

we were able to provide Kaytetye versions of only some of the stories; however, there are some major narratives that we hope will be useful in schools.

We have included in square brackets [] definitions or comments that may help to clarify the texts. Because we have not defined unfamiliar words each time they occur, we have included a glossary at the back of the book to help with Kaytetye words and some English terms.

### **On Reading Aboriginal English**

The English of the storytellers includes some features that derive from the Pidgin English that was widely spoken in the frontier in the early post-contact period, which further north developed into a separate Aboriginal language now known as Kriol. Other non-standard features result from the fact that English is a second language for all these speakers.

1. The pronouns may be used differently from standard English. *Me* may be used for 'I'; *we* for 'us'; *him* for 'he'. *He/him* are also used for 'she'/'her' and for 'it'. Special pronoun forms are *me'n'you* for 'you and I'; *mintwofella* for 'we two'; *mefella*, *wefella*, *usfella*, and *melabat* for 'we' (more than two); *youfella* for 'you' (more than two); *twofella* for 'they'/'them two'; and *allabout* for 'they' (more than two).

*Mintwofella* bin go hunting.

*We two* went hunting.

*He's* my daughter.

*She's* my daughter.

That mob rob *mefella* of native girl.

Those people are robbing *us* of native women.

All you woman, *youfella* gotta go on top of that big hill there.

*You* women go to the top of that big hill there.

They bin tellem alla kid and wife belonga *allabout*.

They told *their* children and their wives.

They like *usfellas*.

They are like *us*.

*Youfella* be all right.

*You* will be all right.

Takem wife from *melabat*.

They took *our* wives.

*Me'n'you* go back to Wycliffe.

*You and I* [will] go back to Wycliffe.

2. Nouns may lack the plural *-s* or the possessive *'s*. Articles *'a'* and *'the'* may be omitted; on the other hand *that* may be used for *'the'* or *'the one I expect you to know about'* and plural may be indicated by *them* (=those) or *alla*. Kinship terms may be followed with *-gether* to indicate both members of a relationship: thus *mother-gether* means *'mother and child'*.

*That's alla* people what I seenem.

*Those* were the people I saw.

*That two* whitefella...

*Those two* whitefellas...

This one go longa *that* camel.

This fella went to *the* camel.

My grandpa (mother's father) and my uncle (mother's brother), two father-gether.

My grandpa (mother's father) and my uncle (mother's brother) are father and son.

3. Prepositions such as *at*, *in*, *to*, *by*, *with* may be omitted or used differently from standard English. Special prepositions of Aboriginal English are: *longa* meaning *'at'*, *'in'* or *'to'* (a place); *belonga* or *belongin to* meaning *'of'* or *'for'*; *gottem* meaning *'with'* or *'by'*.

Wasn't fault *belongin to* Aboriginal people.

It wasn't the fault *of* the Aboriginal people.

Old people get water and cartem *longa* that building there.

Old people got water and carted it *to* that building.

They givem drink water *longa* Jangankurlangu camel *longa* creek.

They gave a drink of water to the camels *at* the creek *at* Jangankurlangu.

They had to go *gottem* horses or buggy.

They had to go *by* horse and buggy.

4. Verbs may lack the final *-s* of, for example, *'he runs'*. The past tense may be marked just by putting *bin* in front of the verb: *him bin run* *'he ran'*. Verbs that imply an affected object may have *-em* attached, for example, *me bin breakem stick* *'I broke the stick'*. Continued activity may be indicated by adding *in* and/or *-bout*, for example, *we bin diggem-bout* *'we used to dig'*. The copula verb *be* is often omitted. Some words placed before a verb affect its meaning: *gotta* means *'going to'* and *lafta* means *'must'* or *'have to'*.

They *bin* live *longa* Thangkenhareng.

They *lived at* Thangkenhareng.

They *bin pickem-up* that old fella.

They *picked up* the old fella.

They bin *sittin-down-bout* there.  
They *were camping* there.

He bin *eatem-bout* alla tree.  
It [camel] *was eating* [leaves] from the trees.

Him bin *livin* there longa house all the time.  
He *used to live* in a house.

They all right.  
They *are* all right.

That's why we bin *lafta* fight with them.  
That's why we *had to* fight with them.

5. The order of words in a sentence may vary more freely than in standard English. It is especially common for something to be added at the end as an 'afterthought', to clarify what has been said.

But he still there, *that bone*.  
Those bones are still there.

Alla man bin go from there, *them white people*.  
The white men went from there.

6. Relative clauses may be introduced with *where* or *what* instead of *which* or *that*.

That old fella *where* him bin stealem that tommyhawk.  
The old fella *who* stole the axe.