a race, where obstacles placed across the flow of the water caught the heavier tin while allowing the lighter dirt to be washed away. It appears that the most

as a spokesman for Aboriginal people who were being treated unjustly; this included himself and his own children, who were removed from the Bloomfield district to Yarrabah over his protests.<sup>27</sup>

**Figure 7:** *Norman Baird in uniform.*



Source: Australian War Memorial  
<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C2082423>

Tin was not the only mineral found by Aboriginal prospectors north of the Palmer. In October 1892, Romeo and mates Bill Baird and Jack Duval found the Batavia goldfield on Retreat Creek, a tributary of the Batavia (later Wenlock) River. About 150 men rushed to a camp called Bairdsville. As it was a small field of some 40 acres the surface gold quickly petered out and most of the miners soon left, but Baird and Romeo remained there until in 1894. Baird was killed by local Kanju people.<sup>28</sup> Descriptions of what happened after the death of Baird are confusing but one story emerged which mentioned in passing that Romeo immediately asked to join the Native Police<sup>29</sup> to hunt his mate's murderer.<sup>30</sup> He remained as an Aboriginal tracker based at Maytown, as many troopers did after the Native Mounted Police was disbanded. He died on 29 January 1915 in the Cooktown Hospital.<sup>31</sup> Romeo was described as an 'intelligent Aboriginal, who can pan off a dish like an

expert, and also knows how to use his fists to some advantage'.<sup>32</sup>

Coen goldfield, the biggest of the Cape fields after the Palmer, was discovered in 1876 and a rush ensued in 1878, with a small but permanent township established around 1880. The field was not officially proclaimed until 1892, thus more evidence for the scant attention paid to the Cape by officials.<sup>33</sup> The town became a jumping-off point for more prospecting parties on the Cape.

One of these prospectors was William Davis, better known as Pluto. He was born in Charters Towers in 1869, and was often before the magistrate for fighting, vagrancy and drunkenness; for example, doing two months in Townsville gaol in 1889 for assaulting a constable. On that occasion he promised he would 'get work in the bush'<sup>34</sup> but he was jailed for two years in Brisbane for burglary in 1890-92, and after his release obviously went north, as he was next heard of in the company of Basalt Earl, who was travelling from Laura to Coen in 1895.<sup>35</sup> He then left Earl's party to try his luck on the Coen goldfield. Robert Logan Jack wrote that Pluto was from Rockhampton, and this story was repeated many times.<sup>36</sup> This may be one explanation of why Pluto was able to remain and work in the north without too much interference by officials under the Queensland Protection Act, as the northern Protectors of Aborigines



would not have considered him as coming under their jurisdiction. The other possible reason is that the 1897 Act only dealt with Aborigines who were employed or on a reserve. Quite possibly the officials did not know how to deal with a self-employed Aborigine, especially as Aborigines of part white descent were accepted as being independent.

Pluto went on to become a very successful miner-entrepreneur, later described as ‘the black gold-tracker’.<sup>37</sup> He began in 1905 by discovering the rich alluvial deposit at Chock-a-Block at Iguana Mountain, on the Batavia (Wenlock) goldfield, then in 1910, he found the phenomenally rich Pluto’s Leader no. 1. This was an alluvial deep lead, the discovery causing a rush which revived the goldfield and founded the town of Plutoville.<sup>38</sup> Logan Jack notes that by the end of 1911, 2,500 ounces had been found in this area, mainly as small nuggets, with the largest being 74 ounces (222 grams), and for the next five years Pluto prospected the area from Iguana Mountain to Bairdsville. From 1910 to 1916 he made more discoveries, including Pluto’s Lead No. 2 in 1911; Pluto’s Gully in 1912; The Tunnel in 1914; and a number of locations along Sefton Creek, as well as a new find on Retreat Creek on the old Bairdsville diggings. The superintendent of the Mein telegraph station helped him legalise his claims. Pluto held the PC (Prospecting claim) for the field, a type of claim containing more land than usual and given to the discoverer of a new lode. There was a small rush to the ground, which gave good returns of very pure gold, including 213 ounces in nuggets found by Pluto and his presumed non-indigenous partner, Anderson.<sup>39</sup>

There are conflicting reports in the records as to whether Pluto made his claims alone or with Anderson. He may have used a ‘dummy’ European to ensure he had no trouble with officials, given that through Regulation (s.31), the notorious Protection Act, Aborigines controlled under the Act were denied normal civil rights as citizens. There is no other record of an Anderson with a miner’s right on the field, or even a first name. Alternatively, it may have been the Queensland Government’s way of dealing with a problem they had not come across before. Initial reports of Pluto’s finds did not mention Anderson, but after June 1911 they do. It is possible that to make his case fit in with the Protection Act, they created a fictitious white partner to ‘employ’ Pluto so he could be given a permit and a bank account in trust like any other Aborigine working under the Act.<sup>40</sup> It would also explain why he had a trust account; the primary sources that mention Anderson never say that Pluto was working for Anderson, but that they were partners. However, because he actually was working for himself, he was able to access his own trust account, unlike all other Aborigines under permit, who could only have their money doled out to them upon application to the local Protector. It would also explain the amount in that account by 1912, as at that time Aboriginal workers were paid 5 shillings per month and this matches what Pluto had in his trust account then for two years, that is, £12-10s.


In 1912 the Chief Protector of Aborigines noted that Pluto was out prospecting, and ‘had £195 to his credit in the Bank of New South Wales, Cooktown, as well as the £12-10s in the Government Savings Bank account.’<sup>41</sup> He also owned ‘five or six horses, with riding and pack saddles’. The following year the Protector visited and found Pluto again out prospecting:

The Aboriginal Pluto, who claimed to have been the discoverer of the Batavia River goldfield, let his own claim on tribute, but apparently all the gold in the claim had been taken out and now the ground has been abandoned. After this Pluto went away on a prospecting expedition. He had his banking account so that he was prepared to expend some time on his research.<sup>42</sup>

He reported that Pluto had let his claim out on tribute to a group of new chums from the United Kingdom, when it was already ‘played out’, as he later abandoned it as worked out. This was a tactic usually employed by gold mining companies when the richer gold had been taken out: lease the mine to parties of small miners who could mine more cheaply because of lower costs, with the winnings being shared with the mine-owner as royalties. It is rare that individual miners would use the same ploy to extend the life of a mine. This type of cheating of the unwary did occur on goldfields, and Pluto certainly had a touch of the larrikin.<sup>43</sup>

Figure 8: Pluto’s prison record.

No.	54	Name	Wm David Pluto
Date when Portrait was taken.		11.4.1882	1882
Native place	Luccaland	Where and when tried	Pr. House No. 3
Year of birth	1867	Offence	Burglary
Arrived in } Ship		Sentence	2 Yrs No
Colony. } Year		Remarks	
Trade or occupation } previous to conviction	Laborer		
Religion	Proby.		
Education, degree of	R.N.		
Height	5 feet 6 inches.		
Weight } On committal	111		
in lbs. } On discharge			
Colour of hair	BR.		
Colour of eyes	BR.		
Marks or special features	Substituted tattoo on arm.		



Source: Queensland State Archives, Digital Image ID 17429  
<http://www.archivessearch.qld.gov.au/Image/DigitalImageDetails.aspx?ImageId=17429>, accessed 3 August 2015.

The same report by the Protector noted that two of Pluto’s horses had died, but he still had £29.15.9 in his Bank of New South Wales and Government Savings Bank accounts ‘in the charge of the Protector’. It is notable that these balances were declining and one suspects that Pluto was no longer putting his earnings into bank accounts under the gaze of officialdom. Pluto also employed other Aboriginal miners; a report in 1913

located him and his party working six miles north of Plutoville, mining fine gold. He also re-discovered Down's Gully, first found in the 1890s, but its location was afterwards lost. It had the reputation of being an 'Eldorado' so other miners followed.<sup>44</sup> There is evidence which suggests that Pluto was marking out claims on the Hodgkinson field near Thornborough in 1914, and he may have been dodging the Protector, or the new-chums he had duped. He is recorded as working with 'a small tribe of blacks' in 1915, probably the family of his wife Kitty.<sup>45</sup> Pluto died in 1916 in Coen hospital.<sup>46</sup>

By the 1930s, Pluto's success was being written out of history. 'JK' wrote that

It is no fiction that rich alluvial gold was found in Batavia River by accident. An old Rockhampton blackboy who was with me found the rich patch at Plutoville (Pluto was the boy's name). He struck it driving a tent peg. I sent him out with the best bushman prospector in these parts (Charlie Weiss). Because old Pluto cost me a quid for opium pills every time he went near Coen.<sup>47</sup>

This is libel. Pluto was never with anyone with the initials JK, had plenty of money of his own, and in fact never worked with European miners. The Coen hospital records do not indicate an addiction to opium, and supply of opium to Aborigines was an offence under the 1897 Protection Act. It is just one example of the way the role of Aboriginal prospector miners was denied and belittled from the 1930s.

**Figure 9:** *Kitty Pluto standing outside her house at Plutoville, ca. 1915.*



Source: *Queensland Government Mining Journal*, December 1930, p. 496.

indicate that their value to the mining industry was recognised and the removal order was reversed.

Pluto's wife Altengen, known as Kitty, became even more famous than Pluto. She was born in 1877 and evidence indicates she was a local Batavia River woman.<sup>48</sup> In 1916 she found the richest gold on the Batavia field at Lower Camp, which became known as Wenlock township.<sup>49</sup> She is now famous as the only Aboriginal woman to find a goldfield, which is not strictly true, as indicated by the unknown woman who is credited with finding the Hodgkinson.<sup>50</sup> However, she was certainly well known on the Cape as a highly successful prospector/miner, but this did not save her from the negative attentions of officials. The records state that in 1921, she, her son Young Pluto, her then husband Jacky Flat<sup>51</sup>, and fellow Aboriginal miner Friday Wilson were removed from the Batavia field under the Act. They were recorded as arriving at Laura but never reached Yarrabah.<sup>52</sup> They did not escape, as soon they appear back on the Batavia, discovering more gold. This can only

In 1931 there was another attempt to remove her. She was recorded by Raphael Cilento, the Director of Queensland Public Health, as being aged 55 and suffering from ‘old gleet’, a discharge resulting from an old gonorrhoeal infection. This may have given the government an excuse to ‘remove’ her as she was included in the infamous round-up of Batavia goldfield Aborigines in 1932 by Constable Theis. This was witnessed by anthropologist Donald Thompson, who described men, women and children – including a heavily pregnant woman – being forced to walk all day in the December heat with no water. According to official records at the time, Kitty was supposed to be removed to Yarrabah Mission near Cairns for the second time, but some kind of intervention obviously took place yet again as she never arrived there.<sup>53</sup> She next appears in the records in 1939, being granted a full pension by the Queensland government as the discoverer of major gold finds, and was finally allowed to settle in a place of her own choosing. She chose Lockhart mission, where some of her own family would have ended up, and she died there in 1946, aged 69.<sup>54</sup>

Because she was an Aboriginal woman and therefore excited even more curiosity than male Aboriginal prospectors and miners, Kitty has received scholarly attention in the last 10 years.<sup>55</sup> Before that, Kitty suffered the same process as Pluto, of being written out of history. In 1949 Bill Beatty wrote in the *Cairns Post*:

The famous Batavia River goldfield of North Queensland was discovered by a newly-wed aboriginal couple in 1911. They were on their honeymoon walkabout when they picked up a lump of gold on the banks of the Batavia River. When they showed it to some white people the news of the discovery brought hundreds of miners to the district. A township sprang up and was named Plutoville in honour of the husband, who was called Pluto. It was not long afterwards that he died. His lubra was so distressed at his death that she went off along wandering in the wilds. By an extraordinary coincidence the native woman stumbled on another rich outcrop of gold a few miles down the river. The new find caused a sensation and a large amount of gold was discovered there: but the discoverer would have nothing to do with the white man’s gold which she firmly believed was an evil omen. To-day [sic] the widow lives on a mission station near Cairns, dreaming of her man Pluto.<sup>56</sup>

The only dream involved was the fantasy of the writer.

Far from having nothing to do with gold, Kitty was an entrepreneur like her husband, and she employed other Aborigines in mining, many of them from her own family. One of the men was Bill Fox, who took up gold mining leases on his own account and also worked with white miners., and continued to mine on the Cape in the 1950s. Another was Friday Wilson, once a well known mining and carting entrepreneur, who has been largely forgotten.

As a baby of around 10 months, Frederick ‘Friday’ Wilson was found in 1881 by Charlie Wilson, one of the early diggers on the Coen goldfield, on the track from Laura to Coen. There is no record of why he was there, but was probably the survivor of a massacre of Aborigines. Charlie Wilson adopted the boy and he grew up as the foster-brother of Johnny Wilson. There were Aboriginal miners in Coen, so there were precedents to follow for Friday in his later mining career. A photograph of the Great

Northern mine headframe in 1903 on pay day shows Aboriginal people, including a number of children [Fig. 10].<sup>57</sup> Aborigines were also reported washing gold near Coen and in the Blue Mountains north of the town, with substantial returns.<sup>58</sup>

**Figure 10:** *Pay day at the Great Northern Mine, Coen.*



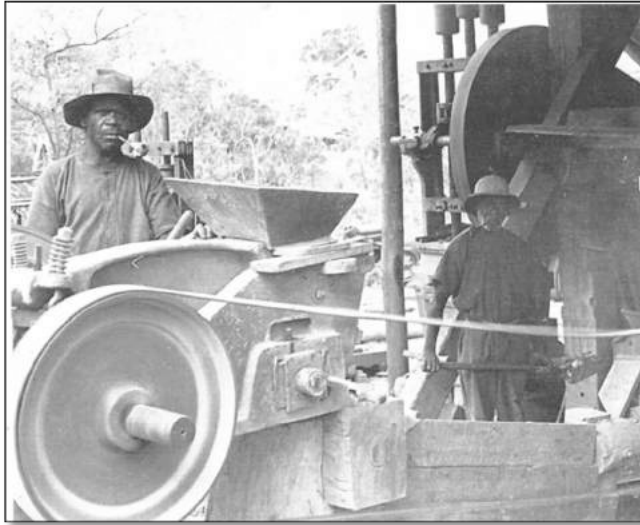
Source: *Queensland Government Mining Journal*, January 1908, p.8

Friday and Johnny went into business as teamsters, using horse teams and drays. They also went part-time mining with Pluto and were recorded as mining at Coen in 1896 and Ebagoolah in 1901. Johnny was accidentally killed in 1906 and Friday went mining full-time.<sup>59</sup> In the 1910s and 1920s he was sluicing for gold at Goanna Mountain, which is the Chock-a-block field.<sup>60</sup> He sometimes worked with white people, and in 1936 he took up a claim with Herbert James Thompson and John Louis Basani, while in the early 1930s he was working for Duke Delaney at the New Years Gift mine on the Batavia, at Lower Camp.<sup>61</sup> In the later 1930s up to World War II, he was mining in the Blue Mountains near Coen, and in a 1936 newspaper report the Mining Warden records him as having a miner's right and a lode mining claim there. The newspaper also said that 'he works on his own in a most methodological fashion' and that he

was constructing a blacksmith's shop at the mine, presumably to sharpen rock drills and make repairs.<sup>62</sup> In 1942 he was applying for the Jubilee claim, still in the Blue Mountains,<sup>63</sup> and as late as 1963 his mine was still marked on a map of the Blue Mountains area. Like many other miners, he often was late with his lease payments.<sup>64</sup> Friday died in 1950 at the Coen Hotel, where he was living.<sup>65</sup>

The 1936 newspaper report noted other Aboriginal alluvial miners in the area at the time, but did not realise that the Blue Mountains battery near Coen and the Ada Stewart battery at Coen were also worked by Aborigines, as revealed by a photograph showing Aboriginal men working the Blue Mountains battery.<sup>66</sup> The Blue Mountains field had originally been discovered by an Aboriginal man, who was never named, but described in 1931 as 'semi-wild'.<sup>67</sup> The high cost of white labour meant that Aboriginal workers were employed in ancillary work, such as being involved in dewatering mine shafts on the Blue Mountains field, and in carrying rails to the Iron Range gold mines, while the women were employed to cook and clean for white miners.<sup>68</sup>

**Figure 11:** *Blue Mountains battery, c.1930s. The man on the left may be Friday Wilson.*



Source: John Hay, *Cape York Gold: The new chum*, Hesperian Press, Victoria Park, WA, 2014, p. 89.

Another Aboriginal miner associated with Wilson and the Plutos was Billy Fox.<sup>69</sup> He is first noted as working with Pluto, and later with Kitty and Friday while he also worked for Delaney at one point on the New Year's Gift mine. By 1939 he had teamed up with C.J. Allen in the Black and White Mine and in 1953 he features in an article on the Wenlock goldfield as a 'coloured goldminer'.<sup>70</sup>

By the 1930s the Protectors of Aborigines had found a way of dealing with independent Aboriginal miners and prospectors: the Protectors

became trustees for the Aborigines. A prospector named Rupert took out a lease in the Blue Mountains on his gold discovery, also called 'Rupert', and the local Protector became his trustee, even though this was not covered by the Protection Act.<sup>71</sup> In 1939 a white miner, Lesnic, took over 'Lesnic's Show' from its Aboriginal prospector with the approval of the Protector.<sup>72</sup> Clearly, controls over Aboriginal mining had tightened since Pluto's day.

Mining declined on the Cape in the late 1930s and early 1940s as miners left for the war, though Aboriginal prospectors found a new field near Lockhart River Mission. The Mission actually took out three leases on the reefs, and the local Protector warned white miners away from the discovery.<sup>73</sup> On the Wenlock field, the biggest mine – the Black Cat, owned by the Fisher family – was still employing Aboriginal workers into the 1940s. The mine was shut down by the Army during 1942 and the white families evacuated as part of a 'scorched earth' policy which was planned for all of coastal Australia in case of Japanese invasion, but only put into effect in far northern Australia. Fisher returned after the war but the mine did not operate much longer. In 1952 he shut it down and moved to Mary Kathleen uranium mine.<sup>74</sup>

Most of the Cape's Aboriginal miners and prospectors worked on gold and tin, but some branched out into other minerals. In 1891, Asmus and the Webb brothers found the antimony deposits of Coco Creek on the Starcke goldfield.<sup>75</sup> Between 1904 and 1906 the Keating brothers, 'fullblood' Aborigines according to the Chief Protector, mined scheelite (a mineral containing tungsten) at Keating's Claim (claim no. 8357) in the Burton Range near Mt Carbine. They sank a shaft and dug 'several' open cuts, and produced an estimated 3-4 tons of 'wolfram'.<sup>76</sup> The claim was taken up again later as the 'True Blue'. Jim Keating died in 1910 in Cairns, and Paddy Keating died in Mareeba in 1926.<sup>77</sup>

Their mine set a precedent for Aboriginal involvement in wolfram mining in the Mt Carbine area. An *Australian Women's Weekly* article in 1952 noted that Aboriginal miners dug for 'floaters' (loose nuggets) of wolfram on unclaimed ground around the base of the mountain, where the main mines were situated. It said:

One miner, shopping in Cairns for a toy to take back to his young daughter, was nonplussed for something suitable. He finally hit on a small stone-napping hammer. The little girl was delighted with it. It was the only toy she really wanted. She now cracks wolfram with a 'grown-up' hammer.<sup>78</sup>

Torres Strait Islanders also mined wolfram, on Moa Island (also known as Banks Island) with production beginning in 1938 and peaking between 1941 and 1944. The lode which was worked by cuttings, produced between 11 and 14 tons, but by 1951 it was down to 1.3 tons.<sup>79</sup> Apart from Aboriginal families fossicking for gold and tin 'scratching', independent Aboriginal mining – in the sense of mining on a larger scale, with claims and leases – ended by the early 1950s.

**Figure 12:** *Ada Stewart battery under construction.*



Source: *Oueenslander*, 21 November 1898.

mining entrepreneurs. They had far more agency than is generally recognised under the current paradigm of race relations in Queensland, and their histories indicate that the 1897 Protection Act did not govern Aboriginal lives as strictly as has been usually portrayed in the literature. This appears to be because these very productive individuals were protected to some degree against the provisions of the Act, particularly removals from the mining fields. It also indicates that the official records of removals are not accurate, which has implications for native title applications, as those individuals have retained their association with the district and therefore their descendant's rights under Native Title legislation. However, their lives have since been distorted in historical memory and their importance to the mining industry of the Cape has been written out of history. Some academic attention is now rescuing them from this obscurity<sup>80</sup> but until this study, very few have been identified.

### **Conclusion**

From pre-contact times, Aborigines have mined for valuable minerals on Cape York. Post contact these people became important in a variety of roles: as prospectors, miners, teamsters, battery owners and workers, drillers and ancillary workers such as teamsters and 'surface' workers, that is, working at the surface of hard rock mines. Some worked for white miners and companies, but others became independent miners and

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> For north Queensland, see Henry Reynolds, *Other Side of the Frontier*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1982; Henry Reynolds, *Frontier*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1987; Henry Reynolds, *Dispossession*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1989; Noel Loos, *Invasion and Resistance*, ANU Press, Canberra, 1981; Timothy Bottoms, *Conspiracy of Silence*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 2013; Timothy Bottoms, *Djabugay Country*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1999; Timothy Bottoms, *A History of Cairns*, Bottoms, Cairns, 2002.

<sup>2</sup> Galiina Ellwood, 'Aboriginal prospectors and miners of tropical Queensland, from pre-contact times to ca.1950', *Journal of Australasian Mining History*, vol. 12, 2014, pp. 59-80; Galiina Ellwood, 'Aboriginal Miners of Cape York Peninsula 1890 to ca. 1950', in Proceedings of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference of the Australasian Mining History Association, Traralgon (Victoria), 25-29 September 2017, p. 44, <http://www.mininghistory.asn.au/conference-abstracts-and-proceedings/> accessed 14 June 2018.

<sup>3</sup> 'Aborigine's Gold: Some Queensland Finds', *Nambour Chronicle and North Coast Advertiser*, 1 June 1934; Geoff Hansen, 'A Mining History of the Cape River Gold Field (1867-1870)', unpublished manuscript, n.d.; B. Toll, TOL/2/ Letter headed 'Phoenix Steam Joinery Works', 25 May 1922, p. 1, TOL/2/, James Cook University (JCU) Archives; *ibid.*, Toll, Letter to editor, *Northern Miner*, 19 June 1922, p. 3, JCU Archives; The Hann family diaries, JCU Archives.

<sup>4</sup> The Stewart River was named for one of the party who later worked on Valley of Lagoons Station and then took up Rookwood Station on the Walsh, on the Chillagoe field. Edwards, a Maryvale stockman, opened the first butcher's shop in Maytown on the Palmer. W. Hann, 'Copy of the Diary of the Northern Expedition under the Leadership of Mr. William Hann', *Queensland Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly (QV&P)*, 1873; *Queenslander*, 19 December 1874, p. 6; W. Hann, 'Trip to Palmer River with Fat Cattle, 1874', in Hann Family Diaries, JCU Archives; Mulligan's reminiscences, *Queenslander*, 10 September 1904, p. 8.

<sup>5</sup> H. Clarke, 'William Hann Diary 1872: Expedition of Exploration to the Endeavour River, Cape York Peninsula, 1872: Reconstruction from His Diary and Two Notebooks', 1982, in Hann Family Papers, JCU Archives.

<sup>6</sup> Clarke, 'William Hann Diary, 1872'; Hann Diaries, 1866-1888; Huxley family pers comm. 2015 (Kulajerry's descendants).

<sup>7</sup> James V. Mulligan, *Guide to the Palmer River and Normanby Gold Fields North Queensland*, Gordon and Gotch, Sydney, 1875.

<sup>8</sup> Noreen Kirkman, 'Chinese Miners on the Palmer', *Journal of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland*, vol. 13, no. 2, 1987, p. 49.

<sup>9</sup> Pers comm. Granny Tommy Mitchell, family stories 1977.

<sup>10</sup> K.G. Lucas and F. de Keyser, *Explanatory Notes on the Cooktown Geological Sheet*, 1 : 250,000; Geological Series, Sheet SD/55-13, Bureau of Mineral Resources, Geology and Geophysics, 1965, p. 22.

<sup>11</sup> Jillian Comber, 'Palmer Goldfield Heritage Study (Stage 2)', report to the Queensland Government, 1991: Site 51 (China Camp), pp. 265-68; Site 52 (part of site 51), p. 269; Site 53 (part of site 51), p. 270; Site 54 (Aboriginal camp No. 1), p. 271; Site 55 (Aboriginal camp No. 2), pp. 272-3; Site 56 (Aboriginal cemetery), pp. 274-76; Site 57 (Gregory Beach), pp. 277-280; Site 58 (Aboriginal graves at Gregory Gully), pp. 281-84; Site 59 (Bulla Burton's grave), p. 285.

<sup>12</sup> *Queensland Government Mining Journal (QGMJ)*, December 1911, pp. 618-20.

<sup>13</sup> 'Palmer River Dredge', citation for Queensland Heritage Register site no. 601871, <https://environment.ehp.qld.gov.au/heritage-register/detail/?id=601871>, accessed 15 June 2018.

<sup>14</sup> 'Aborigine's Gold: Some Queensland Finds', *Nambour Chronicle and North Coast Advertiser*, 1 June 1934.

<sup>15</sup> 'Description of Union Camp', in Reports and Diary of the Government Medical and Health Officer, Thornborough Police District 1888-1889, m.s. in possession of Jan Wegner, JCU; *Brisbane Courier*, 21 May 1881, p. 3; *Cairns Post*, 25 October 1939, p. 11; Hugh Borland, 'Stars of Gold', *Cairns Post*, 8 June 1951, p. 7. There is no indication in Borland's article or other sources that the John Green of Mt Trial on 'Darkie' Green's Reef is Aboriginal, and this fact is only mentioned in the Medical Officer's report. It is implied in the name 'Blackfellow's (Green's) reefs' in the *Queenslander*, 4 October 1879, p. 435.

<sup>16</sup> The Gugu Nyungkul people are in the territory north of the Bloomfield River to the Annan River.

<sup>17</sup> C. Anderson, 'Aborigines and Tin Mining in North Queensland: A Case Study in the Anthropology of Contact History', *Mankind*, vol. 13, no. 6, 1983, pp. 473- 98.

<sup>18</sup> *Northern Herald*, 14 December 1935, p. 31.

<sup>19</sup> Anderson, 'Aborigines and Tin Mining'.

<sup>20</sup> See the *QGMJ* notes for the Cape York fields in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century – in most of the Journals, there are no reports from the Warden.

<sup>21</sup> *Johnstone River Advocate*, 12 June 1934, p. 1.



- <sup>22</sup> Joe Fisher, *Battlers in the Bush: the Batavia Goldfield of Cape York*, WJ and EE Fisher, Darwin, 1998, p. 92.
- <sup>23</sup> Kathleen Denigan, *Norman Baird: a spark within*, Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation, Cairns, 2006, pp. 7, 15, 25-26
- <sup>24</sup> Anderson, 'Aborigines and Tin Mining', p. 485.
- <sup>25</sup> Private Norman Baird, Embarkation Roll 31 October 1917, Australian War Memorial <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/R1873376> ; 'The Two Comrades', notes on a photograph <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C2082423>, accessed 14 June 2018.
- <sup>26</sup> Embarkation Roll 22 July 1916, Australian War Memorial, <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/R2054107>, accessed 14 June 2018.
- <sup>27</sup> Denigan, *Norman Baird*, p. 44.
- <sup>28</sup> Later histories claim the death was 1896, for example, Glenville Pike, *Queen of the North*, Pinevale Publications, Mareeba, 1979, p. 118. However, the first reference in the newspapers was 1894 and the Queensland death certificate confirms this earlier date: see Queensland Death Certificate 1894/C3585 William Thompson Baird, certificate obtained from Queensland Births, Deaths and Marriages.
- <sup>29</sup> N. Francis, 'Told on the Bloomfield. About Bill Baird, No.6', *Cairns Post*, 2 February 1940.
- <sup>30</sup> *Cairns Post*, 25 August 1938, p. 8.
- <sup>31</sup> Chief Protector of Aborigines, Register of Aboriginal Deaths 1910 – 1928, A/58973, Queensland State Archives (QSA).
- <sup>32</sup> *Western Star and Roma Advertiser*, 3 December 1892, p. 4.
- <sup>33</sup> R.L. Jack, *Northmost Australia*, Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co. Ltd., London, 1921, vol. 2, Jack, p. 462; James Dick (1910), *The mineral resources of the Cook District: a retrospect*, Author, Port Douglas, p. 20.
- <sup>34</sup> 'Report of court proceedings', *Northern Miner*, 20 September 1889, p. 2; *ibid.*, 29 July 1889, p. 2; *ibid.*, 21 January 1890, p.3; *ibid.*, 21 March 1890, p. 3.
- <sup>35</sup> Basalt Earl, 'The Coen Goldfield,' *The Queenslander*, 21 November 1896, p. 984
- <sup>36</sup> Jack, *Northmost Australia*, p. 734. Tom Gleeson says in 1938 that Pluto talked knowledgeably about Ayr, and Woodstock and Lochinvar Stations, yet repeats the story of his being from Rockhampton. *Townsville Daily Bulletin*, 16 June 1938, p. 9. His death record has him named as William Davis, and Effie Pike notes that Pluto was not from Rockhampton. Mrs Pike bases this on a claim that she had once met Pluto, and refers to some Burdekin graziers who knew him as a stockman and roustabout there. She also claims that Pluto possessed detailed knowledge of the people, places and workings of the stations of the lower Burdekin River. Bill Bowyang, 'On the Track', *Townsville Daily Bulletin*, 25 March 1938.
- <sup>37</sup> 'Mining Notes', *Worker*, 13 February 1913.
- <sup>38</sup> A deep lead is a buried alluvial deposit.
- <sup>39</sup> Official Wardens' Reports always mention Anderson, for example, see *QGMJ*, June 1911, pp. 281, 307. Robert Logan Jack also refers to 'Anderson' in Jack, *Northmost Australia*, p. 734; and James Dick, 'Mining in the peninsula: The Batavia Rush', *Cairns Post*, 23 August 1911, pp. 6, 7.
- <sup>40</sup> *Aboriginals Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act*, 1901, s.12(1-2), s.13; Als, [pseudonym] 'Protectors report 1912', *Cairns Post*, 1 September 1913.
- <sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>42</sup> 'Protector of Aborigines', *Rockhampton Morning Bulletin*, 26 September 1914.
- <sup>43</sup> Pluto was doing what all the miners, big and small, were doing at the time: find a dupe and swindle him, then disappear until things cooled down. Pluto's larrikin nature is brought out in the writings of Basalt Earl in his series of weekly articles titled 'Along Cape York Peninsula', published by Basalt Earl in the *Queenslander* between September 1896 and January 1897.
- <sup>44</sup> *Northern Miner*, 6 February 1913, p. 3.
- <sup>45</sup> *Brisbane Courier*, 31 December 1923, p. 6.
- <sup>46</sup> Coen Hospital records, Centre for Indigenous Family History Studies (CIFHS), Accessed November 2014. Note: these records have since been removed from this site.
- <sup>47</sup> *Queenslander*, Wednesday 19 January 1938, p. 2.
- <sup>48</sup> Altengen is a Kandju (Wenlock) name. Raphael Cilento, Section 1: Survey of Aborigines in north Queensland, 1932-1937, Series A/1928, Item 4/5, National Archives of Australia.
- <sup>49</sup> Hugh Borland, 'Batavia Becomes Wenlock', *Cairns Post*, 31 July 1940, p. 8.
- <sup>50</sup> *Nambour Chronicle and North Coast Advertiser*, 1 June 1934; Diane Menghetti, 'Kitty Pluto' Australian Prospectors and Miners Hall of Fame (2008), <http://www.republicofmining.com/2008/06/05/australian-prospectors-and-miners-hall-of-fame-historical-profile-kitty-pluto-unknown-%E2%80%93-unknown/>, accessed 16 March 2013.

- <sup>51</sup> Kitty's death certificate notes that she was 'tribally married' to Jacky Flat. Queensland death certificate 1946/C4858.
- <sup>52</sup> Removals for 1921, HOM/B58, QSA, notes '10 Aborigines at Batavia & Tin Cks to Y [Yarrabah], viz., Mary Ann, Rose Ann, Kitty Pluto, Lizzy, H/C child, Nancy, Mick (female), Annie, Little Annie, Maggie Williamson, Sambo H/C, Paddy (female), Emily, Sullivan, Jackie Fat [sic], Charlie, Dick, Bob Whelan, Friday Wilson'. The Protector of Aborigines, Cooktown Aboriginal Occurrence Book 10, 5.1915 - 22.5.1942, POA13/1, Extracts 29, 6.1922, QSA, notes, 'Arrived en route to Yarrabah Peter Constant, Jacky Flat, Sullivan, Kitty and Pluto or Kitty Pluto, Lizzie, Sambo (H/C child). Left for Yarrabah'.
- <sup>53</sup> Kitty removed to Palm Island, Removals register, A/64785:227, QSA.
- <sup>54</sup> Queensland, death certificate 1946/C4858.
- <sup>55</sup> James Cook University academic Dr Diane Menghetti wrote an article on her for the Australian Prospectors and Miners Hall of Fame in 2008. <http://www.republicofmining.com/2008/06/05/australian-prospectors-and-miners-hall-of-fame-historical-profile-kitty-pluto-unknown-%E2%80%93-unknown/>, accessed 16 March 2013.
- <sup>56</sup> Bill Beatty, 'Australoddities', *Cairns Post*, Monday 6 June 1949, p. 4.
- <sup>57</sup> See also list of residents of Coen by Stan Boyd, 'Reminiscences of Coen', Cairns Historical Society Document G01884.
- <sup>58</sup> *Townsville Daily Bulletin*, 23 April 1936, p. 3.
- <sup>59</sup> 'Aboriginal with a History', *Townsville Daily Bulletin*, 13 October 1950.
- <sup>60</sup> C.C. Morton, 'Batavia River Gold Diggings, Cape York Peninsula', *QGMJ*, December 1930, p. 496.
- <sup>61</sup> *Adelaide News*, 6 November 1942, p. 6; *Cairns Post*, 3 December 1936, p. 11. He was doing well enough to gamble £50 on a Melbourne Cup sweep.
- <sup>62</sup> *Townsville Daily Bulletin*, 23 April 1936, p. 3. For a more official report see, G. Beck, 'Cape York Peninsula Fields: Report of Recent Mining Activities', *QGMJ*, November 1935, p. 378; 'Report on Inspection of Peninsula Division', *QGMJ*, September 1936, p. 324, which stated that 'Friday Wilson is gouging stone out of a mullocky leader 3 to 4 in. on his prospecting area, Blue Metal. It strikes 250 degrees and underlies 50 degrees east. A parcel of 2 tons 18cwt treated at Coen returned him 3oz 17dwt of gold. In 1936 Friday's returns were 36oz for 12 tons crushed'. These were common returns for a small miner.
- <sup>63</sup> *Townsville Daily Bulletin*, 28 January 1942, p. 8.
- <sup>64</sup> For example see 'Warden's Court', *Cairns Post*, 27 June 1939, p. 11.
- <sup>65</sup> Queensland death certificate 1950/C4490.
- <sup>66</sup> John Hay, *Cape York Gold: The new chum*, Hesperian Press, Victoria Park, WA, 2014, p. 89. The Ada Stewart battery was later moved to Ebagoolah.
- <sup>67</sup> *Cairns Post*, 4 March 1933, p. 16; *Northern Miner*, 31 January 1933, p. 2.
- <sup>68</sup> *Townsville Daily Bulletin*, 23 April 1936, p. 3; *Cairns Post*, 31 August 1951, p. 7.
- <sup>69</sup> 'Warden's Monthly Report on the Cooktown mineral field', *Cairns Post*, 15 May 1915, p. 3.
- <sup>70</sup> 'Mining Warden's Court', *Cairns Post*, 27 June 1939, p. 11; *Australia's Women's Weekly*, January 1953.
- <sup>71</sup> *Cairns Post*, 19 November 1936, p. 12.
- <sup>72</sup> *Courier Mail*, 3 August 1939, p. 8.
- <sup>73</sup> *Sydney Sun*, 4 April 1939, p. 1.
- <sup>74</sup> Fisher, *Battlers in the Bush*, p.110.
- <sup>75</sup> 'Aborigine's Gold: Some Queensland Finds'.
- <sup>76</sup> L.C. Ball, *Wolfram Mines of Mt Carbine, North Queensland*, Geological Survey of Queensland Publication, No. 251, 1915, pp. 76-94. Ores of tungsten were popularly known as 'wolfram', though wolframite is a separate tungsten-bearing mineral to scheelite.
- <sup>77</sup> Chief Protector of Aborigines, Register of Aboriginal Deaths 1910-1928, A/58973, QSA.
- <sup>78</sup> Annabel Ross, "Everyone digs 'black gold' at Carbine: even toddlers earn money from Wolfram to buy toys", *Australian Women's Weekly*, Wednesday 15 October 1952, p. 15.
- <sup>79</sup> S.R.I. Shepherd, 'Wolfram on Banks Island', *QGMJ*, August 1944, pp. 209-214; O. Anderson, 'Banks Island Wolfram Deposits', *QGMJ*, August 1944, pp. 215-17.
- <sup>80</sup> Ellwood, 'Aboriginal prospectors and miners of tropical Queensland'; Diane Menghetti, 'Australian Prospectors and Miners Hall of Fame Historical Profile – Kitty Pluto', Miners and Prospectors Hall of Fame <http://www.republicofmining.com/2008/06/05/australian-prospectors-and-miners-hall-of-fame-historical-profile-kitty-pluto-unknown-%E2%80%93-unknown/>, accessed 11 April 2012.