

EARLY MEMBERS OF THE KICKETT FAMILY

Thomas Kikit (Younigell) and Mary Millett (Melit)

The earliest recorded Kickett is Tommy Kickett (or Younigell) who was living at Tipperary (near York) in April 1876.¹ At that time, Tipperary was the farm of Samuel Burges.

Tommy Kickett was possibly born around 1823², that is prior to British settlement.

Tommy Kickett (or Younigell) and Tommy Dabai were charged with spearing aboriginal Billy Arai in the belly on 11 April 1876. They were committed to trial at the Supreme Court in Perth.³

His full Western name was Thomas William Kickett, according to the marriage certificate of his son, Thomas Jnr.⁴ In Thomas Jnr's marriage certificate; Thomas specified that his parents were Thomas William Kickett and Mary Millett. Mary Millett worked in the kitchen in the 1860s for the Rev Millet⁵ (who was the Anglican rector at Holy Trinity from 1863 to 1869) and his wife Janet Millett who wrote *An Australian Parsonage*.⁶

A Tommy Kickett was granted a licence under the Wild Cattle Nuisance Act 1871 in December 1877, along with Samuel Burges and other "natives".⁷

In 1908, Daisy Bates records "Kikit" and "Melit" as being the parents of Nungil (Noongale), Yunjang, Binirdan and Yombich.

Thomas Jnr and family were still living at Tipperary in 1895.⁸

¹ This is not his son Thomas (Doochong) because his aboriginal name was Younigell.

² 25 years prior to the conception of eldest son, Thomas Jnr, adopting convention suggested by Mark Chambers.

³ Refer York Police records for 25 April 1876 and 2 May 1876. See also reference 15 April 1876.

⁴ Information from Marion Kickett.

⁵ Interview with Marion Kickett on 11 January 2020.

⁶ There is no reference to her in the book.

⁷ Eastern Districts Chronicle, 8 December 1877, p.2. This could be his son.

⁸ Assumed because John Kickett gives his address as being Tipperary in December 1895: Eastern Districts Chronicle, 7 December 1895, p.3.

THOMAS KICKETT (JNR) (DUCHONG OR DOOGAR OR DUJON)

Thomas Kickett (Jnr) was born around 1849.⁹ He was also called Duchong, Doogar or Dujon.¹⁰¹¹

From at least the mid-1870s he was probably living at Tipperary with his father.¹²

Thomas married Mary-Anne Fleay, who was the last half caste child of Charles Fleay and a Noongar woman who worked in the Fleay household as a servant.¹³ Mary-Anne's mother was called Betty. Betty was killed after she gave birth to Mary-Ann for cohabiting with a white man.¹⁴

In 1892 he was giving evidence for Richard Goldsmith Burges in a case in which Burges was accused of sheep stealing.¹⁵

Thomas was still living at Tipperary in 1895.¹⁶

In 1898, Thomas was being troubled by his brother Yambich who was using threatening language, and so he summoned Yambich before the Police Court, but the case was dismissed.¹⁷

By 1905, Thomas Kickett was a farmer on his own property.¹⁸

Thomas had assistance from the Marwick family in taking up the lease.¹⁹

In 1908, Thomas asked the Greenhills Board to close a track through his property.²⁰ There is also a newspaper reference to the clearing of a road between his property (2890) and that of Gault (2360).²¹

The Sunday Times published an article about Thomas on 25 October 1908 with a picture and title: An Aboriginal Farmer. The caption said:

⁹ Notes of Marion Kickett, 2006.

¹⁰ Notes of Marion Kickett, 2006.

¹¹ Daisy Bates calls him Yunjang who married Nunderan.

¹² The farm of the Burges family north of York. Assumed because of Burges references involving his father.

¹³ Notes of Marion Kickett, 2006, p.1; Jennifer Gardiner: A Farming Family: The Fleays of Western Australia, 1991, p.56.

¹⁴ Notes of Marion Kickett, 2006.

¹⁵ Eastern Districts Chronicle, 8 October 1892, p.2.

¹⁶ His son John put Tipperary as his residence when entering athletic sports events in December 1895: Eastern Districts Chronicle, 7 December 1895, p.3, 14 December 1895, p.3.

¹⁷ Eastern Districts Chronicle, 2 July 1892, p.2.

¹⁸ Eastern Districts Chronicle, 26 August 1905, p.3. He was summoned by the Greenhills Board for failing to pay rates of 18 shillings and 4 pence. The case was struck out as there was no proof of service of a summons.

¹⁹ Interview with Marion Kickett on 11 January 2020.

²⁰ Eastern Districts Chronicle, 18 April 1908, p.3

²¹ Eastern Districts Chronicle, 23 May 1908, p.3. These are presumably Avon Location numbers.

Tom Kickett, to wit, He owns a selection at Greenhills, valued at £1,200. He is a married man with a family.²²

The first Land Titles Office records of Thomas Kickett are three Conditional Purchase Leases issued 28 March 1912 for Avon Locations 10481, 10482 and 17590.

These were mortgaged on 1 April 1912 to The Agricultural Bank of Western Australia to secure £100.

Four months later, on 22 August 1912, the Bank mortgage was discharged, and a fresh mortgage was granted to Richard Edward White, of Dangin, Storekeeper, to secure £125 “and further advances and interest at the rate of £10 per centum per annum”. Richard White was presumably one of the White Bros, the trading name of the business that ran the store.²³

On 27 March 1913, there was a court action between Edmund Hayes and Thomas Kickett. Hayes was suing Kickett, and Kickett had a counterclaim for £10.²⁴

On 17 April 1913, a warrant was lodged on the leases.

Thomas’s land was put up for auction on 5 August 1913, being described as a “Mortgagee’s Sale”²⁵.

The circumstances of sale were “dubious”.²⁶

Thomas sent of a cheque for payment of what was due but, according to Marion Kickett, the local shop-keeper / postmaster (presumably Richard White) took the cheque out of the mail and the property was sold.

Transfer of the leases took place on 20 September 1913.²⁷ The purchaser was Ray Jasper White of Dangin, farmer.²⁸

The purchaser took the crop that was ready to harvest.²⁹

“With nowhere to live, Thomas and his wife went to Badjaling Mission located just outside Quairading. In order to stay at the mission the couple had to legalise their

²² Sunday Times, 25 October 1908, p.1.

²³ Eastern Districts Chronicle, 10 May 1912, p.2 (White Bros was fined for selling bread which did not weigh what it was supposed to weigh).

²⁴ Eastern Districts Chronicle, 28 March 1913.

²⁵ Eastern Districts Chronicle, 18 July 1913, p.4.

²⁶ Haebich, A. and L. Tilbrook. 1981 South West Aboriginal Studies Bibliography. Mount Lawley College, p.34.

²⁷ Conditional Purchase Lease 31351/55.

²⁸ Presumably one brother of White Bros.

²⁹ Interview with Dennis Kickett on 26 January 2020.

marriage. So Thomas Kickett at the age of 70 married Mary-Ann Fleay at the age of 60.”³⁰

In 1916, Thomas was charged with stealing boots.³¹

Thomas died in 1927, aged 78.³²

Thomas and Mary had a son John and another son who died in WW I³³, and a daughter.³⁴

³⁰ Notes of Marion Kickett, 2006.

³¹ Gnowangerup Times, 22 November 1916, p.2.

³² Notes of Marion Kickett, 2006.

³³ Interview with Dennis Kickett on 26 January 2020.

³⁴ No native names, according to Daisy Bates.

BILLY KICKETT (NOONGALE)

Billy Kickett was born around 1852³⁵ in Beverley³⁶. He was also called Noongale³⁷.

He married several times, including Annie, who was speared.³⁸

He and Tommy Windich accompanied John Forrest on his expedition across the Great Australian Bight in 1870.³⁹ Forrest described Billy as “an intelligent young fellow”.⁴⁰

Billy and Tommy Windich each received remuneration of £12 10 shillings for their services on the expedition. According to the Kickett family, Billy saved Forrest’s life during one expedition and Forrest also promised him land as a reward for his efforts, but the promise was never kept.⁴¹

In the 1870s Billy was working for E Blenchynden. In 1879, he was charged with “absconding” and was remanded for 8 days.⁴²

Billy married a number of times. One of his wives was Annie who died from a spear wound inflicted by her former husband named Abraham near Northam in 1881. Before dying, she told PC Charles Payne that she had run away from Abraham because of his cruelty and went to live with Billy. He had found her in a paddock and speared her before with a glass spear, and then another time. Annie was reported as being a very intelligent woman and able to speak good English.⁴³ Abraham was given a life sentence.⁴⁴

In the 1890s Billy was working for Joseph Hicks of Gwambygine. In 1893, he was again charged with “absconding”. He was sentenced to 3 months imprisonment.⁴⁵

Billy brought an assault claim against James Sheehan in May 1901. In that case he said that he got plenty of rations from Sir John Forrest for life.⁴⁶

Billy died on 30 June 1904 at Beverley, aged 52 years.⁴⁷

“I have to bring under your notice with extreme regret the medical treatment
Aboriginals receive in this town. On June the 28th one named Billy Kickett . . . a fine
specimen of health and strength, was taken ill. His companions sent for the doctor to

³⁵ Notes of Marion Kickett, 2006.

³⁶ Lois Tilbrook: Nyungar Tradition, Tree 18A, p.182.

³⁷ Notes of Marion Kickett, 2006.

³⁸ Notes of Marion Kickett, 2006.

³⁹ Inquirer and Commercial News, 23 March 1870, p.3.

⁴⁰ West Australian, 25 July 1919, p.8.

⁴¹ Notes of Marion Kickett, 2006.

⁴² Eastern Districts Chronicle, 1 March 1879, p.2.

⁴³ Herald, 9 April 1881, p.3; Inquirer and Commercial News, 21 July 1880, p.3.

⁴⁴ Eastern Districts Chronicle, 15 April 1881, p.2.

⁴⁵ Eastern Districts Chronicle, 18 February 1893, p.2.

⁴⁶ Northam Advertiser, 18 May 1901, p.3.

⁴⁷ Western Mail, 4 March 1905, p.30.

go and see him. The doctor [did not go to Billy but] gave them a bottle of mixture instead. The poor fellow grew worse and died yesterday, as it were, like a dog, no medical assistance."⁴⁸

Sir John Forrest, who was then Premier, wrote:

"I saw Billy at Clackline in December 1903 and he looked strong and well It seems quite clear that poor Kickett did not receive the attention he should and making all allowances I think the matter ought to be closely investigated in order that it may be known whether there was any culpable negligence."⁴⁹

Forrest also said that he and his wife were in a special debt for his past service.⁵⁰ Billy was buried in the Catholic cemetery. Forrest provided a memorial gravestone for Billy's grave.
⁵¹

⁴⁸ ADF 1904, 263, referred to in Lois Tilbrook: Nyungar Tradition, p.25.

⁴⁹ ADF 1904, 263, referred to in Lois Tilbrook: Nyungar Tradition, p.25.

⁵⁰ West Australian, 6 October 1904, p.4.

⁵¹ Western Mail, 4 March 1905, p.30.

JAMES KICKETT (YAMBICH)

James Kickett was born around 1854⁵². He was also called Yambich⁵³ (pronounced Yombitch).⁵⁴

He married May Hines,⁵⁵ whom Daisy Bates said was Kulberan.⁵⁶

Yambitch was feared by many Noongars including members of his own family.⁵⁷

In November 1878, Yambich may have been working for J Thomas Parker.⁵⁸

He was with Billy Kickett in January 1879, and a woman called Wingar.⁵⁹

In April, 1881 at Cold Harbour (about a mile from York), Yambich speared a native woman, Wingymire or Silena, who was having angry words with his wife. Cold Harbour is just south of the native reserve on the other side of the railway bridge.⁶⁰

His wife struck Silena on her back with a stick. Yambich then came up with a spear and threw the spear at her from a distance of five yards. The spear entered her not far from the collar bone. She called out "Oh!" and called for her uncle and then dropped dead.

Her uncle, Jack Kullyhen then speared Yambich in the thigh and went and called the police.

In his defence, Yambich said that Silena was swearing at him and would not stop fighting.⁶¹

Yambich was sentenced to gaol for 20 years, but served only five.⁶² Yambich escaped from Rottnest by swimming to the mainland.⁶³

He was sent to Rottnest 6 times as he has 6 prison numbers at Rottnest Island. In one of his court appearances in 1888, Corporal Lavery said that he had known Yambich since he was a boy and he was always regarded as a terror to the district.⁶⁴

In July 1898, Yambich was summoned by his brother Tommy Kickett for using threatening language towards him. Yambich was angry with his brother for farming land. He was also

⁵² Notes of Marion Kickett, 2006.

⁵³ Notes of Marion Kickett, 2006.

⁵⁴ Interview with Marion Kickett on 11 January 2020.

⁵⁵ Notes of Marion Kickett, 2006.

⁵⁶ Family records recorded by Daisy Bates in 1908.

⁵⁷ Notes of Marion Kickett, 2006.

⁵⁸ Eastern Districts Chronicle, 23 November 1878, p.2. Yambich was asked by Alfred Wright on behalf of J Thomas Parker to buy alcohol from Mr Chipper at the Kings Head Hotel. Yambich's horse was stopped and the alcohol found. Alfred Wright was charged with delivering alcohol to a native. The case was dismissed. See the accompanying article in Eastern Districts Chronicle 23 November 1878, p.2.

⁵⁹ Eastern Districts Chronicle, 4 January 1879., p.2. The two, Yambich and Billy were fighting over Wingar.

⁶⁰ Interview with Marion Kickett on 11 January 2020.

⁶¹ Inquirer and Commercial News, 20 April 1881, p.1; Eastern Districts Chronicle, 20 May 1881, p.3.

⁶² Inquirer and Commercial News, 4 January 1901, p.6.

⁶³ Interview with Marion Kickett on 11 January 2020.

⁶⁴ Notes of Marion Kickett, 2006.

angry with his brother Billy for having guided Forrest on his expedition across the Great Australian Bight in 1870.⁶⁵ Magistrate Dinsdale dismissed the case.⁶⁶

Notwithstanding his anger towards his brother Billy, the two kept in contact and were once even arrested together for fighting over a woman.⁶⁷

In January, 1901, Yambitch sued a police constable, Corporal Tyler of Beverley, for having used insulting language towards him. Tyler said that Yambich had threatened to murder the Government black-tracker. The case was dismissed and Yambich was fined 2 shillings and 3 pence.⁶⁸

Yambich had 3 sons: Herbert, Douglas and Thomas Jnr.⁶⁹

Yambich died in 1919.⁷⁰

⁶⁵ Notes of Marion Kickett, 2006.

⁶⁶ Eastern Districts Chronicle, 2 July 1898, p.2.

⁶⁷ Eastern Districts Chronicle, 4 January 1979, p.2.

⁶⁸ Inquirer and Commercial News, 4 January 1901, p.6.

⁶⁹ Notes of Marion Kickett, 2006.

⁷⁰ Notes of Marion Kickett, 2006.

JOHN (OR JACK) KICKETT

Jack (or John) Kickett was the only son of Thomas Kickett (Jnr), the farmer⁷¹.

He was born in 1880.

The first mention of him in any newspaper is when he was a competitor in the Boxing Day Sheffield Handicap at the Beverley Athletic Sports which offered a 35 pound reward. John competed in three events, the Sheffield Handicap, the Quarter Mile Handicap and the 120 yards hurdles handicap.⁷² There is no report as to how he went. He would have been 15 at the time.

From then on, John was competing regularly in athletic events, for example winning 20 shillings in the Maiden race in June 1896.⁷³

The prizes were substantial. For example, at the York Athletic Club Sports, John competed in two races, the One Mile Handicap where the prize was 8 pounds, and the Sheffield Handicap, where the prize was 30 pounds. John was given a handicap of 90 yards for the One Mile Handicap (the largest handicap of any person).⁷⁴

After this, he is constantly referred to in sporting pages as a middle distance runner and a sprinter.⁷⁵

He was also a cyclist and took part in York Cycling Club events often competing in three races on one day.⁷⁶ The coverage of the 7 January 1899 Northam Cycling Club events reports:

“Kickett led for the first couple of laps, when the two Stewarts took up the running and maintained the lead till the bell rang, the Northam riders”

He was specifically referred to in a coverage of the Hibernian Handicap of 120 yards at Fremantle on 23 March 1899:

⁷¹ Notes of Marion Kickett, 2006.

⁷² Eastern Districts Chronicle, 7 December 1895, p.3., 14 December 1895, p.5.

⁷³ Eastern Districts Chronicle, 6 June 1896, p.5.

⁷⁴ West Australian, 28 May 1897, p.6.

⁷⁵ E.g. first place in the Hurdles Handicap at Quellington Sports: Eastern Districts Chronicle, 25 September 1897, p.6.; Eastern Districts Chronicle, 28 May 1898, p.3, 4 June 1898, p.3; the 15 mile road race: Eastern Districts Chronicle, 20 August 1898, p.3, 10 September 1898, p.3, 15 October 1898, p.2, 20 May, 1899, p.3, 3 June 1899, p.3, 19 May 1900, p.3, 26 May 1900, p.3, 2 June 1900, p.2, 11 May, 1901, p.3, 18 May 1901, p.2 25 May 1901, p.2, 1 June 1901, p.3 8 June 1901, p.2, 17 May 1912, p.2, 31 May 1902, p.3.

⁷⁶ Only some examples of many: York Post Office to Gwambigyne and back: Eastern Districts Chronicle 12 March 1898, p.3. with a handicap of 7 minutes; One mile -Eastern Districts Chronicle, 31 December 1898, p.3; half mile and one mile at Northam: Eastern Districts Chronicle, 24 December 1898, p.3; all three Open Mile, York Wheel Race and Members' Handicap of the York Cycling Club on 14 January 1899: Eastern Districts Chronicle, 31 December 1898, p.3. and 14 January 1899, p.3., 120 yards Sheffield Handicap and 440 yards handicap - West Australian, 4 September 1908, p.7.

“Kickett, the aboriginal, got quickest away, and at 20 yards, was in front. He maintained his advantage till he breached the tape a winner by two yards. Time 11 2-5 secs.”⁷⁷

He was singled out again the following year in a coverage of the Queens Athletic Grounds races in Perth on 20 January 1900:

“Most of the heats were very closely contested, an exception being that won by Kickett, who won by 8 yards.”⁷⁸

And again the next year in a coverage of the Sheffield Handicap:

“the Sheffield Handicap was won by a colored man named Yarran, and second place by a colored man also, named Kickett.”⁷⁹

In the Friendly Society Sports in York in November 1902, John competed in only in the sack race.⁸⁰

The next year, Jack was racing a horse called Paris at the York Jockey Club.⁸¹

But by May and June 1906, John was back competing in York Athletic Club events, competing in two sprints.⁸²

From 1907, John started competing in cricket, representing Doodananning, indicating he had moved there. He was opening batsman and a bowler.⁸³

John continued to race horses and in 1908 was racing Sweet Neil.⁸⁴ From 1910, he started to ride horses of other owners.⁸⁵

And a return to sprinting in 1908, as he came second in the sprint final in York and in the Greenhills 120 yards and the Greenhills Handicap.⁸⁶

In the high jump at Doodenanning, he jumped 5 feet 1 inch.⁸⁷

⁷⁷ Inquirer and Commercial News, 24 March 1899, p.6.

⁷⁸ Western Mail, 20 January 1900, p.49.

⁷⁹ Northam Advertiser, 21 June 1902, p.3.

⁸⁰ Eastern Districts Chronicle, 15 November 1902, p.3.

⁸¹ Eastern Districts Chronicle, 11 April 1903, p.3.

⁸² Eastern Districts Chronicle 26 May 1906, p.3, 2 June 1906, p.3.

⁸³ Eastern Districts Chronicle, 9 February 1907, p.3, 9 March 1907, p.3, 20 April 1907, p.3, 23 November 1907, p.2, 4 January 1908, p.4, 22 January 1908, p.4, 30 January 1909, p.3, 6 February 1909, p.3, 13 November 1909, p.3, 27 November 1909, p.3, 15 January 1910, p.3.

⁸⁴ Eastern Districts Chronicle, 11 April 1908, p.4, 18 April 1908, 1908, p.3.

⁸⁵ Eastern Districts Chronicle, 29 January 1910, p.3 (TW Elliott's Piercefield), 11 August 1911, p.3 and 6 October 1911, p.2, 4 October 1912, p.2 (J Fleet's Fleetlock), 4 October 1912, p.2 and 20 December 1912, p.2 (Mr A Kent's Dangan Thunderbolt – shown as T Kickett).

⁸⁶ Eastern Districts Chronicle, 19 September 1908, p.2, 26 September 1908, p.2, 29 May 1909, p.3, 5 June 1909, p.3 11 September 1909, p.3, and at Beverley: Eastern Districts Chronicle, 24 March 1911, p.2.

John was successful in securing the tender to clear 160 chains of Pike's Road in March 1909, earning himself 9 pence per chain "to be completed in 6 weeks".⁸⁸

John married Sarah Warren⁸⁹ and they had 11 children, 4 sons and 7 daughters.⁹⁰ These included Algernon.

When his parents moved from Greenhills to Quairading in 1913, it appears that Jack and his family moved with them. Jack started farming on 200 acres of land.

He competed in the sack race again in 1914, at Quairading.⁹¹

In 1915, John carried out work for AAB Paech and was not paid, and had to go to court. He was awarded payment of 13 pounds 2 shillings and 7 pence but he had to return to work and complete clearing 48 acres at 20 shillings an acre by the next 30 June.⁹²

In April 1915, Jack wrote to the Minister for Education saying he was "farming on 200 acres of land", that he "lived as a white man and looked after his children" and that he wanted his children to go to the State School in Quairading, and the head teacher had told him to write to the Minister. "I don't want to see them degraded"; "I am only asking for my children" he said. He had to write a second letter before he received a reply.

The Minister for Education replied in October 1916 saying he could send his children to the Native School at Beverley which was 30 miles from Quairading.⁹³

All the footballer Kicketts are descended from Jack and Sarah.⁹⁴

Jack died on 31 July 1925 at the York Hospital from heart disease aged 45 years and he was buried at Quairading.⁹⁵

⁸⁷ Eastern Districts Chronicle, 14 November 1908, p.2.

⁸⁸ Eastern Districts Chronicle, 27 March 1909, p.3.

⁸⁹ Born 1886 from a Quairading family, died 1971: Lois Tilbrook: Nyungar Tradition, Tree 18A, p.182.

⁹⁰ Notes of Marion Kickett, 2006.

⁹¹ Eastern Districts Chronicle, 13 November 1914, p.5.

⁹² Eastern Districts Chronicle, 5 March 1915, p.4.

⁹³ Jennifer Gardiner: : A Farming Family: The Fleays of Western Australia, 1991, pp.59-60.

⁹⁴ Notes of Marion Kickett, 2006.

⁹⁵ Eastern Districts Chronicle, 7 August 1925, pp.2 and 4, 14 August 1925, p.2.

ALGERNON (ALGY) KICKETT

Algernon Kickett was the first son of Jack Kickett and Sarah Warren and was born in 1900.⁹⁶

He was educated and was one of the deputation of “Western Australian aboriginals, well spoken and in some cases well educated and well read men” who formed a deputation to the State Premier in March 1928.⁹⁷

Their objective was to remedy “a number of disabilities under which they labor”.

Algernon married Grace Ryder.⁹⁸

Rob Garton Smith
President
The York Society (Inc)
29 April 2022

⁹⁶ Lois Tilbrook: Nyungar Tradition, Tree 18A, p.182.

⁹⁷ Mirror, 10 March 1928, p.1.

⁹⁸ Lois Tilbrook: Nyungar Tradition, Tree 18A, p.182.