

WWI and Sports in the Northern Territory: Celebrating a centenary of football

Dr. Matthew Stephen

Darwin, c1915



Photo courtesy of the Mitchell Library, Donnison Collection, MLMSS 890/3 1075

Darwin Football, c1916



Photo courtesy of the SLSA_b23025

Football's beginning

- *‘[Reuben Cooper] came back [from Adelaide] with a football and no-one knew about the thing what was, then he created, originated, Aussie Rules in the Northern Territory.’*
- *The game was hatched in a pub bar over a few bottles of Pilsner when several footballers of the day were discussing football, and of course, someone quietly said, “I wonder could we get a game in Darwin?” “Yes too right we could” Another said, “It’s too hot.” Anyhow from that day football was hatched.’*
- *‘A meeting of townsmen interested in football was held in the Hotel Victoria on the 2nd inst ... On the motion of Mr Breen, seconded by Mr Marriman, it was agreed that a match under Australian rules be played on the cricket ground on Saturday 18th inst., commencing at 4pm.’*

Presentation Outline

- An overview of the NT political, economic and social context, 1914-1919
- Second of three presentations, 1st an overview of the period 1914-1919, the 2nd looking at sport during WWI & 3rd the friendship between Willie Allen and the Herbert Family.
- Exploring some of the personal stories of WWI that make it so interesting.

Reuben John Cooper



Photo courtesy of the Mitchell Library, Donnison Collection, MLMSS 890_3_0228

Laurence 'Larry' Donnison



Photo courtesy of the Mitchell Library, Donnison Collection, MLMSS 890/3 0230

Willie Allen



Photo courtesy of the Mitchell Library, Donnison Collection, MLMSS 890/3 0227

Robert 'Bob' MacDonald



Photo courtesy of the Mitchell
Library, Donnison Collection,
MLMSS 890_3_0232

John Anderson Gilruth

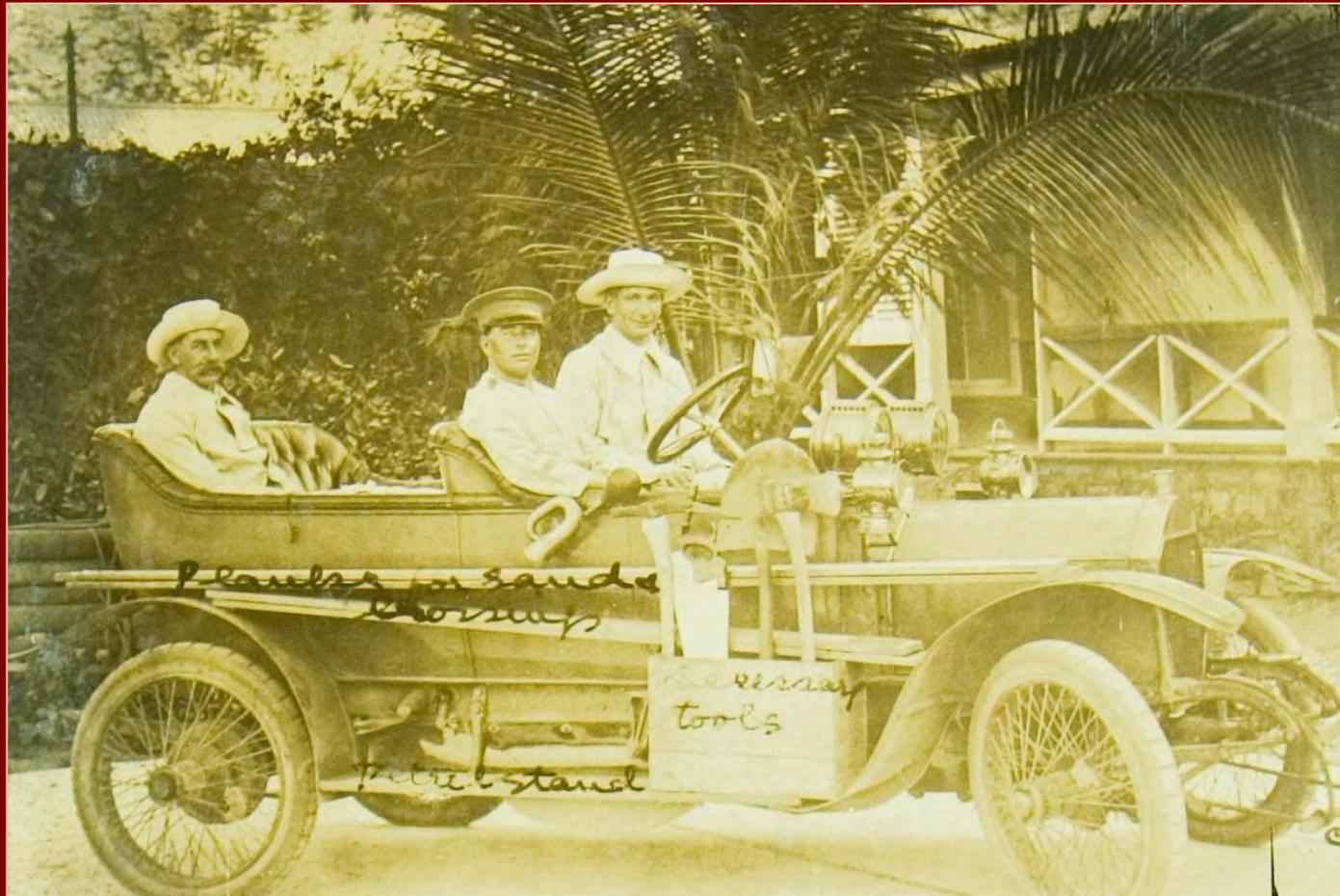


Photo courtesy of the Northern Territory Archive Service, Gilruth Collection, NTRS 3427_42

Vesteys Meat works, c1914



Photo courtesy of the Mitchell Library, Donnison Collection, MLMSS 890/3 Vesteys Meatworks

Vesteys Mess, August, 1915



Photo courtesy of the Mitchell Library, Donnison Collection, MLMSS 890/3 0201

'Coloured boys' strike breakers, Darwin 1915



Photo courtesy of the Mitchell Library, Donnison Collection, MLMSS 890/3 0216

Industrial Unrest. AWU meeting, 'The Stadium'



Photo courtesy of the Mitchell Library, Donnison Collection, MLMSS 890/3 0217

Darwin Races, 1915

x Administrator Gilruth



Photo courtesy of the Mitchell Library, Donnison Collection, MLMSS 890/3 0204

Darwin's Red Cross

Darwin Red



Cross Fund

A couple of errors were made in acknowledging contributions to the Red Cross Fund in our issue of the 17th instant. Mrs. Walter Bell was credited with a donation of 10s instead of 17s 6d, and the name of Mrs. N. Bell, who donated 10s, was left out altogether.

War, Declared, 4 August 1914

NT Volunteers, 1914 AIF, originally the Cable Guard

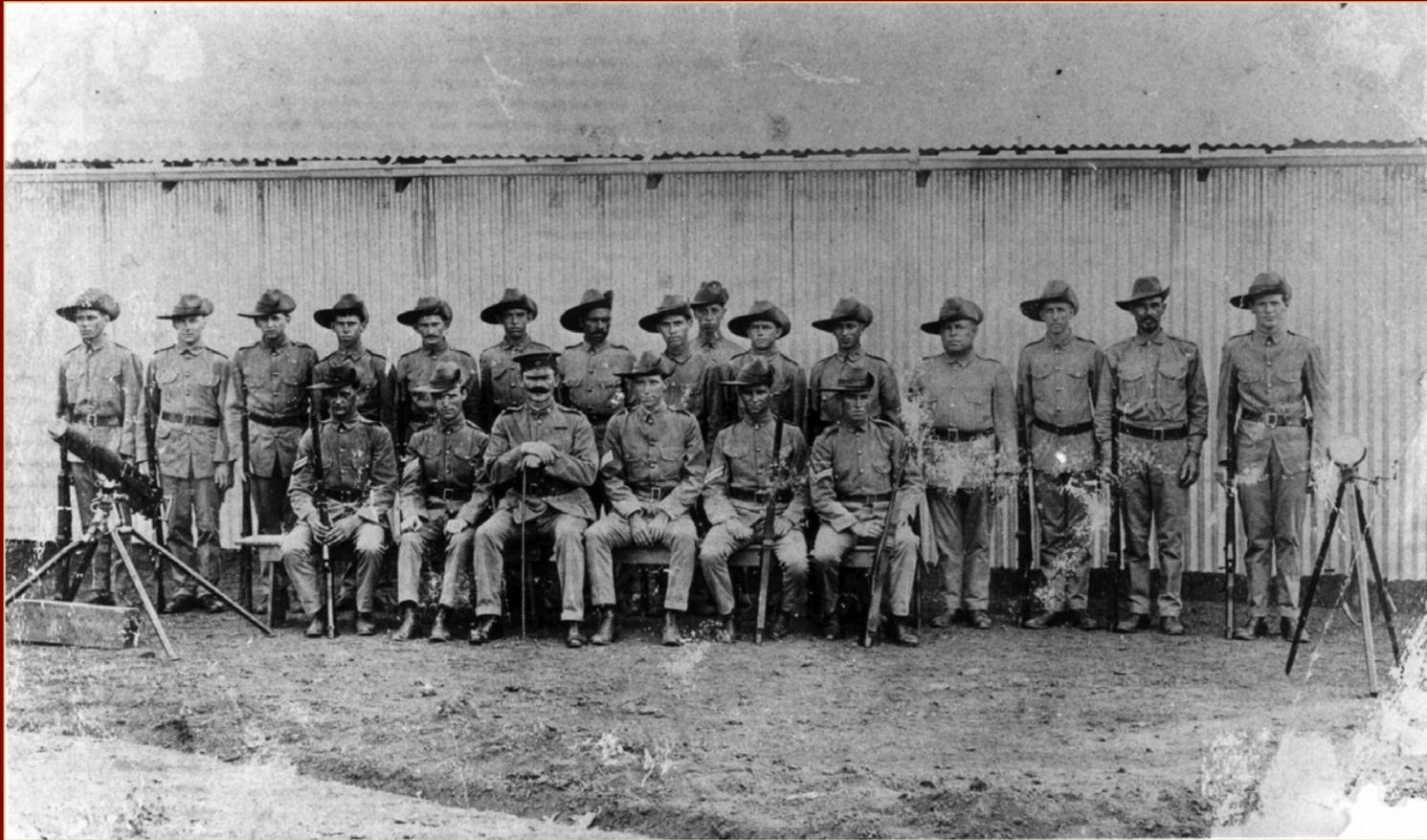


Photo courtesy of the Northern Territory Library Service : ph0341_0002

Boxing at 'The Stadium', c1914

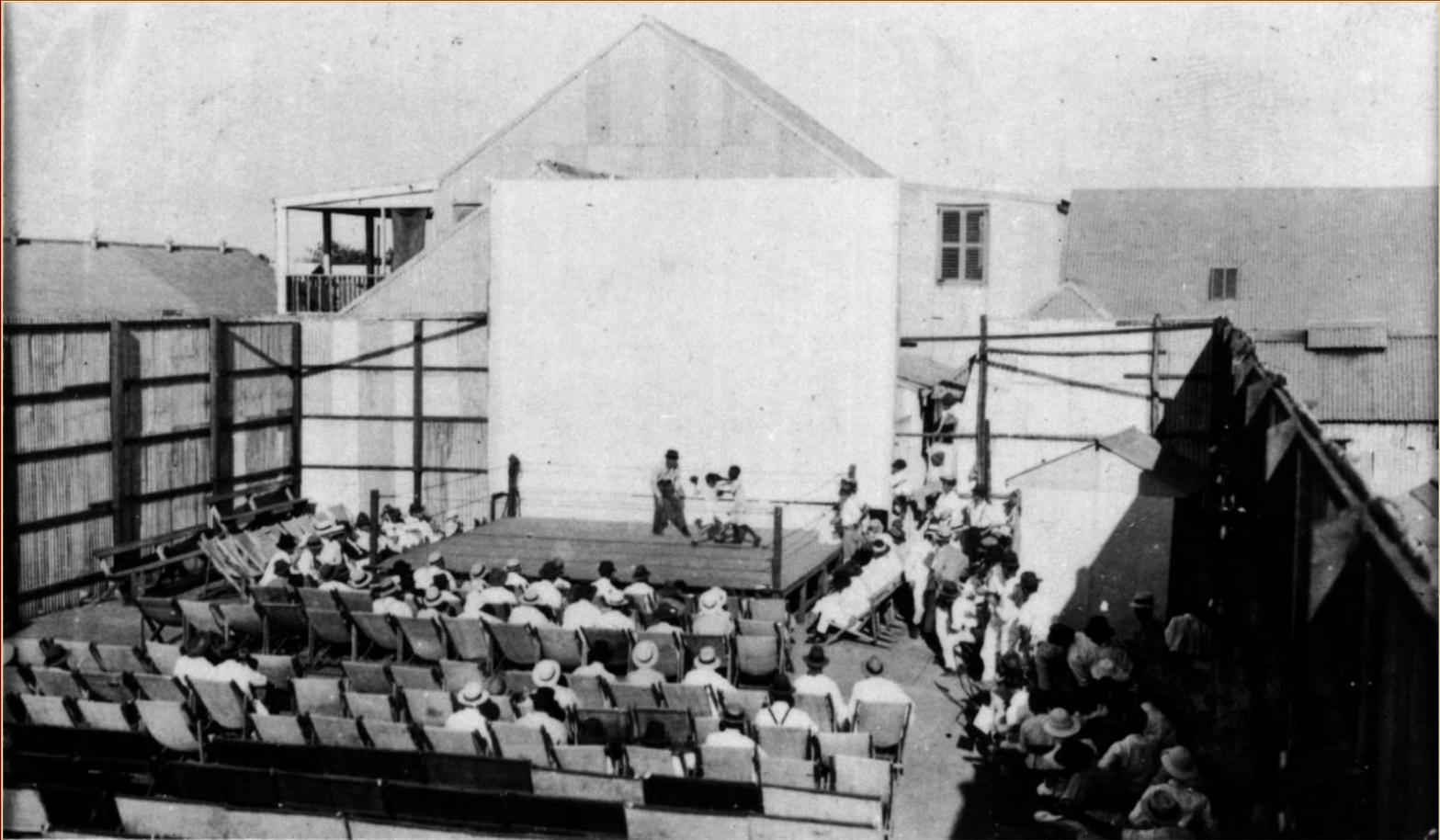


Photo courtesy of the Northern Territory Library Service : ph0238_0427

8 Hour Day Sports Procession, Darwin, c1914



Photo courtesy of the Northern Territory Archive Service, HSNT Collection, NTRS 1854_1321

NT Swimming Championship, Fort Hill Baths, Oct 1915



Photo courtesy of the Mitchell Library, Donnison Collection, MLMSS 890/3/0206

Reuben John Cooper, c1915



Photo courtesy of the Mitchell Library, Donnison Collection, MLMSS
890/3/0206

“ Reuben in War paint when on the Island he is one of the boys In *town* very quiet & a gentleman Best “Australian Rules Footballer in the Northern Territory. A good all round Athlete. Medals for swimming, footrunning Boxing, wrestling shooting football cricket, Horseriding, buck jumping, believe me some boy. Engineer by education as a trade. Buffalo hunter by profession 20 years old 1918. Educated Adelaide Born in the N.T Halfcast.”

Reuben Cooper in 'Starries' uniform, c1914

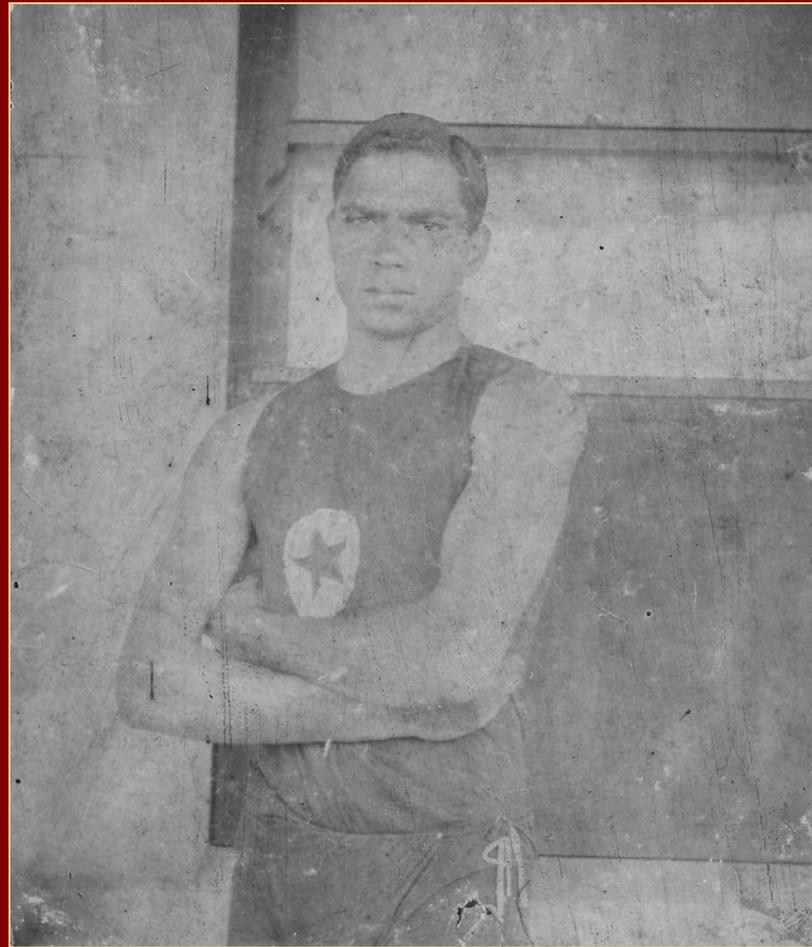


Photo courtesy of the Castillon Family collection

Reuben Cooper, buffalo hunting, c1915



Photo courtesy of the Northern Territory Library Service: ph0413-004

Darwin, c1920s



Photo courtesy of the Northern Territory Library Service, Goodale Collection PHO0345/0156

Fancy Dress Football Game, Pine Creek, August 1914



Photo courtesy of the Northern Territory Library Service : ph0188_0138

NT's First Rugby Union, 1916



Photo courtesy of the Northern Territory Library Service, Spillett Collection, ph0238_0015

Darwin Football, c1916

[Willie Allen is 'Goal keeper']



Photo courtesy of the SLSA_b23025

Left Bob McDonald Protector of Aborigines. This is a photo taken of our football association up here. I was playing for the Gov team this day. Larry x L. Donnison. 16 aside.



Photo courtesy of the Mitchell Library, Donnison Collection, MLMSS 890/3/0232

Junior Football team, c1916



Photo courtesy of the Northern Territory Library Service : ph0170_0132

Football, circa 1916

[Reuben Cooper is marked with a circle. Robert 'Bob' Macdonald sits third from left]



Photo courtesy of Maxwell, personal collection

Reuben Cooper, buffalo hunting, c1915



Photo courtesy of the Northern Territory Library Service : ph0413-004

‘First Match played in Northern Territory.
Australian rules. Tennis Court Darwin Oval 1916’



Photo courtesy of the Mitchell Library, Donnison Collection, MLMSS 890/3/0227

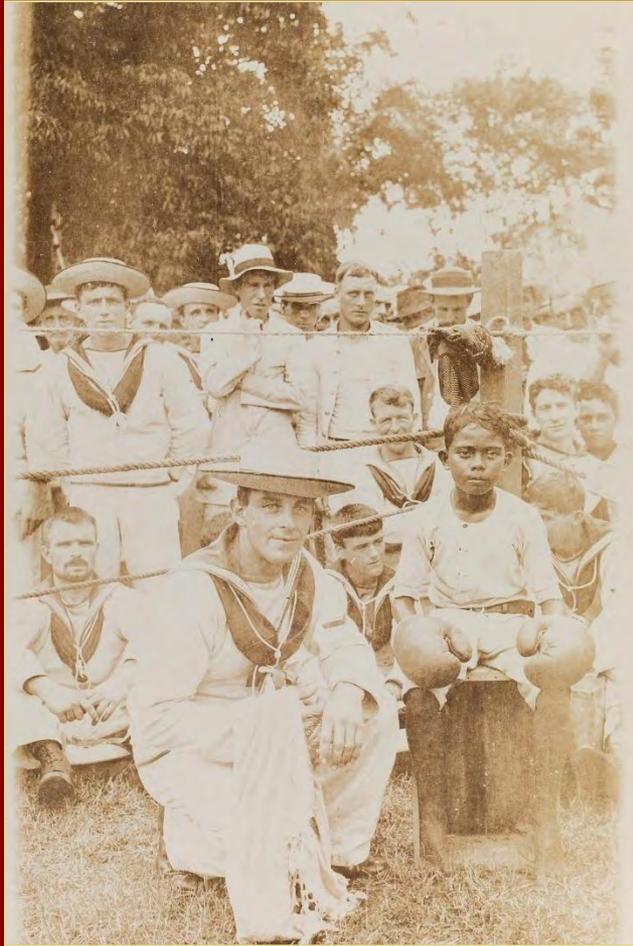
Darwin interschool cricket teams, c1898

[Willie Allen, standing 2nd from right.]



Photo courtesy of the Northern Territory Library Service : PH0238-2081

Sports against visiting ships were popular events



“Ponto half caste
Abo having a go at
young Nelson Visit of
H.M.S Cornwall, Feb
1916. *H.M.S
Cornwall of
Falklands islands
Naval battle 1915*”

Photo courtesy of the Mitchell Library, Donnison Collection, MLMSS 890/3/0225

Waratahs, 11 February 1917, at the Parap Parap oval



Photo courtesy of the Mitchell Library, Donnison Collection, MLMSS 890/3/0228

Kahlin Compound football team, circa 1922

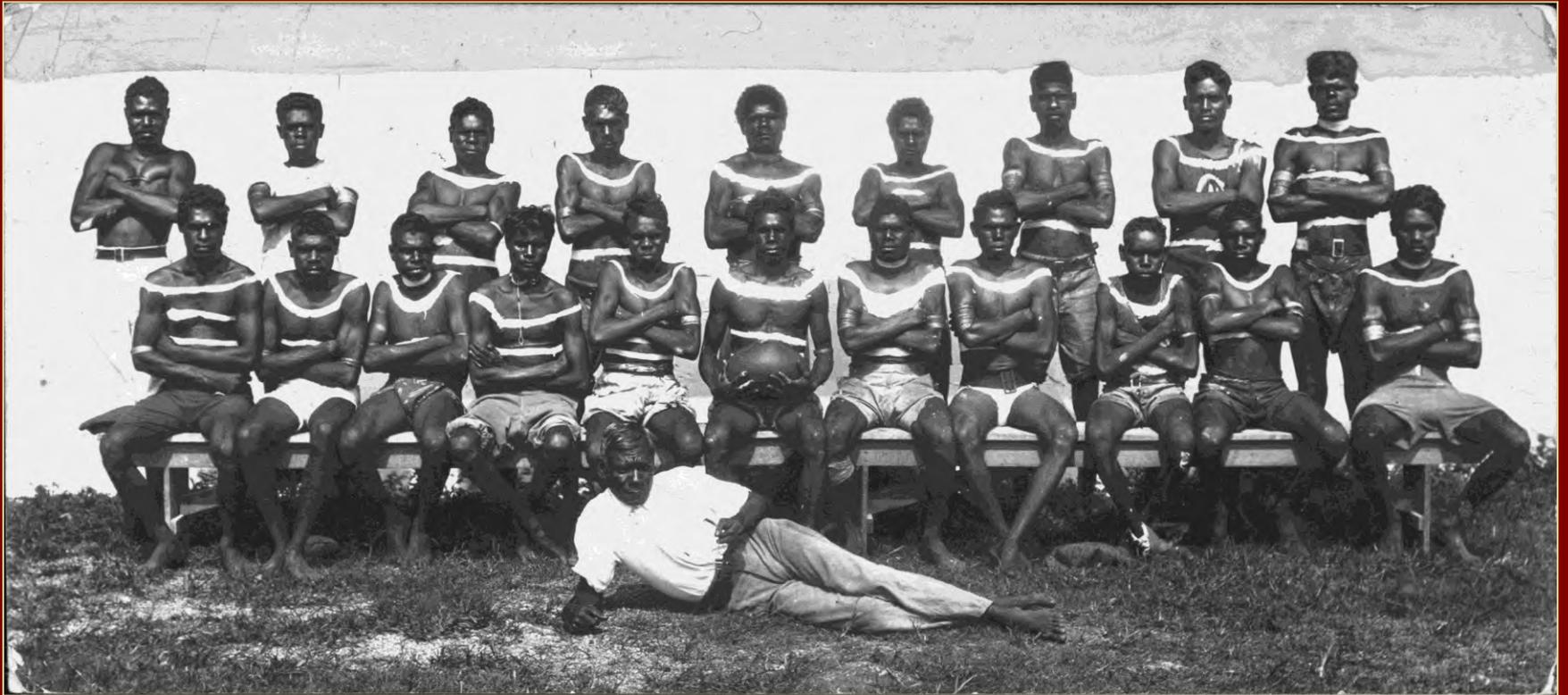


Photo courtesy of the SLWA , Conigrave Collection, 2908B28

Waratahs, 11 February 1917

[R. Cooper, standing 3rd from left, Willie Allen sitting first left]



Photo courtesy of the Mitchell Library, Donnison Collection, MLMSS 890/3/0228

Vesteys Football Club, c1918



Photo courtesy of the Mitchell Library, Donnison Collection, MLMSS 890/3/0229

Wanderers, Premiers 1917-1918



Photo courtesy of the AFLNT Collection

Public Meeting, Darwin Oval, December, 1918



Photo courtesy of the Northern Territory Archive Service, HSNT, NTRS1854_No078

Armistice Day Sports, 16th December 1918

[The procession began with] A lorry, with all the Allied nations' representatives onboard, looked perhaps, the prettiest part. Next followed the Japanese with their "Rising Sun" and other banners; the Greeks, With one in full national regalia, at their head, were well re-presented. Lastly, the Chinese, who practically had a procession of their own,

Procession following effigy of Dr Gilruth, 17 December, 1918



Photo courtesy of the Northern Territory Archive Service, Rhodes, NTRS 2885_23

Protesters at the Administrator's Fence, 17 December 1918

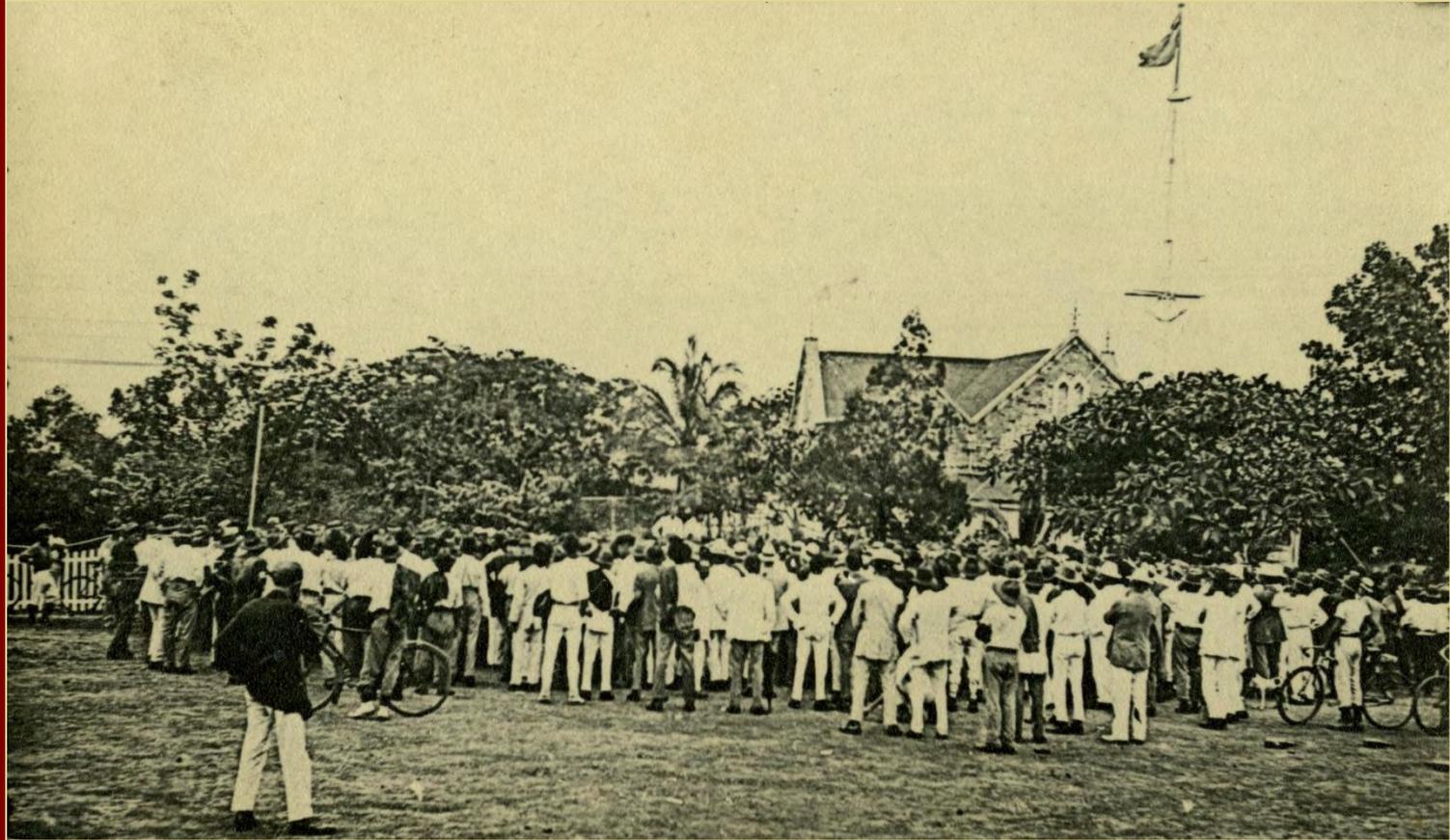


Photo courtesy of the Northern Territory Archive Service, Rhodes, NTRS 2885_24

Vesteys Football Club, c1919



Photo courtesy of the Mitchell Library, Donnison Collection, MLMSS 890/3/0233

Cooper v Cavill Swimming Challenge, February 1919

“Ernie Cavill, swimmer, called in at the "Times", office this Friday afternoon, and signified his willingness to swim Reuben Cooper, Sergeant Green, or any other swimmer, over any distance from 100 yards to a mile, to be mutually chosen, provided that a substantial purse is put up, and a substantial stake. This challenge and proviso also applies to fancy swimming, and is likewise open to all”

Northern Territory Times and Gazette, 15 February 1919

Ernie Cavill

PRINTED BY MISSY AND MR. W.

A GRAND
Aquatic Carnival
AND
WATER GALA

Under the Patronage of His Worship the Mayor (Cr. D. C. Watts)
and the Industrial Council of the Northern Territory.

WILL TAKE PLACE AT
Messrs. Vestey Bro.'s Baths,
By kind permission of the North Australian Meat Co., Ltd.,
ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9th,
Fifty per Cent. of the Nett. Proceeds will be handed
to the Trades Hall Building Fund.

ERNIE CAVILL,
THE WORLD-RENOWNED SWIMMER,
Will Give a Grand Display of
Fancy, Ornamental, and Speed Swimming
PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE FOR THE EAST.

Swimming Races	High Diving
Fancy Swimming	Life Saving
Water Pantomime	Aquatic Water Polo

Also a Swimming Race for Ladies.

THE GREAT MONTE CRISTO ACT
Swimming Championship of the Northern Territory.

The Full Programme will be issued in a few days, and all
Entries will be received by Mr. B. M. Balding, N.T. Industrial Council.

Northern Territory Times and Gazette, 1 February 1919

'L-R: L Gorodsky, Sid Roberts, Reuben Cooper, George, M
McIntosh, W [Billy] Watkins March 1919 Parap NT'



Photo courtesy of the Mitchell Library, Donnison Collection, MLMSS 890/3 0214

28 June 1919,
the Treaty of
Versailles

PEACE CELEBRATIONS

To be held on the Darwin Oval
ON SATURDAY, JULY 19th, 1919.

EVENING PROGRAMME.

Procession to start 7.30 p.m. at the Esplanade end of Cavenagh Street. Aboriginal and Chinese Torchlight Procession to march along Cavenagh Street, along Bennett Street to Smith Street, Smith Street to Club Hotel, and thence to the Oval, where the Procession will disperse.

Bonfire at 8 p.m. Concert to start at 8.15 p.m.

Musical Programme under direction **W. F. Connolly, Esq.**

CORROBOREE! CORROBOREE!

THE WHOLE TO CONCLUDE WITH A

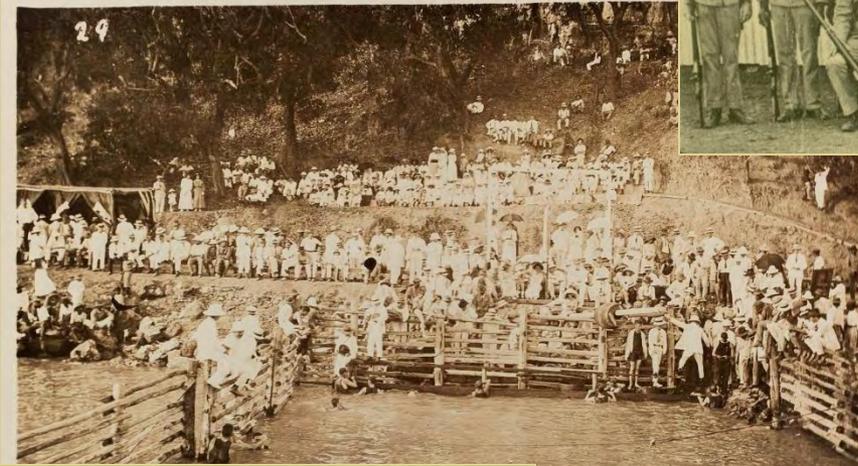
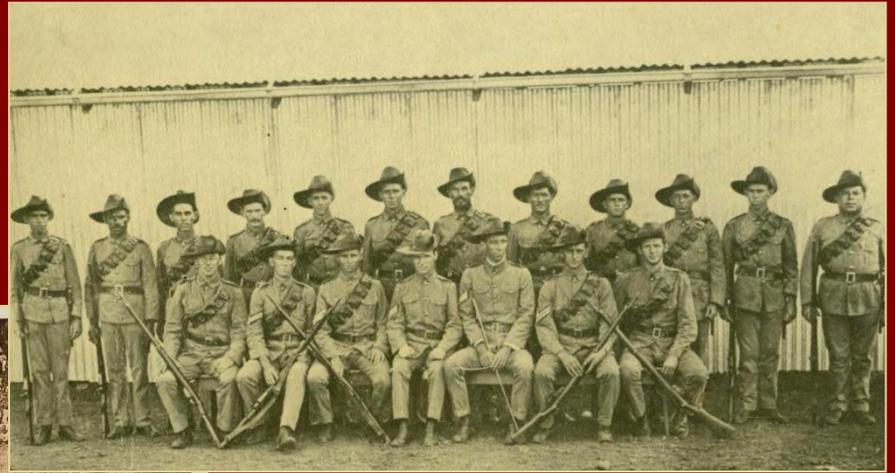
FIREWORKS DISPLAY.

Gold Medal, donated by Mr. Kalafatis, inscribed "Peace Day Celebrations, Darwin, 19th July 1919," to be raffled on the Oval. Tickets obtainable from Mrs. and Miss Shadforth.

Collectors kindly note that all moneys collected by them must be in the hands of the Treasurer by noon on Monday, 21st instant.

A. O. RHODES, Hon. Treasurer.

J. W. CALLAN, Hon. Secretary.



AMING CARNIVAL DARWIN
OCT. 1915

