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Marriage and Relationships

Lynnette Lounsbury

One aspect of life on Mona Mona that was of profound importance to government, missionaries and residents was the regulation of relationships. From the Queensland Government's perspective, interracial marriage was undesirable for most of the period in which Mona Mona operated. A decade before its establishment, Archibald Meston, the Southern Protector of Aboriginals in Queensland, had warned that marriage of white men to Aboriginal women "requires emphatic discouragement. Such marriages are degrading and mean and also increase the half-castes, a result to be earnestly avoided."[1] A more positive view was expressed by Walter Roth. As the first Northern Protector of Aboriginals, he was appalled by the sexual exploitation and widespread abuse of Indigenous women and girls, mostly by unprincipled white men. Roth defended interracial marriage in some cases but only where the white man was of good character.[2] In his opinion, white men were more likely to misuse Indigenous women than to marry them and treat them well.

The stance against interracial marriage and mixed-race children hardened under the influence of Chief Protector Bleakley and tropical medicine expert Raphael Cilento. Both formed the view that interracial marriage between white and Aboriginal people was dangerous and would lead to the extinction of the Aboriginal race. In the 1930s, a new policy that was unique to Queensland required Aboriginal women to marry within their own race. Using language that was common at the time, Bleakley reported that the policy shift was designed to result in "the mating of half-castes, removed to the reserves, with other half-castes or aboriginals and the birth

of half-caste children." This outcome was supposedly more desirable than "the promiscuous intercourse of... crossbreeds with the lower elements of the white population."[3] Bleakley viewed mixed-race children as a "social blot" and "evil," explaining that:

> The marriage between whites and aboriginals, unfortunately not discouraged in earlier years, has been absolutely prohibited, and every encouragement given to these women to marry amongst their own race.[4]

When Mona Mona was established, Richard Howard's tenure as Queensland's Chief Protector (1906–14) was coming to an end. Howard too was preoccupied with matters of race and argued that, where possible, half-caste children should be brought up as white children outside of church missions. The extent to which Howard's opinions impacted Mona Mona is questionable. Pre-empting assimilation policies adopted by other states he argued, "What should be aimed at is the opportunity of getting half castes to marry either half-castes or Europeans."[5] While promoted elsewhere, this policy of "breeding out the colour" seems to have been ignored by Mona Mona's missionaries. Furthermore, children who were obviously of European descent were usually kept on the mission, where they were placed in dormitories.

For much of the time that it operated, Mona Mona was overseen by Chief Protector Bleakley, a figure who loomed large over mission life. Generally speaking, Bleakley opposed assimilation and the marriage of half-caste girls to white men. For him, there were dangers of blood transmission, "throw-back," fewer wives for young Aboriginal men of the "same breed" and little likelihood of successful marriages because "none but the lowest type of white man will be willing to marry a half-caste girl."[6] Ultimately, these views reinforced the segregation of Aboriginal residents at Mona Mona, especially in the early decades when few worked outside the mission and those who did were expected to marry within their own race. An unexpected benefit was that mixed-race children were not commonly sent away, nor were mixed-race women.

Understanding Culture

Referring to the situation in Western Australia, Tomlinson has argued that most Christian missionaries were familiar with traditional Aboriginal laws regarding marriage, knew that disobedience could result in severe punishment, including death, and tended to be offended by traditional marriage practices and restrictions.[7] Available historical records provide little insight into whether Mona Mona's missionaries knew much about traditional customs and beliefs regulating marriage and relationships in

the Cairns region. Clearly, Djabugay, Yidinji, Gunggandji and other less-known language groups shared patterns of social structure and tradition that regulated, to some extent, who could marry whom. On at least some occasions tradition was ignored. Although he was born in 1952 and still a child during Mona Mona Mission's later years, Glenn (Mario) Williams recalled that "sometimes people were forced into marriage with their own relatives, the old people knew it was wrong but they couldn't stop it."[8]

Importantly, Djabugay, Bulway, Yirrgayndji, Yidinji, Ngadjon-ji and Gunggandji people were classified into one of two moieties, grounded in the Bulerru, or "Story Waters." Where culture remained strong, individuals could only marry a person from an opposite moiety.[9] The basis for this rule was embedded in culture. In the Cairns region, two argumentative brothers, Damarri and Guyula, were said to have been responsible for creating the landscape and establishing law, which in turn guided selection of marriage partners. Damarri represented the *Gurabana* moiety (*bana* means water or wet, and thus wet season). Guyala represented the *Guraminya* moiety, the dry season (*minya* means meat). Prior to colonisation, stories of their conflict explained the occurrence of the wet and dry seasons, the existence of plant and animal food, and guided choice of marriage partners from specific groups and areas.[10]

Christian Weddings and Marriage

What is clear from church records is that at Mona Mona, traditional law and ceremonies were devalued in favour of Christian ceremonies overseen by the superintendent, who favoured, encouraged and gave permission for marriage conducted according to British tradition. A significant wedding was held at Mona Mona on Sunday, August 19, 1922, for Charlie and Lucy Levers. It was the first where "both the contracting parties were Christians" and "both had taken the privilege of choosing the other for a companion."[11] According to Ruth Borgas, it was the usual custom for the Aboriginal families to promise a baby girl to a much older man, a contract that she would have to fulfil when she reached early girlhood, around the age of eight or nine years, no matter her feelings about the union. According to Borgas' account of the wedding, Charlie and Lucy went against this tradition, choosing each other out of deep mutual affection. They were united in wedlock in a European-style wedding by Branford, who officiated, with colporteur Lionel Smith acting as best man and Heather Totenhofer, the daughter of a missionary couple, as flower girl.[12] The newlyweds were said to be much loved among their peers in the dormitories where they had been brought up, and this affection was expressed through the decoration of the large dining hall for the reception and wedding breakfast.[13]

Other residents also seem to have played an active role in choosing their marriage partner, though to what extent this reflected or compromised traditional law is unknown. On one occasion in the very early years, while writing letters in his office, Branford was interrupted by a diminutive woman named Nellie, who made what he believed to be an important but amusing request. "Me want husband this long time," she explained, leading Branford to recommend a lean, tall individual named Spider. Asking Nellie if she might consider the man as a suitable partner, he was surprised when she immediately consented by saying, "Me like him, Spider—big fellow." The term was not associated with a man's physical stature, but with his esteem in the community, and Nellie clearly believed Spider to be a man of some value. After discussing the prospect with Spider, the man agreed that he also saw Nellie as a "big fellow" and would be happy to marry her.[14]

Various accounts reveal a tendency for mission staff to encourage love matches and to conduct wedding ceremonies along Western lines in suits and elegant dresses. Alma May Franks remembers that her mother, Jessie, also married for love:

> I would say Mum's happiest memory was when she married my dad. Mum was very beautiful with her long black hair and she had a lot of admirers but she chose to marry my dad, she wasn't forced to do so.[15]

At times, the ethos of the mission came into conflict with local customs surrounding relationships, family and marriage. Staff tried to discourage the usual practice of arranged marriages, particularly the union of girls as young as eight with middle-aged men.[16] Instead, they involved themselves in match-making, encouraging the local Aboriginal women, particularly those who were following the Christian faith, to marry men who were Christian. At times, this caused significant turmoil, especially when it conflicted with the expectations of family. However, the missionaries viewed mutual Christian belief as more important than love and this influenced the advice they gave to those residents who were church members:

> One young woman gave up a young man to whom she was greatly attached. It was a question of this young man or Christ with her. The struggle cost her many tears. She had to contend with the wishes of relatives and friends, but she chose her Saviour and gained the victory.[17]

The process of getting married was sometimes a source of great celebration and pride, with some weddings taking place with the brides and grooms dressed in wedding finery. Even so, group weddings became a feature of mission life at Mona Mona, possibly to save time and cost. Born in 1922, Enid Boyle was married together with a number of other couples.

Glad that hers was a love match, she was nevertheless concerned by the motivations of mission staff and found a different explanation:

> My happiest memory was when I married my sweetheart Hughie. I wanted a single wedding but a lot of us had to get married all at once. I suppose that the superintendent wanted the girls to move out of the dormitory so other girls could move in and have our beds.[18]

On the mission itself, there was strict segregation between boys and girls in the hope that inappropriate relationships would be avoided,[19] in particular any relationships that did not conform to the mission's standards of sexual virtue and Christian marriage.[20] Any interactions between unmarried males and females were closely monitored. Young people received very limited sex education and what they were taught was in the context of the mission's enforced moral code. Staff were vigilant in monitoring social interactions and allowed only one night per week for courting couples to spend time with each other, sitting on the veranda of the superintendent's house where they could talk to one another.[21] This was not unique to Mona Mona. Similar courting rituals were also required of non-Aboriginal students at the Australasian Missionary College through the 1950s.

Minor moral transgressions were punished, sometimes with a flogging, a stint in the community jail, or by shaving hair to what was called a "baldy" haircut. Public humiliation and jail sentences were also used as punishments for adultery or sex outside of marriage.[22] Despite the harshness with which courting was regulated, some unapproved relationships did have happy endings, as explained by Florence Brim:

> What I remember really makes me laugh, thinking of how my husband used to tease me and tell me he was going to marry me, I was only 13. I was only young and I used to cry because I felt like he was teasing me but in the end we actually did get married. I remember when we were sweethearts at about age 16, he was put in the jail because he had been hanging around where I worked and he got caught.[23]

Despite strict rules and monitoring, illegitimate pregnancies still occurred. These were treated as moral lapses and the young women involved were sometimes exiled from the mission, sent out to work while the child remained in the dormitories, or quietly married to the "offending" partner so that religious and moral ideals could be upheld.[24] These marriages were, according to some, done in private, without celebration or family members present. Stories have also been told of girls being forced to marry in sackcloth,[25] although this is not substantiated in mission records. One former resident remembers being married in 1951 "by force," because he

had caused a young woman to become pregnant. He was given the option of having an arranged marriage or going to jail. He chose marriage.[26] This attitude of punishment and humiliation was reserved for the Aboriginal residents of the mission. However, a double standard seems to have been applied when the daughter of a missionary became pregnant and was sent away rather than being punished, although she returned later to marry the father. Residents of Mona Mona confronted the superintendent about the differential treatment but were not given an adequate explanation.[27]

Within the law and within the moral code of the mission, there was leeway to marry out of necessity or for love. A number of former residents described their courtships and weddings as love matches. Milton Brim said:

> My happiest memory was when I finally got to marry Flo my sweetheart. I used to tease her and tell her that I was going to marry her, she would cry when I did this, so I teased her more by telling her that I would go to her parents and ask them for permission to take her hand in marriage, she was only 13. I did get permission to marry her when Flo was 19 and I was 20, which was the happiest day of my life.[28]

If there weren't enough men on the mission to provide husbands for the girls, men were sometimes brought in from different areas or other missions and at times it seems matches were "suggested" for older unmarried adults. The young Christian couples who were married on the mission were allowed to occupy one of the small cottages reserved for the couples. In the first such instance, Ruth Borgas wrote:

> To us as workers the service was a very impressive one, as these two young people, fruits of many heartaches, were united in life. After the usual wedding breakfast the two young people walked home to their neat little two-bedroomed cottage, where we hope and pray they will be shining lights to their people who sit in ignorance.[29]

Married couples could move away from Mona Mona and live independently off the mission if the man had been exempted under the Act. If the couple lived on the mission, they would move into one of the mission's houses. June Callaghan recalled that after being exempted in the late 1940s:

> Things got better because two of the older boys, Lionel and Wilfred, found girlfriends at Mona Mona and they got married back there. I think it was around about the year 1948. They used to have multiple weddings. I think when they got married there were three groups. That was OK but then they brought their wives back with them and we had to all squash in that house

> and everyone just had a bed, wherever the bed could fit. There was no privacy, nothing.[30]

The celebrant at weddings conducted at Mona Mona was the superintendent of the mission. The weddings followed a traditional European style in dress, music and format. Brides walked down the aisle of the church and photographs were taken. After the wedding ceremony, the guests celebrated at a feast in the dining room and then the married couples would move into their new quarters.[31] Not all weddings went as planned. Mervyn Riley remembers meeting his future wife when bringing in the cows for milking and being allowed to speak to her once a month. On the day of his wedding, seven couples were to marry but one of the men ran away.[32]

There were times where differences between cultural laws and the expectations of mission staff required compromise on the part of the superintendent. According to Kuranda resident Walter Snider:

> My grandfather had a traditional wedding and when they went to Mona Mona my grandfather was supposed to get married in the SDA Church and Charlie said he already was married, traditionally. When Pastor Lester came he said that he needed to be married under the Church regulation, SDA Church, so my grandfather said he was married but it didn't matter. I'm proud of him for doing that because there was a traditional law and my grandfather took him on and showed him the rope, he had sons and daughters.[33]

This pragmatic attitude was shared by many of the mission inhabitants in the early decades. While they accepted Christianity, they continued to practise their traditional cultural ceremonies and some aspects of traditional marriage survived. At first, many of the older people had initiation marks on their shoulders and chest to differentiate their tribal affiliations and when they wished to marry, some may have been taken off the mission by members of the tribe to be tested.[34] At least one Mona Mona resident said that while it was common practice to discuss marriage with the superintendent, residents of Mona Mona did not need official permission to get married as did residents of some other missions such as Palm Island. Florence Brim recalled:

> [T]hey never picked out boys for the younger ones, but I was told that the older girls... they picked the boyfriends for them and that's what they did. They got men from different areas and brought them into the mission, that's what I was told. But that wasn't for us, we selected our own husbands.[35]

Once the married couples had moved into their small living space, the

girls were expected to take on domestic chores. Cooking tended to be primitive even by the standards of the time and involved cooking over an open fire outside the home or a wood stove in later years. It also needed to be inventive as some ingredients were in short supply:

> We moved into a house and me and my wife made our own bread and had an oven built and there was a caretaker there who took all the dough and put it into the oven and then I told my missus, "This dough is not right, it is getting a bit sloppy." I said to go over next door and see if they have any flour and she came back with no flour and I thought, well, we got Weetbix here so we can smash it all up and put it in the dough, so we mixed that all up and got the right mix and the next morning the dough rose up and we rolled it up into loaves and we were wondering how it was going to come out and I'll tell you now, it came out real good.[36]

While Ruth Borgas described these houses as "neat little two-roomed cottages" in a 1922 article, other descriptions suggest they were rudimentary and unsophisticated.[37] Some residents described the cottages as "box houses" consisting of a single bedroom, small living room and kitchen.[38] While mission staff were often proud of the neat rows of square houses, a resident of Cherbourg, which had similar homes, similarly described Cherbourg's two-bedroom residences as little cells, all next to each other in rows.[39] At Mona Mona, the cottages had no heating and so it was often warmer to sleep outside by the cooking fire than inside. Residents improvised when equipping their residences, and the furniture in these homes was constructed from timber gathered around the mission. According to the Australian Adventist historian Milton Hook, in many cases mattresses were not used or they consisted of simple piles of grass and banana leaves.[40]

Family Life

Of the families that lived on the mission, those who were elderly often lived in grass gunyahs on the fringe of the mission (especially until 1930), while the married couples lived with their children in wooden cottages. In 1931, it was recorded that there were about 30 of these two-roomed houses on the mission.[41] Once they were old enough to go to school, children moved into the boys' and girls' dormitories, where they remained until they were married or sent out to work.[42] Letters and reports from the mission suggest that the missionary families who supervised children in the dormitories were, by-and-large, caring, and that the Aboriginal parents showed particular affection for their children. It was suggested by those

who worked on the mission that Aboriginal parents were inclined to "spoil" their children, especially while they were very young, ignoring temper tantrums and fits of self-will. This led to the suggestion that Aboriginal fathers in particular doted on their children and did not wish to discipline them harshly.[43] For this reason, many children found dormitory life especially hard. In Heather Simon's account:

> My saddest memory was when my dad died because of gangrene after being shot. Then, because he wasn't alive to support us, the superintendent sent my mum out to work... so then I lost both of my parents and was sent to live in the dormitory, it was very sad for me and my sister to see my mother go.[44]

Once placed in the dormitories, familial relationships suffered, especially between boys and girls. Rose Grogan remembered with dismay the punishments of one superintendent's wife, who gave her 10 cuts for waving to male family members because "[s]he think that's your boyfriend."[45] Still upset in her 90s about the unfairness of it, she said:

> I must have been seven or nine. And every time you walked past the boys' dormitories they'll yell out good morning and I'll wave to them and Mrs Borgas will watch me go across it and she said, "You come up here missy you're always waving to the boys."

In some instances, the superintendent of the mission intervened directly in married life, both as a protector and spiritual leader. In 1918, Branford wrote that at times a man would come into his office and say, "My wife will not do what I tell her. She says, 'I not boss.' I want you to come and talk along her." This would result in the superintendent's visiting the home of the couple and reminding them of what he believed to be the traditional duties of man and wife, after which the troubles would die down for a while.[46]

In another incident, staff described how one of the Mona Mona boys was sent to Palm Island because he was so unmanageable. He returned with a Catholic wife and it soon became apparent that he was being unkind to her, cruelly beating her. The young man was an important member of the local community, in direct line to be the government-appointed king of the Kuranda tribe, and so had some social influence. His wife, who had planned to take their four children and leave him because of his violence, instead convinced him to take counselling and Bible-study classes at the mission. Finlayson suggests that the couple were "trying to live the Christian life."[47]

There were, however, many more recollections of the "great affection" the residents had for one another. Sister A N Lawson wrote:

> We had a striking example in the case of Willie Newbry. He was taken ill and went to the hospital. When he had spent some

> weeks there, his friends visited him, and together they planned that he should leave the hospital, as he was somewhat better. He came home last Monday, and the cry that he was coming was heard from the village long before we could see anyone. His friends greeted him with handshakes and calls from all quarters. He entered the dormitory, and immediately there went up a wail of sorrow mingled with joy— sorrow for his condition, and joy at seeing him. It was explained to him that he must return to the hospital, which he said he would not do; but after thinking it over he decided he would do as he was advised. In the evening some forty or fifty men, women, and children gathered around him in our grounds and wept over him kissing and embracing him, and showing their affection in many ways.[48]

This affection was made clear in many of the interactions between husbands and wives reported to church readers. Branford shared a note written by May, one of the church members at Mona Mona, to her husband Gilbert, who was also a member. At the time, her husband was in a Cairns hospital with a suspected case of leprosy and May, deeply concerned that she might never see him again, wrote him a letter of hope and comfort to let him know she was thinking of him. A copy of May's letter was sent by Branford to the *Australasian Record* where it was published:

> Dear Gilbert, I am just writing you a few lines to let you know that I am well and I hope you are the same. I miss you very much at home, and feel very lonely without you. I will be glad when Jesus comes, where there will be no more sickness death and pain, sorrow, crying, and all will be joy and gladness. We won't part from one another over there. Isn't that worthwhile trying for? and I want you to try and do your best where you are and obey the doctor and all those around, and try to be a missionary where you are and tell them about Jesus who died to save sinners. If you do that the Lord will be pleased with you, and do not feel discouraged when things go hard, but you pray and ask Him to help you to do right, and ask Him to heal you, and make you better again so you may return home again if 'tis God's will. You must have faith in your Master to believe that He can heal all sickness. What a wonderful Saviour we have, one who is ever ready to help us, doesn't matter how far we are from each other, but still He will hear us. I must close now, From your loving wife, May.[49]

This tale of separation from a partner because of leprosy was not an isolated incident. Another Mona Mona resident, Billie Green, was

pronounced a leper in 1941 and was told he would need to go to the leper station on Peel Island for treatment. He was about to be married the following week and had already built a cottage, ready to move in with his new bride. The wedding had to be postponed for the duration of the leprosy treatment, which took approximately two years. Billie's betrothed—Mabel—promised to wait for his return.[50]

Missionaries and Residents

Relationships formed off the mission provided both considerable challenges and opportunities. Margaret Gargan's poignant account of trying to find Lorna Mitchell, her Aboriginal nanny, 43 years after she disappeared from her family home reveals several tensions. Gargan writes that Lorna made her life magical. Wondrous adventures included whizzing through the house on a blanket, catching yabbies together, raiding fruit trees, picking mulberries and collecting bush tucker, until one day Lorna disappeared and Gargan's universe fell apart. Unbeknown to her, Lorna had fallen pregnant to a white neighbour and had been returned to the mission.[51]

The reunion of Margaret Gargan and Lorna Mitchell four decades after being separated is an example of the mutual love and respect shared between children of mission staff and domestic workers, a feature of mission life echoed by Pastor David Blanch who was born at Mona Mona and attended the 100th anniversary of Mission's establishment in 2013. To the delight of the audience, Blanch said that Rose Grogan "smacked my bottom more than any other Aboriginal person here at Mona Mona.... I have her to thank for keeping me on the straight and narrow, and that I am a pastor today."[52]

For another staff member's child, Errol Cherry, Minnie Maggable became a second mother, and her domestic help in the family home laid the foundation of a friendship that has continued for more than half a century.[53] Betty Stellmaker (nee Murray) also formed a close attachment to her Aboriginal carer, a young girl named Molly Raymond. They too remained friends, with Betty travelling north many years later to celebrate Molly's 100th birthday.[54] Betty recalled an encounter between her mother, Eva, and Molly in which the young Aboriginal girl showed kindness:

> One day Eva instructed Laurel and Betty to bring up the firewood from the yard to fill the wood box by the stove. A little later she caught Molly creeping up the stairs with her apron filled with wood. Eva explained that the girl had to share chores, but Molly replied, "I couldn't see those lovely girls get a spanking for not obeying."[55]

While good parenting required Eva to warn her house-girl (Molly) to share domestic tasks with the children, good parenting also took interesting turns. Mona Mona's Aboriginal residents trusted that their children would be well cared for in the dormitory and, like parents in many cultures, used cautionary tales and stories to try to keep their children safe. This is evident in Bernard Singleton's description of the painting *Hairy Man*, based on Stephen and Mona Fagan's warning to their children not to go out wandering in the rainforest or the mysterious and frightening "Hairy Man" would get them.[56]

Enduring Friendships

Describing the nature of relationships at Mona Mona over a 50-year period is difficult. There were several superintendents and many dormitory supervisors, and the mission was given the task of operating harmoniously in a context where several cultural groups were artificially blended. One favourable outcome was that, in the early years, traditional marriages were accepted as a matter of pragmatism, and when Christian weddings did take place from the 1920s onwards, it appears that a good portion were celebrated as "love matches" or matters of individual choice. However, like young women at Cherbourg and other reserves and missions, some at Mona Mona fell pregnant either on the mission or while in domestic service and faced the shame of public humiliation, coercion into marriage, or a return to the ignominy of dormitories and outside work. While the mission staff were proud that many residents chose their marriage partners, it is disturbing that they also removed children from their parents at a young age and placed them in dormitories. At its core, this was a direct attack on Aboriginal ways of raising family and presumed that institutional care was superior.

The breaking up of families by placing children in dormitories until the early 1950s was not limited to Mona Mona. Anglican missionary Ernest Gribble had done the same at Yarrabah Mission, denying education to children who remained at home with parents. Ruth Hegarty, a resident at Cherbourg, had a similar experience, mourning the fact that her whole life was mapped out from the moment she was taken to the dormitory when aged five.[57] This then is the contradiction. At Mona Mona, relationships between residents and God were valued in accordance with biblical teachings, as were those between husband and wife. Yet, family life and relationships were often compromised in the assumption that placement in dormitories and isolation from parents was the best method to civilise and Christianise children.

Receiving an exemption did not always mean there was a happy ending for families and a positive impact on relationships. When Dick and Jessie

Richardson were exempted, they went to live in Koah, near Kuranda, but their son Darrell and daughter May stayed on the mission to finish school until the end of the year with Aunty Marita and Uncle Lyn Hobbler. Even though Marita was like a sister to Jessie, the situation left the children feeling lonely.[58] Fortunately, Mona Mona did provide a strong sense of community for many residents, a feature of mission life that led Rita Hunter to say that the saddest memory she had was having to move away from the mission.[59]

It can be said with some certainty that while relationships between some residents and staff were strained, and some residents objected to the coercion and control exercised by mission staff, and others resented the power imbalance, some cross-cultural relationships were enduring and defied cultural norms of the day. Errol Cherry recalled that because his mother Audrey was responsible for sewing classes in the 1950s, "the case of 3 boys Peter, myself and Noel, was left to a beautiful young Aboriginal girl Minni Grogan (around 15 years of age at the time). To this day I refer to her as my second mum."[60] Others exchanged letters and made mutual visits for decades after the mission closed.

Some staff and residents have described strong cross-cultural relationships, as seen in the widespread respect for Pat Blanch and even for Superintendent Borgas, who volunteered as a retiree to help build homes for residents in Mareeba and adopted an Aboriginal boy. For her part, Djabugay elder Mona Fagan came to the mission as a toddler in 1913[61] and lived both in the dormitory and with missionary couple, Mr and Mrs Mills, who apparently raised her as their own daughter and probably did not use her tribal name "Ngywul", meaning "Only One." Mona was a monitor in the school, eventually became a teacher, and like so many of the mission children, loved music and got along well with mission staff. Married to Stephen Fagan for 74 years and a regular churchgoer who sought to educate her people, she may well be the epitome of what mission staff hoped for in positive relationships with staff, students and family life.[62]

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