



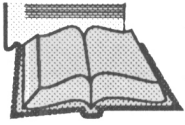
The Australian Journal of **INDIGENOUS EDUCATION**

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Reviews

Boundary Lines

C. McAdam and family, told by Elizabeth Tregenza

McPhee Gribble/Penguin Books, Ringwood, Victoria, 1995, xi + 231 pp, ISBN 0869143557

Reviewed by Kath Schilling, Aboriginal Biographical Index, AIATSIS.

Boundary Lines is about the life of Charlie McAdam, from his birth in the Kimberley to his later years, about which he expresses the pride he feels with three of his sons playing representative Australian league football. He wanted to let his children know about his life, about the Kimberleys in the 1930s, about their grandparents and their people. This book is his, about his heritage.

It is an interesting story, from Charlie's birth in the 1930s, unwanted by his white father and reared by his Aboriginal mother and stepfather, who taught him tribal laws and practice and raised him as his own. Charlie was taken by Native Affairs and, after a time at Moola Bulla, was moved to the Beagle Bay mission near Broome. This mission was run by German Catholic priests who knew very little about Aboriginal customs, or children in general.

When he was in his teens and after leaving the mission, Charlie made his way back to Springvale station, where he was born and from where he had been taken. He was reunited with his mother and grandparents and found work as a boundary rider, drover, driver, boxer and station hand. He tells of times when life and customs were very harsh. He relates stories of people and places, and amusing happenings and characters. There are additions throughout the book from different family members who give their perspectives of particular incidents or happenings. It makes interesting reading and tells of determination and survival.

Editor's Note: These reviews originally appeared in *Australian Aboriginal Studies* (1996) 1: 77. We thank *Australian Aboriginal Studies* and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies for allowing us to reprint them here.

Bee Hill River Man

J. McPhee and P. Konigsberg

Magabala Books, Broome, 1994, xi + 164 pp, ISBN 1875641149

Reviewed by Kath Schilling, Aboriginal Biographical Index, AIATSIS.

This book began as a research project into Nyamal words and developed into the story of Jack McPhee's life and memories. Jack was 87 years old at the time of writing, and his remarkable stories and recollections fill the book with people, incidents and characters from the early years of Western Australia's rugged history.

Jack was born in 1905. His mother worked in a store owned by his father. He was unwanted by his real father. Sandy McPhee became his stepfather and cared for both Jack and his mother. After his mother's death at a very young age, the town sergeant took Jack in and raised him. From that early history, Jack goes on to tell amusing tales of Afghan camel drivers, Chinese cooks and others from every nationality who tried to scratch out a living in the harsh conditions around Marble Bar.

He tells of his own life prospecting, mining, hunting, and collecting kangaroo skins and fox pelts. He tells of the gold seekers, the drovers, the sailors and the vagabonds. He tells of his own people's customs and beliefs and gives a wonderful insight into it all.

Sometimes the text jumps from person to person and place to place, making it a little difficult to follow. However, this does not detract from his story telling and explanations about how they worked, how things were done, how they made a living and how they survived in conditions so unlike those of today. The characters are amusing, and Jack McPhee is one of them.