Exploring Place in North Queensland:

A Contemporary Visual Artist Responds to Colonial Journeys

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Declaration

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Abstract

This exegesis reviews artistic interpretations of contemporary place in North Queensland following the paths of three colonial explorers—Edmund Kennedy, Ludwig Leichhardt and George Dalrymple. Artworks created in the field during this study and informed by memories of invasion appeared in and shaped an exhibition, *Imagining Place: Cultural Memories of North Queensland* (2015). The phenomenology of perception and observation through drawing, memory and imagining was used as a sentient way of knowing place.

North and Far North Queensland artists have previously depicted this region in their art, but there have not been connections made between the explorers and concentrated journeying to these sites has not occurred. There has been no substantial body of art exhibited on this concept; therefore, there was a gap in this field of knowledge concerning this region.

The ideas of journeying and being in place led to the first research question: How do practice-led research, research-led practice and immersion within significant North and Far North Queensland sites contribute to the presentation of a new understanding of the essences of these loci? Long-distance travel in remote regions and an absorbed memory of past occurrences informed my immersion in chosen locations. I gained visual data by walking around, exploring, listening and observing and—when settled into drawing at the site—becoming sentient, perceptive and emplaced, all while reimagining what might have happened at this location. Drawing is my 'mind to hand' mode of intense observation, which records my individual mark and personal recollections. Subsequent conceptual and artistic development produced new understandings of these locations.

The second question related to the methodological approach to creation and making: How does the creation of art reflect new cultural, physical, multisensory and emotional connections? The resultant artworks shown in *Imagining Place* merged journeying and exploration with deep sensitivity and respect to Indigenous peoples. The phenomena of observation and sentience, supported by consideration and remembering of the past, instilled my emotional and multisensorial responses into my drawing through markmaking, concept development and production.

Colonial incursion can be depicted in artistic metaphor, giving meaningful shape to the effect of early exploration. As a container of colonial might, the white vessels featured in the exhibition do not stand up to an ethical historical assessment. Broken and repaired, the strains and stains of incursion inflicted on the vessels oppose a smooth definition of British imperialism. *Terra nullius,* as a propaganda term, disrupts the historical sense of place for the invader. I rebuilt the vessels as a contemporary explorer, symbolising the sharing and reconciliation of all cultures.

An iterative, cyclic web of practice-led research and research-led practice, informed by academic research, was adapted to manage ideas, investigations and extrapolate concepts. This culminated in new creative concepts and artworks. The model allowed for entry and exit at any point, maximising my flexibility to undertake research or creative practice as required for the development of new ideas, techniques and art.

Research, journeying and artmaking formed my views on the unethical actvitities of British imperial incursion. There is further potential for journeying artists, as there were many explorers, settlers and miners involved in the development of North and Far North Queensland who have yet to be considered. For other artists who seek to gain inspiration through journeying, this region has copious conceptual

offerings for the creation of new art practices and a voice for North and Far North Queensland.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

List of Maps

Chapter 1: Connections, Pathways and Steps to Journeying

1.1 Prologue

My family moved to Tully (see Map 1.1) in Far North Queensland when I was five and I spent a large part of my childhood on a sugarcane farm. Tully is a small, rural, sugar mill town situated on the main highway, halfway between Cairns and Townsville. My father had always wanted to be a farmer, so we moved onto undeveloped land on a government assignment. As a child, I was engaged in clearing land for the cane fields, which involved hard physical labour for the entire family: picking up rocks and tree roots, blasting trees and cutting and planting cane by hand. The work started before dawn, then off to school, with more work after school until dark. It was a hard life for a child and, on occasion, my brother and I would spend a day off adventuring and exploring the boundaries and roads around the farm.
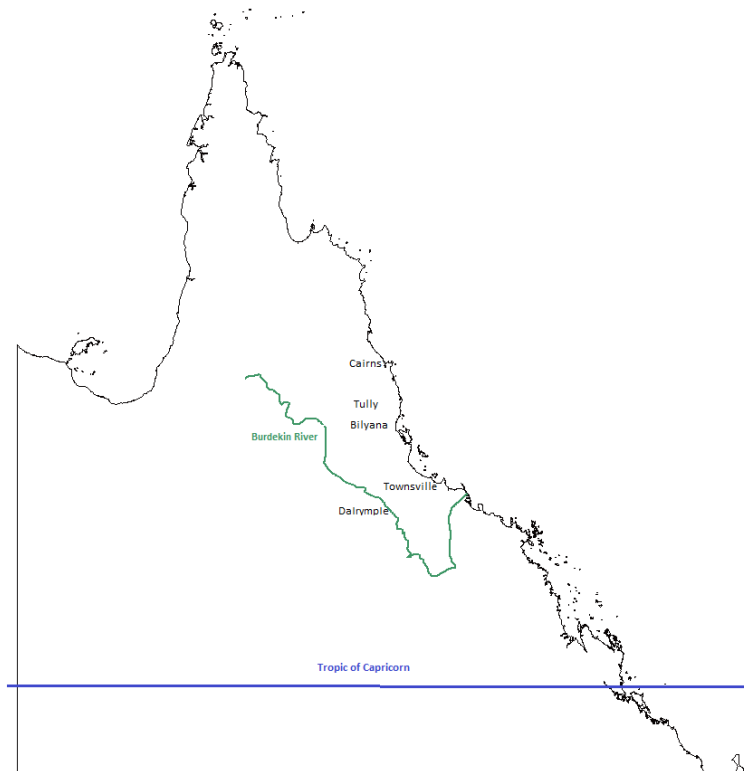
Map 1.1—Regions of interest in North Queensland.

One recurrent adventure was in the direction of Jarra Creek, where we would take our makeshift canoes. One day we came across an Aboriginal family from Tully who were camping at the creek for the weekend. They had four poles and a sheet for cover and were cooking an enormous pot of flying fox stew. They invited us to join them and we visited for a while, ate our sandwiches and then ventured on our way. I had some idea at the time that this was a special place for them, but did not understand how or why.

Years later, I was drawn back to this place and bought some property at Bilyana, south of Tully. During my research, I found that Edmund Kennedy had travelled close to both my previous homes. This coincidence prompted me to wonder if there were any other links I could make. At that point, I had not yet realised that I was looking for something that I could not grasp and I questioned my connection to the place. To begin with, answers evaded me, which led to my study of non-Indigenous positioning on this land and how I could find emplacement while also coming to terms with a history of colonial incursion and the effects of that history on First Nations peoples. This research also prompted me to create a body of artwork through which I could make sense of my connection to place.

1.2 Journey to Place

This study is an exegesis of the practice-led research and research-led practice undertaken to create and produce artworks for two exhibitions, *Energies and Crossings: Connection to Place* (2013) and *Imagining Place: Cultural Memories of North Queensland* (2015). Practice-led research, research-led practice and art experimentation underpinned the theory and practice I employed to know and reimagine North and Far North Queensland as I followed the paths of colonial explorers. As I produced art, the exegesis developed.

It is important to note that I am descended from settler-colonial European ancestors who arrived in Australia in the nineteenth century. My families chose Australia—my maternal family escaping the famine in Ireland and my paternal family immigrating from England by choice. McIntosh (2012) contends that 'white privilege exists in creation of knowledge as in all other experiences'. With this in mind, I approach my pursuit of a sense of place in North and Far North Queensland as a non-Indigenous female with awareness, sensitivity and respect for First Nations peoples.

Exploring and understanding place in North and Far North Queensland have been major interests for me, driven by my desire to delve deeper and find an expression of my own experience of place. This investigation is an immersive practice, involving movement to and through sites and participation in the environment. My art practice endeavours to realise how the explorer past informs my artistic present. In this way I interpret the landscape to develop new ways of perceiving the past and present of North and Far North Queensland.

The area of tropical North and Far North Queensland is vast. This research explores contemporary place in this region through the lens of my own perspective as an artist/explorer reimagining the paths of selected colonial explorers. To do this, I travelled along similar paths to these explorers—though I used present-day means of transport—attempting to understand the scale and immensity of their journeys. There are many geographical features named after these explorers, including creeks, roads, townships and occasionally memorial cairns in their honour. The waterways and terrain have changed over time as cyclones, floods, regrowth, agriculture, industry and housing forge new landscapes. The level of detail found in early maps ranges from specific details complete with topographical drawings to vague and challenging

reimagined paths. The relevant explorers traversed a territory that ranged from Townsville west to the Burdekin River and north towards the tip of Cape York.

The land of North and Far North Queensland was host to many explorers; thus, it was necessary to choose three to enable a manageable study. The three selected explorers—Edmund Kennedy, Ludwig Leichhardt and George Dalrymple— were connected to similar land areas and, in some cases, each other. At different times, Kennedy and Dalrymple had contact with the Girramay people at Rockingham Bay. Kennedy would have travelled through the territories of many Aboriginal nations as he trekked north, but his most significant connection was with the Jadhaigana group to the east of the Escape River. Leichhardt and Dalrymple both had experiences with the Gugu Badhun.

To achieve a deep understanding of colonial exploration in this region it is necessary to also understand the cultures of the First Nations peoples of Australia. Although Indigenous cultures were not the focus of my artworks, their histories are important to the investigation of colonial invasion, exploration and intrusion. Due to the enormity and complexity of the processes of exploration and colonial invasion, it was necessary to keep the scope of the research within reasonable limits; thus, my practice focused on the paths of the early explorers. Because of my connection to the Tully region, I began my research with Kennedy. The crossover in Rockingham Bay between Kennedy and Dalrymple made it clear that it was necessary to include Leichhardt to complete the connection between the three explorers.

In this chapter, I outline the general processes that I adopted for journeying, producing art and attempting to understand the complexities of place. These processes are discussed in more depth in later chapters.

1.3 Approaches to Journeying

Journeying, in the context of this research, involved travelling along paths taken by colonial explorers and to sites they had visited to gain a sense of this land in the present while also reflecting on the colonial past. First Nations peoples have endured dispossession of land and control under various governmental Acts that enable the structures of settler colonialism to persist. On my journey I remained cognisant that the land that I travelled on was, and in some areas still is, inhabited by First Nations peoples.

I travelled through, walked and sat in seemingly serene landscapes to intuitively feel and understand each site. This prepared me to visually record what I observed, heard and sensed—annotating drawings, memorising aspects of the site and taking photographs for future work in the studio. While I was collecting these data, I was constantly aware of a conflict-laden past.

In general, I felt safe on my journey. This was my own experience and understanding of my journeying. Colonial explorers and First Nations peoples would have their own truths about contact, security and ways of understanding the land. My feeling of security was heightened by the knowledge that I did not have to protect myself from external forces; conversely, early explorers would have had contact— and sometimes conflict—with Aboriginal people along their various routes. Although I shared experiences with the explorers, it was here that we differed. A four-wheel drive replaced horses and food stock, while refrigeration and preserved food ensured I had access to a balanced diet. The similar dangers we faced included aridity, heat and the ever-present threat of harmful insects, crocodiles and other reptiles.

1.4 Artistic Practice

A primary goal of this research was to find new types of creativity for making art about North and Far North Queensland place. Reaching out to the past in any given environment, I can only imagine how a stranger to the land would have walked through the same space and how different their agenda would have been. Due to the vastness and, at times, the difficulties of this region, I chose specific sites as close as possible to camps and stretches of ground used by the early explorers and First Nations peoples. The common element for anyone who occupies a campsite is water. Early explorers followed watercourses, pathways and often the tracks of Aboriginal peoples. Travelling through similar terrain as the colonial explorers with the aid of diary notes, maps and drawn images allowed a contemporary sense of specific places transposed over the history of colonial intrusion and incursion. At these locations, I reimagined potential past events. I immersed myself in them to gain a feel for the land and used this connection to reimagine the present through the perception of auditory and visual experiences.

1.5 Practice-Led Research, Research-Led practice

The complementary use of practice-led research and research-led practice allowed me to flexibly react to diverse stimuli while moving through and within each environment. Using practice-led research and research-led practice, an artist can critically, creatively and systematically investigate the themes of their research while remaining 'committed to the principle that methods of inquiry remain flexible rather than fixed' (Lin 2019, p. 165). This methodology is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

1.6 Developing the Research

In 2011, I travelled throughout Victoria, observing the paths of Robert Burke, William Wills and Thomas Mitchell to understand how they are perceived and valued in Victorian culture. While travelling through Horsham, I happened by chance to visit an exhibition: *The Stony Rises Project* (2011). The exhibition involved a multidisciplinary collaboration involving artists, a designer, an architect, a historian, a geologist and a landscape archaeologist from diverse cultural backgrounds. All parties visited the site four times to investigate 'the layers of interpretation and natural or human intervention that individually and collectively create this place' (Vaughan 2010, p. 8). The exhibition showcased their individual perspectives building their interpretation of place (Vaughan 2010). The resulting artworks represented diverse experiences and perspectives, providing a lively, engaging and insightful interpretation of many narratives and contributing to a new way of viewing the Western District in Victoria. I was inspired by this approach and desired to create such a narrative for North and Far North Queensland.

I developed two research questions to facilitate the creation of such a vision:

1. How do practice-led research, research-led practice and immersion within significant North and Far North Queensland sites contribute to the presentation of a new understanding of the essences of these loci?

2. How does the artist's creation of artwork reflect new cultural, physical, multisensory and emotional connections?

These questions were central to finding my individual understanding of place for North and Far North Queensland. The first pointed to my artistic direction, practice in the field and ways of finding the essence of particular locations. It provided the groundwork for the second question, which related to finding original

ways to reflect new cultural, physical, multisensory and emotional connections to place. My response to the latter question developed further in the studio as I built the creative concepts needed for a consolidated exhibition. These questions are answered in Chapter 6.

The structure of this thesis is shaped by its aims, which were to:

1. investigate the writings and journeys of select colonial explorers

2. identify key Australian artists who have visually depicted elements of the North Queensland region

3. become immersed within, document and visually interpret significant sites

4. create artworks in the studio setting to reflect acquired understandings and connections to the significance of site immersion.

These aims provided a framework for my research. For example, by focusing on explorers I was able to find connections to their pathways that helped me choose sites for gathering artistic data. Likewise, the emphasis on Australian artists became relevant to the process of illuminating aspects of place through perception, movement, sensing, imagination and memory. I also included a Scottish artist who takes an interdisciplinary approach to engaging with place.

The fourth aim described my process for gathering data at the selected sites: immersion, documentation and visual interpretation. Using these tools, I reimagined places and related them to the time of intrusion. The fourth aim emerged from the third as the visual data and memories generated in these places were brought back to the studio for creative development.

1.7 Exegesis Outline

In Chapter 2, I discuss the central role of place as a concept in the process of experiencing and examining sites as I followed the paths of colonial explorers. This chapter focuses on movement to and through places, with immersion and multisensory perception in those locations. Place has been integral to developing an understanding of perception, sensing, interpretation and creation in my creative development and artworks.

Chapter 3 uses a creative research design approach to describe the methodology, concentrating on the role of practice-led research and research-led practice in finding a niche for a new understanding of North and Far North Queensland place.

Chapter 4 investigates the paths of colonial explorers and their interactions with Indigenous peoples during their travels in North and Far North Queensland place. The three explorers were chosen on the basis of research into the connections between them: Leichhardt, Kennedy and Dalrymple all explored North and Far North Queensland; Dalrymple founded Cardwell near where Kennedy began his northern trek; Kennedy knew of Leichhardt's exploration between Darling Downs and Port Essington, travelling east of the latter's path; Dalrymple read Leichhardt's journals and founded a bullock road from Cardwell to the Valley of Lagoons, where he documented plentiful water and fertile land.

Chapter 5 expands on the concept development for the two exhibitions. The first exhibition, *Energies and Crossings*, was a step towards the metaphorical concept of the container as the symbol of colonial incursion. This was built into the narrative of the major exhibition, *Imagining Place.* This chapter analyses the

artworks in this exhibition along with the practice, process and installation of the exhibition.

Chapter 6 reviews the overall project with outcomes and provides responses to the questions and aims outlined above. The purpose of the journey was not to exemplify or vilify the early explorers; it was to find a balance between their effects on the original owners of the land and their contributions to colonialism. Metaphors are used in this chapter to illustrate and give a voice to the exhibition. Opportunities exist for future stories to be told of North and Far North Queensland through art practice and the sharing of these stories.

Chapter 2: Place as Container

2.1 Finding Place

The concept of place is a complex one that geographers, anthropologists, phenomenologists, philosophers and social scientists have all debated, defined and refined. Malpas (2010) considers place to be a central concept in many disciplines and a significant part of interdisciplinary research in the arts, humanities and social sciences in the past two decades. Visual artists research a range of disciplines to develop a broad base of knowledge that can assist with the development of concepts and the creation of art. This chapter outlines the theoretical perspectives on place that guided my investigation of journeying, exploration and creation. The phenomenological qualities of perception, movement, sensing, imagination and memory assisted my understanding of place in a contemporary context, while remembering a history of colonial incursions. This chapter discusses several artists whose practices reflect being in place and recording the environment, some from North and Far North Queensland, North-West Queensland and South-East Queensland, and some from South Australia and Scotland. These artists were chosen for their contemporaneity, passion for journeying and/or conceptual strength as visual recorders of place or belonging.

2.2 Contextualising Place

The experience of place extends into most areas of human activity, including art (Dean & Millar 2005). Some authors contend that place can best be understood as a either a meaningful location, being in such a place, a sense of belonging or the experience of that belonging (Cameron 2003; Casey 1996; Cresswell 2004; Lippard

1997; Tuan 1977). Location is not the same as being in place. Location refers to physical space, whereas place describes a phenomenological space that involves human experience and sensing, becoming lived space (Agnew 2011). Human connection and regular visitation to the space of place, transforms landscapes into the fullness of place (Vaughan 2010).

Space and place cannot be neatly differentiated, but their discrete meanings can be clarified through concepts that are closely bound and woven in and out of the other (Malpas 2012). Malpas (2012) considers the three concepts as 'boundedness, openness, and emergence' (p. 233). He contends that it is inadequate to define place as locations; conversely, he suggests that locations are points on maps, while places are bounded and do not divide lines in space (Malpas 2017). He argues that place is foremost and it is 'space that is the dependent phenomena' (Malpas 2017, p. 384). Space, like time, is situated and experienced in place (Casey 2009; Malpas 2017). While these concepts are closely related, Malpas (2017, p. 384) posits that place does 'not belong either to space or time alone' and has bounds or limits. Bounds and limits can be understood as horizons and divisions, giving place the characteristics of openness and opening—operative functions of both space and time (Malpas 2017).

For a visual example of space as a container and contained space, visualise a box full of cherries that has been emptied: the box has become a *space as a container*. When the box is emptied, the space that held the cherries is a space of that which is contained—contained space (Jammer 1969; Malpas 2012). The cherries, then, may be considered part of this space; by extension, Malpas (2012) incorporates the void and body into space. He traces these distinctions back to the Greek philosophers of place, Plato and Aristotle. The terms chorology (i.e., the study of

12

regions), topography and topology—that is, place—are derived from their discussions regarding *chora* and *topos* (Cresswell 2015).

Plato was interested not only in the existence of place, but also what exactly place is (Casey 1998). He was concerned with how things come to be—how, if there is nothing, it must be something. The nothing (void and limitless space) of place must be differentiated from existence (Cresswell 2015). Malpas (2012) extends Plato's term *kenon* into a modern idea of infinite space. Similarly, Algra (1995) suggests that *kenon* could be referred to as emptiness or as a space, place or thing and might extend to the empty vessel. Although Algra extends *kenon* to the empty vessel, his interpretation is more concerned with emptiness and the void in infinite space.

Plato defined *chora* to be a limited amount of space—a container with content—unlike the void of *kenon* (Cresswell 2015). For Plato, *chora* was the 'womb or matrix out of which things come into being' (Cornford 1937, cited in Malpas 2012, p. 233). *Chora* as a receptacle may be described 'as a Space [sic] in which things happen and appear, including the event of creation itself' (Casey 1998, p. 44). Plato used the term *topos* to represent a process of becoming, such as an *achieved* place (Cresswell 2015).

Aristotle is credited with the view that the physical world cannot be studied without a concept of place (Casey 1998). Aristotle, in *Physics,* maintained that place was the essential basis of existence for all physical things: for place to exist, it had to be somewhere (Barnes 1984; Cresswell 2015). His theories of place were centred in the natural motion of the elements: earth, water, air and fire, and that 'each should remain naturally in its proper place'. Aristotle considered these elemental movements to be part of place, where water and air are part of an 'organic union when both become actually one' (Barnes 1984, p. 362).

Aristotle questions the causation of space, comparing it to place with its elemental foundations. He contends that space does not have matter or form, has size, but not the structure of place (Barnes 1984). Space, for Aristotle, was associated with a large region of country, namely *chora* and *topos*, a specific place within such a region (Casey 1998; Cresswell 2015). In terms of boundedness, *topos*, for Aristotle, was the 'innermost boundary of a containing body' (Hussey 1983, cited in Malpas 2012, p. 233). Aristotle (Barnes 1984, p. 356) contends that 'if everything that exists has a place, place too will have a place' and extended this to the body in place, where 'every place has a body in it'.

Aristotle explained that form and matter are part of place, and place can be separated from another place. He equated place to be like a 'vessel—the vessel being a transportable place. But the vessel is no part of the thing' of place. Place is a 'non-transportable vessel' (Barnes 1984, p. 361). The form's place is separable from the object or vessel; the object may be in place, but place is not part of the contained entity.

Aristotle came to the conclusion that place had priority over all things, particularly the infinite, the void and time. He acknowledged change and movement in place, but returned to the primacy of place (Casey 1998). Place could exist unhindered, but bodies or humans need places to exist.

Visual artists adopt understandings from a range of disciplines. Place is an important concept for artists as they intensely engage with it in the course of an interdisciplinary approach (Cresswell 2015). These differing approaches can be interwoven into an artist's understanding of place. The artist pursues a bond with specific places to understand what has happened at those sites, finds meaningful locations and forms emotional attachments to them (Cresswell 2004; Lippard 1997).

Place is experiential, dependent on human connection and meaning and involving relationships between people and activities at particular sites that are interconnected with each other (Cameron 2003; Lippard 1997; Relph 1993; Vaughan 2010). Artists search for ontological connection with place.

Scottish artist Amanda Thomson (2013) investigates place in particular landscapes in her artistic practice, which brings together ethnographic fieldwork with her interdisciplinary interest in geography. She collaborates with geographers and familiarises herself through repeat visits to sites, coming to know and explore how others' knowledge can facilitate artistic process, practice and development. In her process and practice, Thomson notes that 'when we become still, sometimes otherworldly movements come to our attention'. In her 'stillness, in (and to) watching and listening (and learning), is an integral element', sensing her environment. In her process, Thomson reflects that from her panoptic renderings utilising GPS drawings, she 'changes perspective, using memory, notes, photographs, and sometimes audio records to shift downward and be within and among, looking along and out from, again'.

Dead among the Living: Fieldnotes, Bookwork (Figure 2.1) displays the product of Thomson's field notes as she weaves connections between experts' knowledge of places, her walking in the field and her ontological understanding of places. She uses these to make stories of place and create visual and textual narratives.

Figure 2.1—Thomson A n.d., *Dead Among the Living: Fieldnotes*, bookwork, etchings and digital-print concertina book, (Thomson 2013, p. 245). Photograph: Thomson.

2.2.1 Perception

Over time, theories of place evolve and new theories are developed, particularly as perceptions of the world change (Casey 1996). Cresswell (2015, p. 115) offers that '[p]laces are never finished, but are produced through the reiteration of practices'. In this sense, places are actively created through a variety of everyday practices (Cresswell 2015), ultimately affecting perceptions and understandings of place. Studies of place continue to challenge theorists as global ideological change occurs.

Perception—seeing, feeling, hearing and analysing—is integral to knowing place. Visual artists see, sense and engage with the world, which forms a large part of their research (Schilo 2016). Artists perceive and make meaning. For Schilo (2016, p. xx), what matters the most for the artist is a way of 'being, seeing, and responding' that allows them to understand a place of interest and find new creativity in other 'spatial and temporal imaginaries'. Ingold (2000, p. 243) describes 'visual and aural perception' as a 'process of seeing and hearing'. Perception is crucial to the meaning of place (Casey 1996). Visual artists involve themselves bodily in place.

Emeritus Professor Kay Lawrence is an artist who uses a variety of mediums—from sculpture and textiles to watercolour—to perceive and create

meaning from her artistic practice. In her 2014 project, *No words for the River*, Lawrence responds to the Murray River in particular ways. Using the uncompromising medium of watercolour, she painted at sites along the river where, at any moment, a dropped brush could ruin the work and remain permanently on the page as a record of human frailty (Lawrence 2014). Similarly, British colonial explorers also represented their findings in watercolour; Lawrence recalls young ladies acquiring desirable skills in watercolour sketching.

Lawrence (2015, p. 2) explains her bodily consciousness of drawing by the river as an experience of 'sensory complexity: the light, the air, the terrain, the sounds magnified by water'. She agrees with Malpas's (2015) perception of landscape: that a 'visual representation or a physical terrain' is perceived from that place, not only through visual means, but also by the 'smell and feel of a place' (Lawrence 2015, p. 2). Figure 2.2 illustrates Lawrence in situ in this perceiver producer role. She describes her work as a result of being in place, perceiving the river at this moment and drawing reflexively (Lawrence 2014).

Figure 2.2—Lawrence K 2014, Emeritus Professor Kay Lawrence working on *No words for the River*. Photograph: Michal Kluvanek; with permission from the artist.

Lawrence's (2015, p. 1) engagement with the Murray River landscape was an exploration of 'personal and national identity'. She reached similar conclusions to Ingold, finding that the landscape is shaped imperceptibly by human interaction and environmental change (Ingold 1993; Lawrence 2015). Lawrence's viewpoint on this Australian landscape is one of dwelling and recognition of Aboriginal occupation prior to colonisation: while sitting by the Murray River, she was intuitively aware of previous Aboriginal inhabitation. Ultimately, Lawrence (2015, p.3) concurs with Cresswell (2015, p. 18):

> [W]hen we look at the world as a world of places, we see different things. We see attachments and connections between people and place. We see worlds of meaning and experience.

Harriet Hawkins is a geographer who is interested in artistic methods of representing geography. She describes drawing as discovery—of being 'led to see, to

18

be drawn into an intimate relationship with the object' (Hawkins 2015, p. 255). As a geographer utilising creative methods, Hawkins (2015, p. 255) states that she felt this whole-body attunement through slow, careful drawing and observation of a place, with perception gathered through combinations of 'tactile, sensual and explicit knowledge'. Multitextured and sensory experiences resonated with her; her hands and eyes acting together to access the immediate environment.

Sensing and raw impressions are ingredients in perception transferred to what it is to be in places (Casey 1996). The components of sensing are parts of human perception that are particularly relevant when we are involved in place—they are innate (Casey 1996). A sense of place, importantly, is instilled in humans due to how we experience and exist (Cresswell 2015). Casey (1996, p. 17) describes these experiential sensations as 'every experience [having] its own horizons'. Perceptual horizons, both those contained within the perceiver and those that encompass the complete scene, surround and embody the viewer (Casey 1996). These horizons are individual. Past experience and knowledge alter how a place is experienced in particular ways and these perceptions are different for each person.

As we perceive places, we engage and are immersed in them, but are not necessarily subjected to them; conversely, we may adapt ourselves to the influence of place as we succumb to it (Casey 1996). It is a bidirectional, circular process. Feld (1996, p. 91) writes that 'as place is sensed, senses are placed; as places make sense, senses make place'. The interaction between perception and place is complex, interwoven and continuous (Casey 1996). Humans experience perception and always have 'emplaced experiences' (Casey 1996, p. 19).

North Queensland artist, Alison McDonald, perceives and experiences place specifically through the theme of water. Her artwork, *Warmth* (Figures 2.3 and 2.4), represents a 'fictitious river connecting all of North Queensland' (McDonald 2019).

Figure 2.3—McDonald A 2019, *Warmth*, laser cut stainless steel and paint (one side only), 200 cm x 400 cm x 200 cm approximately. Photograph McDonald; with permission from the artist.

Figure 2.4—McDonald A 2019, *Warmth*, detail, hand cut aluminium. Photograph McDonald; with permission from the artist.

McDonald (2019, p. 1) relates that 'place and people have always intertwined for thousands of years and people have settled around creeks and rivers'. McDonald has keenly followed the theme of water and *Warmth* represents the embrace and continual warmth of North Queenslanders reflected from the sunshine, friendliness and enthusiasm of people coming together after the devastation caused by flooding in early 2019. The artwork included both 'English and their recognised Indigenous clan boundaries from North Queensland' (McDonald 2019). *Warmth* was installed in the North Queensland Stadium situated beside Ross Creek at a place in Townsville where thousands of people will gather. The artist has developed this work from her perceptions and sensing of the watercourses as place in North Queensland.

2.2.2 Movement and Sensing

The moving body senses and perceives place. Moving, knowing and describing are not separate tasks, but rather they are part of the same practice—

imbued in the participant, immersed in place (Ingold 2011). For a person to move, know and describe they must be observant and able to absorb information visually and intellectually. Ingold (2011) equates this to being alive and totally focused. To be alive in place, artists observe and sense. This section discusses the journeying artist in place.

For Ingold (2011, p. 11) 'perception is fundamentally about *movement*'. He affirms that the 'perceiver producer is thus a wayfarer, and the mode of production is itself a trail blazed or a path followed' (Ingold 2011, p. 12). Along these paths, the participant is alive to the world and skills are formed through seeing and knowledge. Walking and moving along paths and journeying provide distinct methods of sensing and knowing place for creative practice.

In her practice, Far North Queensland artist Dr Jacqueline Scotcher epitomises movement and sensing through wayfaring and walking mindfully in nature. Through the phenomenology of walking in this terrain, she came to understand that place could be more than a fixed location and developed a method of wayfaring and painting (Scotcher 2018). Scotcher's (2018) *Hinchinbrook Walk Series* (Figure 2.5) illustrates the results of her immersive experience—walking, camping, observing and sketching—and represents the 'sensuous essence of the hike' (p. 70). Figure 2.6 shows the detail of Scotcher's markmaking process, in which she uses layers of colour and references the distant hills of the mainland. The teeming rain is represented by dripped paint while human presence and movement is symbolised by triangular symbols transiting across the canvas. Wayfaring, for Scotcher, allowed her to sensuously express her bodily movement through place in her paintings.

Figure 2.5—Scotcher J 2017, *Hinchinbrook Walk Series No 1–4*, synthetic polymers on canvas, each 120 cm x 130 cm. Photograph: Scotcher; with permission from the artist.

Figure 2.6—Scotcher J 2017, detail *Hinchinbrook Walk Series, No 1*. Photograph: Scotcher.

Casey (1996) defines three criteria for the practice of bodily movement in place: the body is active while staying and remaining in place, in position; movement takes place in a defined area within a place; and movement is not restricted to a single place, but to a number of places—place becomes the entire region. He maintains that the most striking instance is the journey—'emigrations, pilgrimages, voyages of exchange, and nomadic circulations' (Casey 1996, p. 23). Each term

fosters transition and movement. Longer walking engagement in an extended space can produce a peripatetic or mobile sense of place as the longer the body moves through space the more perceptive it is to the mobile sensory surrounds (Edensor 2010). The ambulatory body moves along the path and produces the individual's idea of place as well as being influenced by the physical surrounds (Edensor 2010). Participation in place, around place and movement between places allows immersion for the journeying subject. Moving through place allows a two-way transfer of the senses of the walking body and the surrounding environment.

Touch is one component of perception, as our feet interact with the ground (Ingold 2011). Schilo (2016) connects movement (e.g., walking) and thinking in terms of visual art with imagination, place and embodied thinking. The body is tactile, sensing through the feet, sight, smells and sounds; hence, walking is a visual activity with sensory benefits.

Bodies and places naturally exist; thus, they are both present and innate in place and the body is the natural way to experience place (Casey 1996). Ingold (2011) suggests that human beings connect and grow creatively in response to elements of interest and, inspired by the journey, relate these processes of growth to reflect life as movement along a path. He recalls recurring themes of life as living along lines, journeying, wayfaring; the natural bonding in movement to the earth and its position in the universe; experiences of the elements, light, sound, visuals, and connects these to making, drawing, writing and storytelling. This encapsulates the meaning or way of life for the journeying artist: being alive in place, making connections, sensing space in the environment and creating meaningful narratives, concepts and art. Solnit (2014) connects the bodily history of the act of walking to how we give particular meanings to regular and universal acts. She contends that,

24

while walking, the imagination can be shaped by the environment or the sensory nature of what is perceived on the walk (Solnit 2014). Sensory activities lead to imagination. For the individual artist wayfarer, the connection between the bodily history in motion and stimuli in the field provides opportunities for imagination.

According to Ingold (2011), the journey has recognisable phases: getting ready, setting out, carrying on and finishing off. These phases are not sharply delineated and it is at the completion of each phase that they are recognised. Ingold's journeying task phases represent the physicality and stages of the wayfarer. Casey (1996) considers not only the place of the event, but also the journeys between, to and from places. These journeying experiences, he contends, are equally eventful. Additionally, he points out that we also dwell in between those places—the interplaces—and as we travel in space and time we collect particular nuances and ideas of emplacement. He contends that we are 'never anywhere, anywhen, but in place' (Casey 1996, p. 39).

2.2.3 Imagination and Memory

Memory and imagination sit together in place as two distinct methods of contemplation. They are complementary and corresponding phenomena (Casey 1996). Imagination is the phenomenon that transports our minds to countless possibilities, taking us further into creativity (Casey 1996), while memory takes us back to what has already happened (Casey 2009). We are enveloped and involved in place, which allows memory to invade our thoughts and entice the imagination (Casey 2009). Casey (1987) describes place as the container of a stabilising continuum of experiences, and attributes an alert and alive memory to connection with place. He contends that memory naturally relates to place (Casey 1987). Memories are fixed and located in place (Bachelard 1994, cited by Cresswell 2015).

Cresswell (2015) positions personal memory and place to be interwoven for selected recall as required.

North Queensland artist Jo Lankester explores landscape through printmaking. Lankester's *Blood Rock* (Figure 2.7) depicts a particular rock on Mer Island (Murray Island) in the Torres Strait. According to Lankester, at high tide the sea washes onto the rock and, as it recedes, a blood like colour seeps from the rock into the sea. The artist would not elaborate on this story as it was not hers to tell; instead, she suggested that viewers could reach their own conclusions.
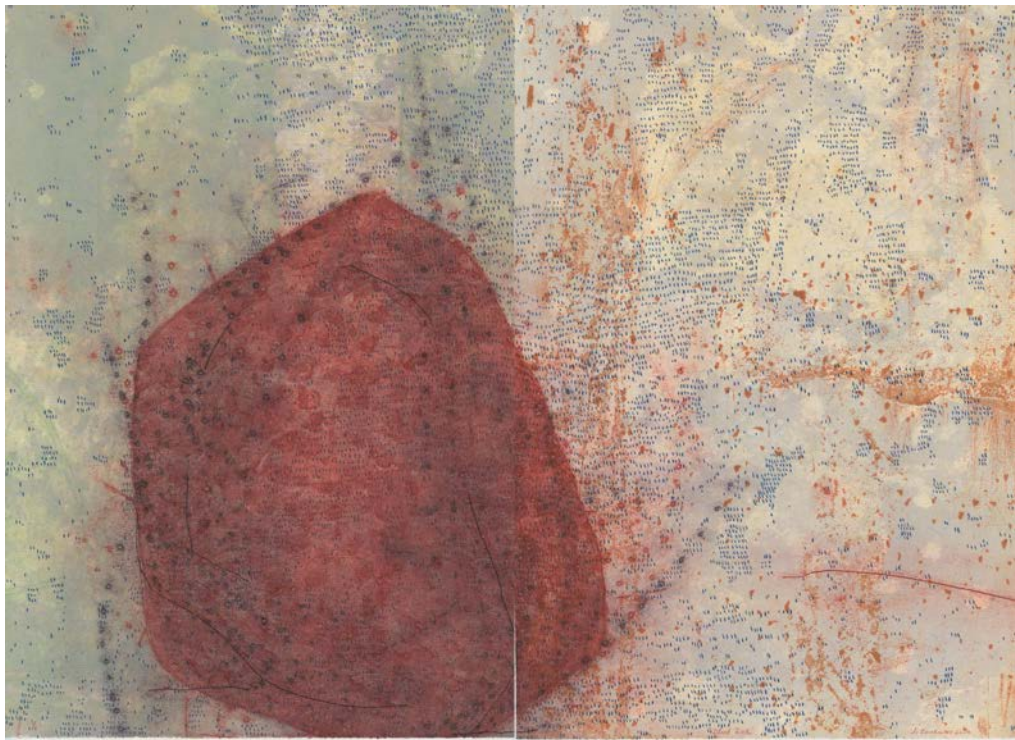
Figure 2.7—Lankester J 2018, *Blood Rock*, Multi-colour plate intaglio, 970 cm x 98 cm. Photograph: Lankester; with permission from the artist.

Lankester's art originates from internalising observations in the field and finding pathways for imaginative expression (McBurnie 2019). Lankester states that she sketches at locations of interest, remaining sentient in her surrounds and perceptive of the ambience. In the studio, memories—like those of her visit to Mer Island—over time revealed colours, marks and shapes that she accumulates on her prints, in several layers, until she has reached the desired outcome.

For both Cresswell (2015) and Casey (1987), place-memory is the ability to bring the past into the view of the present to develop and build awareness of social memory. Public memory consists of memorials, plaques and inscriptions in the landscape (Cresswell 2015). Places of memory usually commemorate the winners of history (Cresswell 2015). Conversely, these places of memory may also 'enact an exclusion, literal and figurative, of those memories that are painful or shameful' (Cresswell 2015, p. 122). The choice of which memories are promoted or erased in a place becomes a political issue as places become sites of dispute (Cresswell 2015). Cresswell (2015, p. 123) cites Kenneth Foote (1997), who suggests that 'places have the power to force hidden and painful memories to the fore through their material existence'. He affirms that, in producing a place of memory, issues of materiality, meaning and practice are combined. Memory for the individual is a choice, while public demonstrations of memory may have powerful affects on social memory.

2.3 Indigenous Belonging

Belonging to country is a significant and complex matter for Indigenous Australians. Before colonisation, there were 500 Indigenous language groups (Moreton-Robinson 2015). Indigenous people owned their land and were taught to know country, the term that connects the land to the individual's place of origin (Moreton-Robinson 2015). Not only did they own the land, but there were large territorial groupings with named nations and tribal units along with smaller groupings and named areas for social and economic use (Memmott & Long 2002).

Indigenous ontological relationships to country and senses of belonging originate from what is known in English as the Dreaming (Moreton-Robinson 2015). Ancestral beings created land and life with knowledge and beliefs that informed First Nations peoples (Moreton-Robinson 2015). Moreton-Robinson maintains that life

forms like animals, plants and humans were created by ancestral beings, as were the physical geographical features of the country with which they were associated. The immortal ancestral beings established Aboriginal ways of living, including moral codes and patterns of behaviour. As creatures of the Dreaming, ancestral beings moved across the country intentionally, leaving behind 'possessions which designate specific sites of significance' (Moreton-Robinson 2015, p. 32). Moreton-Robinson writes that First Nations peoples are descendants and reincarnations of these ancestral beings and derive their sense of belonging to country from them. Ancestral spirits and First Nations peoples share a life force that inextricably binds them to the land (Malpas 1999; Moreton-Robinson 2015). A child's identity is derived from factors like spiritual and totemic ancestry and place of birth, although practices vary between groups (Malpas 1999). This is important for Aboriginal people as they have strong ties to the stories and myths of the land marked with their individual and ancestral origins (Malpas 1999). Rose (2008, p. 118) describes the Dreaming as rolling together the present and the past in a continuous 'wave of living beings who had all worked together to keep the place alive'. Stanner (1979, p. 24) suggests that the Dreaming brings to the fore the:

> Notion of a sacred, heroic time of the indefinitely remote past, such a
> time is also, in a sense of the present. One cannot 'fix' The Dreaming
> in time: it was, and is, everywhen.

Research has indicated that the Australian continent was an Indigenous cultural landscape in its entirety, was known to Aboriginal people and was mostly named (Langton 1996, cited by Memmott & Long 2002). Memmott & Long (2002, p. 45) argue that Indigenous Australia is still one cultural landscape, or rather, numerous cultural landscapes corresponding with different 'Aboriginal societies or cultural blocs'. They maintain that interrelationships existed between the cultural

28

landscape of particular groups through the activities of ancestral beings, travel, exchange and shared histories and experiences, including knowledge of place. This cultural living and knowing contrast with the experiences of non-Indigenous explorers, who described remote Australia as pristine wilderness (Memmott & Long 2002).

By investigating colonial diaries and journals, Pascoe (2018) found evidence of a complex Aboriginal economy. He describes the period prior to colonial incursion as a pre-colonial society and confirms that Aboriginal people built houses and dams, sowed, irrigated and tilled the soil, stored grain, altered rivers, sewed clothes, maintained governments and upheld peace and tranquillity. One example conveyed by Pascoe is that of the Aboriginal people at Cuddie Springs, near Walgett, who ground seeds for flour 30,000 years ago. He considers these people the oldest bakers in the world by around 15,000 years.

Malpas (1999, pp. 3–4) states that the removal of Aboriginal people from their country deprived them of their land and culture and that in 'past times such removal—particularly when it involved imprisonment—frequently led to sickness and death'. Despite this, Moreton-Robinson (2015) proudly declares that colonisation did not destroy the Indigenous ontological relationship to country; however, it did have a detrimental effect on First Nations peoples as they were prohibited from speaking their own languages (Sivak et al. 2019). Considered a civilising function by the Australian Government, this prohibition not only caused the loss of languages, but also destroyed 'intellectually, sophisticated cultural beliefs, practices, and activities' that had previously been transferred generationally (Sivak et al. 2019, p. 2). This loss of 'land, culture, and identity' has subsequently been connected to ill health for First Nations peoples (Sivak et al. 2019, p. 2).

Artist Shirley Macnamara of the Indjalandji-Dhidhanu and Alyawarr people uses memories and stories in her art, mirroring her deep connection to country in North-West Queensland. The name of her artwork, *Nyurruga Muulawaddi* 2017 (Figure 2.8), means 'old woman spinifex'. In constructing the piece, Macnamara reflected on the 50th anniversary of the 1967 Australian referendum while thinking of her grandmother and older members of her family (Moon 2019).

Figure 2.8—Macnamara S 2017, *Nyurruga Muulawaddi*, spinifex sculpture, 40 cm x 32 cm x 18 cm, University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane, Queensland. Copyright Shirley Macnamara and Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne, Copyright of photographic images is held by individual photographers and institutions or QACOMA; with permission from the artist.

For Macnamara, this vessel contains a strong message of loss and strength. Older women usually sang their stories into their art and taught younger generations, but these traditions were disallowed during Macnamara's early life (pers. comm., 2 November 2019). She wove her feelings about her grandmother, older women and family members into this sculptural vessel. This work differs from other pieces because Macnamara picked the oldest and hardiest spinifex to weave, representing and remembering her grandmothers and all the older ladies. Macnamara knew where

to find this particular spinifex. She advised that she could not sing the songs into her art because she had only been taught some of the language and the meaning was conveyed in songs; however, she can weave the stories into her art. She continues these stories and memories through her spinifex art and ensures that her 'thoughts and feelings of country go into *Nyurruga Muulawaddi,* that's the only way I can ensure the meaning lives on because I can't sing them'.

Macnamara ([Alcastan Gallery, Melbourne] email, 9 November 2019) was awarded the Telstra Wandjuk Marika Memorial Three-Dimensional Award at the Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Awards in 2017. In addition to the technical mastery she demonstrated by weaving one of the harshest materials, the judges lauded her precise engineering and mature practice. This work is deeply connected to country and the land, songs and stories of Macnamara's birthplace.

Interestingly, Macnamara recognises her artwork as a container of stories and songs—the narrative woven into the form. Gibson's (1992) interpretation of the meaning underlying Papunya Tula paintings from the Western Desert artists aligns with Macnamara's ideology. He interprets the work of these artists as representative of complex myths and stories, sharing essential knowledge concerning aspects of country, such as meteorology, flora and fauna. Gibson explains that these paintings are visual memories for a specific audience who internalise and imagine themselves within the spaces and elements presented. Similarly, Macnamara maintains that everything she makes has a story.

2.4 Non-Indigenous 'Place' Since Colonisation

Settler colonialism in Australia is an organising structure that breaks down the social and cultural norms of First Nations peoples while striving for domination of Aboriginal societies (Wolfe 2006). Wolfe (2006, p. 388) provides a list of

characteristics of settler colonialism that have been used to maintain the structure, including 'officially encourage[ing] miscegenation, the breaking-down of native title into alienable individual freeholds, native citizenship, child abduction, religious conversion [and] resocialization in total institutions such as missions or boarding schools'. It is from this beginning that the identity of non-Indigenous Australia has developed.

Matters of identity and place pose questions for non-Indigenous Australians. Gibson (1992) and Carter (2010) examine place within the context of British colonial incursion. Their writings put forth postcolonial interrogations and critiques of culture and identity in Australian history. Place is not the starting point of enquiry for these theorists; rather, it is the end result of their analysis.

Gibson (1992) describes colonial Australia in terms of definitional space: it is the land down under, positioned as a land of plenty for Britain. It is also a bifurcation—an anomaly—composed of opposites, including distance from the rest of the world and the concept of nowhere, an enigma for the West. A myth of binary opposites has been built; happiness and adversity appear juxtaposed with hardship and felicity (Gibson 1992). The texture of this forged identity is fraught with absences and questions about the authenticity of place.

Gibson (1992) points towards a shift in how Australia has been identified, interpreted and massaged by the mythologies of pro-colonial writers keen on Western perspectives. He discusses changing ideas of space and knowledge since the Renaissance, during which space was a 'container of objective, permanent knowledge' used to access and colonise (Gibson 1992, p. 5). The attitudes of non-Indigenous Australians were derived from Renaissance imperialism. Australia: a land waiting to be known, possessed—an empty void waiting to be filled by colonial

might. The Renaissance container then, is filled with the settler-colonial force; it is a destructive *chora*—a one-sided becoming that brings imperialism into being.

Carter (2010) reasons that the historian is a spectator of the historical scene, not questioning the stage conventions; however, they seek to order the play of history. Explorers and settlers perform the roles in the play that is imperial history and some are elevated to the status of mythic heroes in the process (Carter 2010). This history was written for the usurper.

The creation of non-Indigenous Australia by explorers—who mapped, named and inhabited it—was, in Carter's (2010, p. xxi) terms, 'spatial history'. He journeyed into historical texts to discover gaps, silences and choices of language that allowed specific readings of space for those who wished to achieve ownership and provide a version of history. Cook renamed geographical sites like Rockingham Bay and Shelburne Bay after politicians; other places were named after royalty, vessels or events. Carter (2010, p. 8) equates the naming of places to a spatial discourse that transforms the 'natural world into an object of knowledge'. Those with knowledge acted with power. These names all related to distant people or places of significance to Britain with no relationship to this ancient land. Carter argues that the idea of Cook's travelling created a vision for future explorers to colonise.

To convince potential settlers that Australia was a land worth colonising, myths were created that promised wondrous rewards ready to be claimed and failures needed to be explained (Gibson 1992). Gibson (1992, p. 17) describes these myths as an early version of the 'Australian Sublime', a series of fabricated narratives that 'defeat yet ennoble the reader'. These narratives continued, and were central to, an Australian sense of place through time. Failed heroic protagonists such as Patrick White's Voss, following Leichhardt's doomed exploration, were necessary for a

'postcolonial society to help make its peace, conditionally, with the continent it could not defeat' (Gibson 1992, p. 17).

Nationalism, built into grandiose bicentennial celebrations, promotes social mores and alienates Indigenous cultures (Gibson 1992). Eclectic objects, ideas and memorabilia, brought into the country to give a sense of belonging, eventually metamorphose into a seemingly natural version of an Australian culture (Gibson 1992). According to Gibson, many Australian artists gather and devise ways of utilising whatever they find, making meaning—making it their own. He describes this as postmodernism with remnants of colonialism at its core.

2.4.1 Pathways to Acknowledgement

Moreton-Robinson (2015) challenges the concept of postcolonialism on the basis that Indigenous belonging, for the original owners, is ontological and all-powerful. Smith (2012, p. 25) cites the poet and activist Bobbi Sykes, stating that 'post-colonial can only mean one thing: the colonizers have left'. Given this has not yet occurred, Smith (2012, p. 101) indicates that the term itself is problematic from an Indigenous perspective because it names 'colonialism as finished business'. She contends that Western intellectuals use the language of postcoloniality as an expedient device to attribute and retain power, while many Indigenous people resist debates about it. Smith (2012, p. 14) explains that the Indigenous experience is framed by imperialism and that Indigenous peoples globally have had to develop and comprehend specific ways to talk about the 'history, the sociology, the psychology and the politics of imperialism and colonialism as an epic story telling of huge devastation, painful struggle and persistent survival'. She asserts that the 'spatial vocabulary of colonialism' has three concepts: the line 'used to map territory … and mark the limits of colonial power'; the centre, 'an orientation to the systems of

power'; and the outside, as it 'positioned territory and people in an oppositional relation to the colonial centre' (Smith 2012, p. 55). Moreton-Robinson (2015) considers the concept of *terra nullius*—land belonging to no one—as a legal fiction. Australia was claimed on the basis of this concept, an event that was followed by systematic dispossession, murder and rape (Moreton-Robinson 2015). The pain and suffering inflicted on Indigenous peoples is a strong message in Smith's discussion of power imbalances during and after colonialism.

Further, Smith (2012) insists that Indigenous language, knowledge and culture have been devalued, silenced and condemned in academia. She explains that decolonisation engages with imperialism and colonialism on many levels, which involves, for the researcher, critically deciphering the 'underlying assumptions, motivations and values which inform research practices' (Smith 2012, pp. 20–1). Strang (2006) expresses a similar concern regarding the equality of academic relationships and ensuring that Indigenous cultural knowledge is not controlled by postcolonial non-Indigenous academics.

David Jones (2017, p. 13), an academic and artist of the Dalungdalee, Dalungbarra and Butchulla peoples, gives a powerful critique of the 'institutionalized and political racism in contemporary Australian society'. Jones (2017, p. 15) states that the 'Killing Time' in the early development of the colonies was followed by 'invasion, war and massacre' that 'sped along the song lines'. His 2015 artwork, *Tools for the Australian Amateur Scientist* (Figure 2.9) screams of violence, trauma, massacre and anger. The composition is harrowing, with a threatening blade—ready for further action—across a bloody row of skulls. Further, these skulls represent specimens of deceased Indigenous people were brought to Britain (Turnbull 2007).

Jones does not explain his artwork, leaving the way clear for the viewer to grasp its meaning.

Figure 2.9—Jones D 2015, *Tool of the Australian Amateur Scientist*, multiple block *a la poupee intaglio* etching on Hahnemühle, 12 cm x 20 cm. Photograph: Jones; with permission from the artist.

Jones considers an Australian identity for the nation is an imaginary and creative process for Indigenous people and promontes non-belief, resistance and 'resilience in the face of the continuing effects of this [colonial] settlement' (2017, p. 25). Jones maintains that the settler culture is a turbulent, cruel rotation of anxiety, ignorance and failure to remember the crunch of Indigenous bones during the colonial invasion. He uses humour even though his message is direct, clear and concise. In the way of a gentle rebuke, Jones's humour in one poem encourages the reader to reflect and ponder his intent, giving it an arresting power:

> So many Aussies,
> Jumping on our dead,
> One fell down
> And woke in dread.
>
> Went an' called the doctor,
> The doctor said,
> 'No more Aussies,
> Jumping on our dead['] (Jones 2017, p. 56).

Smith (2012) defines Christopher Columbus not as the hero or father of imperialism but as the cause of massive suffering. In Indigenous literature, figures like Columbus are not admired (Smith 2012). Smith (2012, p. 22) describes imperialism as a 'chronology of events related to discovery, conquest, exploitation, distribution and appropriation'. Similarly, Pascoe (2018, p. 5) aligns with Smith's analysis, stating that imperialism is more than an 'economic and military exercise; it's an act of ideology, the blatant confidence to see "others" as tools for the will of the European'. He maintains that explorers' journals clearly show that they were in Australia to examine the landscape for profit without regard for who or what they were erasing (Pascoe 2018).

It is difficult to imagine a world where everything one knows is renamed and erased by people from another culture. As Smith (2012) points out, colonial world maps secured the position of Indigenous societies on the fringe of the world, in part by erasing Aboriginal names. Renaming and forced movement from the land are about power.

Smith (2012, p. 35) contends that history is about power, and it is 'because of this relationship with power that we have been excluded, marginalized and "Othered"'. She suggests that history does not apply to Indigenous peoples and lacks importance for them as it does not convey the truth, does not change the facts of Indigenous marginalisation and lacks the power to bring justice (Smith 2012).

Smith (2012) ponders the significance of decolonisation in history and argues that the colonial experience traps Indigenous people in modernity. She contends that until Indigenous people have settled the unfinished business of the modern, there will be no postmodern. To her, colonisation is continuing and Indigenous people are still searching for justice.

2.4.2 Non-Indigenous Sense of Place

According to Malouf (1998, p. 32), Australians of European ancestry share the 'complex fate' of grasping to understand how it is to be in this place. Tensions exist between the Western world and the perceived environment and place of Australia; there are opposite hemispheres and seasons, different flora and fauna and different views of the stars (Malouf 1998). The duality of finding identity between the physical place and an inherited European culture may be the most interesting and unique component of Australian culture (Malouf 1998). Cameron (2003) develops Malouf's concept of inherited cultural and physical tension. He maintains that the tensions between a European cultural heritage and Australian physicality require constant rethinking and reinvention of who we are as non-Indigenous Australians. Continual reinvention conjures up restlessness—a search for identity and belonging—creating tensions that manifest in debates about becoming a republic, cutting ties, independence and new journeys (Cameron 2003). Cameron (2003, p. 1) describes the unease that Australians may have over going it alone—a process that is complicated by tensions 'between European and Aboriginal heritages'. The search for a non-Indigenous sense of place is complex.

Cameron (2003) points out that resurgences in awareness of a sense of Australian place lies deeply in the country's history. He lists uneasy, tense historical events that sit below the surface of non-Indigenous identity and place, including remoteness and isolation in the nineteenth century, the experiences of convicts and free settlers, early European perceptions of native flora and fauna, the decimation of Aboriginal people and the limited understanding of their deep connection to country, the lack of knowledge about agriculture and pastoralism and the slowness with which artists and writers came to appreciate the country. Cameron's inventory

acknowledges that Australia has a difficult past from which to structure a sense of place. He states that there is a need to go beyond an emotional response to a place: 'it includes a growing sense of what the place demands of us in our attitudes and actions' (Cameron 2003, p. 4). Non-Indigenous attitudes and actions demand a moral, ethical and emotional response to the past to attend to the present. Developing this point, Cameron turns to Tacey (1995), a contemporary literary writer, who acknowledges coming to terms with sense of place through spirituality. Likewise, Magon (1998) asserts that Australian people are in need of spiritual involvement and an ethical sensibility as a result of social change and the breakdown of secularism.

Whatever might emerge from the Euro-Australian experience would be considerably different from our past English or European spirituality (Tacey 2003). Tacey (2003, p. 245) quotes AD Hope's poem *Australia* 1939, imagining that a 'new 'spirit' would arise from Australian soil, a "savage and scarlet [spirit] as no green hills dare"' (Hope, 1992, p. 71). The imagery is explicit, animistic and antithetical to a soothing English or European spiritual experience. Tacey (2003) describes Hope's depiction of the Australian spirit as savage, untamed and primal—ready to challenge the reader to understand the Australian experience. He infers that Hope's use of the word 'scarlet' suggests more than just geographical features: the colours represent red mountain ranges, but also red blood, signifying the rawness of instinct and passion (Tacey 2003). Tacey's primordial spiritual experience in Hope's *Australia* speaks to Casey's experience of place: it is dynamic, connecting the Australian landscape and earth with bodily physicality.

Similarly, Malouf (1998) connects the body to the spirit of the land. He maintains that the Australian landscape, inclusive of its unique flora and fauna, contains a palpable spirit. Malouf specifically discusses Australian landscape

painting and brings artmaking together with poetry. For Malouf, poetry is an interiorising activity. He points out that the image and rhythm of language is continuous with bodily movement, incorporating both the mind and the body. Further, he affirms that daily living in a place, registering the surroundings with the senses and consciousness, provides a place for imaginative habitation. Malouf's sense of place involves enriching the consciousness by internalising and imagining the inhabitant into deeper connections with the spirit of the land.

Tacey (2003) maintains that on entering the vast Australian outback our sense of place calls for a transformation of attitude. He connects this notion with white, European artists (e.g., Judith Wright, AD Hope, Patrick White and Les Murray) who share a belief that Australian people are 'predisposed by history, geography and divine grace, to experience a reawakening of the sacred' (Tacey 2003, p. 246). Tacey (2003, p. 246) also proposes that the 'reawakening of the sacred' in the arts culminates in the 'relative optimism and earth-romanticism of Australian poetry and painting'. He adds that at this time non-Indigenous people were becoming aware of living on the sacred ground of Aboriginal Australia (Tacey 2003). He contends that the 'Aboriginal sacred experience becomes … our own cultural heritage as soon as we send cultural tap-roots down into Aboriginal soil' (Tacey 2003, p. 246). He qualifies this statement by adding that non-Indigenous people do not appropriate or devour Aboriginal Dreaming, but that we allow the Dreaming to come towards us. He also advocates being attentive and sensitive to the land that we might find we are 'Aboriginalised by dwelling in the spirit of the place' (Tacey 2003, p. 247). He points out that Aboriginal people know of non-Indigenous people desiring deeper roots to the land and their response is that 'white men cannot conquer foreign soil, because in it there dwell strange ancestor-spirits who reincarnate themselves in the

new-born' (Aboriginal tribal elders, as quoted by Jung 1964, cited by Tacey 2003, p. 247).

Malouf's view is similar to that of Tacey. He feels that taking shared experiences of aspects of Australia into our consciousness at a deep symbolic level is a way to begin finding possession of a place (Malouf 1998). He points out that this possession is not appropriation: we come to this possession 'not legally, and not just physically, but as Aboriginal people, for example, have always possessed the world we live in here—in the imagination' (Malouf 1998, p. 39). Malouf (1998) points out that rather than appropriating or displacing the original owners, this is a move towards the merging of understanding between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, shared spiritual mindfulness and reconciliation.

The containment of place resists an easy outcome for Australia. How the container is perceived is important. As a continent, this space and place contain us; however, it does not do so fairly and equitably to all. For artists, Casey's (1996) phenomenology of sensing raw impressions of perceptual horizons allows reflection not only on the scenes around us, but importantly, on the treatment of First Nations peoples as they recover from colonial invasion. Before Australia can achieve reconciliation, the myth of postcolonialism must be shattered and carefully rebuilt in collaboration with First Nations peoples. For Australia, the container as *chora* and receptacle is still coming into being as we move towards reconciliation.

2.5 Ode to Reconciliation

Reimagining Australia as an equitable place for all is a positive outcome. In 2015, Stuart Corbett and I wrote a poem, *What Footprints Lie Beneath*:

This land of chequered history; criss-crossed by paths of time.
Colonial incursion, dispossession: such a crime.

The tracks of people of the land, spiritually their place,
Trampled by people on the land, careless in their haste.
Explorers 'discovering' land where First Nations peoples roam:
Settlers taking ownership of someone else's home.

We're obliged as people of this land, without regard to race
To respect each other's culture and revere a sense of place.
Centuries of people have walked this timeless land,
Thirst quenched from common waterways; its harshness felt firsthand.
When we recognise our differences: discuss them face-to-face,
We will become one people; belong to the same place.

Reimagining North Queensland and its history up to here,
As a colonial terra nullius; white vessels filled with air.
Then the jugs are shattered, all flawed systems fall apart,
Slow reconciliation; thin black joints begin to start.
Sparse lines and missing pieces show how fragile is this base;
The bond uniting cultures and imagining of place.

The paths of modern travellers are often sealed with tar.
Most will go by boat or train or aeroplane or car.
Venture off the well-worn paths; be excited and alive.
Walk where those who roamed this place, struggled to survive.
When you're standing on North Queensland tracks, what do they bequeath?
Think of those who crossed this place. What footprints lie beneath?

North and Far North Queensland has a harsh past that sits uncomfortably with me. It is jarring to know that colonial incursion has occurred, harming and erasing Indigenous people in the process. In my exploration, I was armed with my art equipment and this background knowledge—memories of a past with implications for a future reconciliation. I immersed myself in the places where Indigenous people and explorers crossed paths and reimagined the feeling of each place, sensing it and annotating it through drawings in my visual diary. The process of travelling these vast distances, camping at relevant sites and building a solid compendium of information for use in the studio formed part of my methodology. This is discussed in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3: Cyclic Research: Creation to Concept

3.1 Journey to Place—the Research Model

This exegesis emerged from an aspiration to understand place in North and Far North Queensland through an investigation of colonial explorers' journeys. The cyclic, reiterated and dynamic structure of the research—involving going into the field and returning to the studio—brought both practice-led research and research-led practice into the methodology (Smith & Dean 2009).

Smith and Dean's (2009) iterative cyclic web of methodology is an innovative tool for reflection on the eclectic gathering of material, inspiration and concepts. Researching, journeying, experimenting and piecing together combinations that are disparate but useful helped define a metaphorical concept for the development of a large body of art production.

Smith and Dean (2009, p. 2) suggest that 'academic research can lead to creative practice' because the combination of research and practice is 'interwoven in an iterative, cyclic web'. As seen in Figure 3.1, their model allows for entry or exit at any point in the cycle. The model is loosely divided into two sections: the left outlines research-led practice and the right defines practice-led research and the creative process. From necessity, I began my generation of ideas and development process using research-led practice. My initial idea was to follow the paths of colonial explorers. This led to an empirical approach in which I decided who and where to research and chose my journeys. Investigations of place, colonial explorers and First Nations peoples were conjoined on this research path. Development, interpretations and synthesis of themes drawn from the explorers and their travels

produced new ideas and connections. At any time, I was able to bring my research ideas across to the right hand side of the model for creative development.
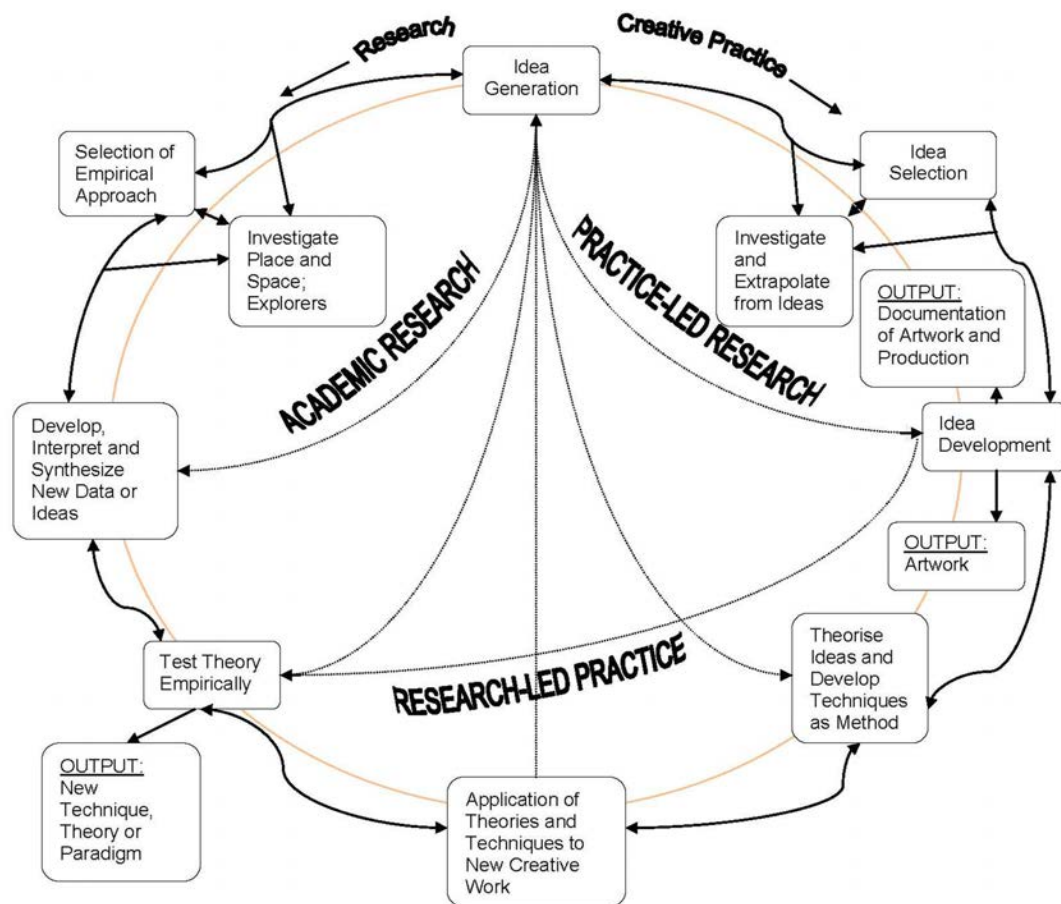
Figure 3.1—The iterative, cyclic web of practice-led research and research-led practice. Adapted from Smith & Dean (2009).

The two sides of the model are closely connected to each other. At any point in the research process, an idea could begin in practice, after which I investigated and deepened the artwork, visually and textually documenting in visual diaries as I worked, until I had developed one or more ideas. When necessary, I revised my thinking by undertaking further research and continued creation. The end result of the practice-led research was an exhibition. My application of techniques and theories is analysed in Chapter 5. Smith and Dean's (2009) model allowed for flexible, reflective movement through the research-to-artwork process. This methodology helped establish the journey concept. These journeys were conceptual

as well as physical, comprising the research, my following of the explorers' paths, artmaking in place, the process of creativity and the final exhibition. I returned to the model often, particularly around each journey, as research and artwork developed.

On my journeys, I reimagined places from the perspective and sentience of memory absorbed from my research, particularly those pertaining to explorers and First Nations peoples during colonisation. The research provided scaffolds for reimagining and considering the past while being in and coming to know place.

One example of how I applied the model was during the creation of my 2014 artwork, *Dry Walk, Capt. Billy's Landing, Cape York* (see Figure 5.30). I had visited a place that Kennedy might have passed on his trek, recorded visual data from the entire scene with annotations and memorised how it felt in the October heat. I composed a set of drawings (see Figure 5.31) made up of extremely busy markmaking. In the distance I could see the sea, a major factor for Kennedy's ability to obtain supplies. Next, I crossed to development and synthesising of the materials; however, I needed to empirically test the concept of the artwork. Refining my concept and output, I realised that a fine, linear depiction in the background, engulfed by a strong red/tangerine colour would illustrate the explorer's difficulty and angst. This was a break from my usual markmaking that resulted in a new technique.

The research area was located in North and Far North Queensland and encapsulated the Burdekin River west of Townsville, and from Cardwell to the top of the Cape York Peninsula. Having spent a good deal of my life in North and Far North Queensland, I was intent on understanding my connection to place. Known generally as the wet and dry tropics, this area comprises diverse environments from lush rainforests to savannah and dry sclerophyll. Seasonal timing was important to

avoid dangerous weather and to have access to water. Harding (2011) portrays the torrid zone, or tropics, from a European perspective, as a place of pestilence, dangers and heat. She suggests that the term 'torrid zone' was Aristotelian in origin—too hot for 'civilised habitation, a place of great horrors, and a dangerous place of pestilence' in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Harding 2011, p. 2). She also observed that the tropics could be viewed in a positive light as paradise, but also one of pestilence. In this, Harding was describing a dichotomous view of the tropics. She saw a positive view as 'shining a spotlight on the critical importance of the people … of the tropical world, grappling with the challenges and finding their solutions' (Harding 2011, p. 4). Harding showcased and explored a new vision by proposing problems and solutions for the tropics.

Harding's positivity for the tropics mirrors my own. Yet, at the beginning of my research, I had to revisit my own sense of place and perception of the tropics. During my first journey to Cardwell, Rockingham Bay and surrounds, I was comfortable knowing the area. On my second journey to Cape York, I began to understand how enormous the land area—my northern *chora*—was to be. In North and Far North Queensland these areas are really only accessible in the winter. In the warmer months, the weather is too unpredictable, due to the threats of heat, occasional cyclones and flooding. Despite that, the geographical changes—from dry to wet tropics, savannah and sclerophyll to rivers, creeks and seascapes—are stunning. The region is always changing, which granted me a deeper understanding of North and Far North Queensland. My interest in the explorers provided another way for me to understand my position. The following section offers a brief summary of my journeys.

3.2 Four Journeys—A Short Summary

In 2012, I travelled to Cardwell to meet with an archaeologist, Phillip Pentecost, my guide to the region where Kennedy and Dalrymple entered Far North Queensland. I was shown this area from Rockingham Bay, then north to Bilyana, south of Tully. My journey to Cape York, also in 2012, was unknown territory, but it enabled me to create a formative body of work for the first exhibition, *Energies and Crossings*.

My third journey, in 2013, took me to Cape York a second time. Lastly, I journeyed around sections of the Burdekin River in 2014. Artworks from these two journeys were developed using data from my first two journeys and the first exhibition. The end result was the summative exhibition, *Imagining Place*, in 2015.

3.2.1 Finding the Niche

My preliminary research indicated that previous artist-researchers had not investigated and visually documented contemporary place at sites visited by Leichhardt, Kennedy and Dalrymple. Several artists had visually documented the tropical north, including Dr Anneke Silver, Dr Anne Lord, Dr James Brown and Ron McBurnie; however, there had been no practice-led research-based investigations of Leichhardt, Kennedy and Dalrymple in visual art, nor connections made between the explorers. A visual documentation of place and background knowledge regarding colonisation provided the knowledge structure for reimagining how this particular place may have been.

It was necessary to narrow the scope of my research to three explorers to fit within the scope of a doctoral study and exhibition. My task, as the artist-researcher, was to bring my research concerning place, colonial incursion, explorers and First

Nations peoples to a chosen site, then become sentient, hear, feel and perceive. Becoming sentient is term I use to describe the development of my connection to a place. Apart from my research of an area, it is not that I know the particular site, as I have not previously seen these places. I take the time to sense through my bodily emplacement and my art making to grow my understanding and creativity. Visual artists experience, document and transform their craft through creativity.

My artmaking is an individual process: my way of seeing and interpreting places with the accumulated knowledge from my research and a lifetime of drawing. Markmaking is akin to a handwritten signature. My marks are signatures of my own and the artworks that result are my responses to place. Included in each artwork are compositional elements, including tonal qualities, use of line, shape, colour, site selection, direction of view and time of day. Observation and visual documentation were essential to recording and memorising for further scrutiny in the studio. North and Far North Queensland as place had not previously been scrutinised in this manner; thus, there was a gap in knowledge. In this research and exhibition, I questioned a turbulent past of colonial exploration and invasion in North and Far North Queensland. The deliberate haze of forgetfulness over Queensland's incursion was metaphorically lifted as the colonial might of the containers were shattered and re-bonded in the hope for collaboration towards reconciliation. This research sought to bring awareness to place in North and Far North Queensland.

3.2.2 Shaping the Research

My early investigations into the paths taken by the explorers revealed patterns in their connections. In the dual role of the artist-researcher I paralleled the role of the explorer as I travelled along similar paths. This was practice-led research at inception: onsite observation, time, sentience, active drawing and visual recording

that was collected for later studio inquiry and research-led practice. Further material was investigated for each of the subsequent journeys. The first research question revolved around onsite visitation and immersion: How do practice-led research, research-led practice and immersion within significant North and Far North Queensland sites contribute to the presentation of a new understanding of the essences of these loci?

On location and guided by an historical perspective on colonisation, I observed, reimagined and visually and photographically documented while remaining sentient, particularly to the effect of being in place and my emotional responses. The essence of loci is my ontological, emotional and mental response to place. They relate to my personal reflection on where I am and these are recorded in my responses—notes, drawings and photographs. These are then sorted into a rough order after my return to the studio. Using this, I created emergent artwork for *Energies and Crossings*. After performing more research, several subsequent journeys, further immersion and connection of concepts led to the main exhibition, *Imagining Place*. The exhibitions are discussed in Chapter 5. The second research question facilitated the next phase of development—that of production: How does the creation of art reflect new cultural, physical, multisensory and emotional connections?

My process of creation came from a combination of research and my embodiment in place. Equipped with this knowledge, I sat with my materials on site and became sentient in an attempt to understand the environment. At first, there was serenity—the water flowed, the wind rustled or was still, the rocks were sharp, the riverbanks were dry—and every place was different. Paths around the watercourses helped me get a feel for how horses and men on foot would have walked through the

thick bush where I trekked. Similarly, I felt sensitivity for the land belonging to First Nations peoples. Responding to the past, I reimagined and sought emotional connections.

Drawing was my main method of visual annotation. The elements and principles of design that I learned early in my career were instinctively part of the process. Hawkins (2015, p. 255) maintains that drawing is about discovery, as the artist seeks to be 'led to see, to be drawn into the intimate relationship with the object' or environment. This intimacy with the environment, transmitted from hand to eye, resonates with rich 'multi-textured and sensory experiences' (Hawkins 2015, p. 255). Drawing a line was a responsive, emotional experience in which the energy in the body allowed pressure on the drawing implement to contain my expressive responses.

Line, shape, tone, texture, colour and space are the elements important to the production of form (Ocvirk et al. 1998). Line is the element important to the mark-maker. Marks are the signature of the artist, as they identify the creator. Line can be dynamic, soft, harsh or productive of emotion—it can be as ubiquitous as place. In the field, I selected elements to use, including angles, colours, shapes, tones and whether to cast in shadows or strong light. This process was a conversation with place. Markmaking and notetaking, sometimes similar, were the foundations of my studio investigation into creativity.

My creative practice emerged from integrated aspects of my embodiment in place along with the reimagining of less settled memories of place. Smith and Dean's (2009) model allowed me the space to have ideas, notes, drawings and photographs alongside academic research, with creative work as the outcome. This could

sometimes be messy. Figure 3.2 demonstrates an example of the collation of drawings, maps and tools.
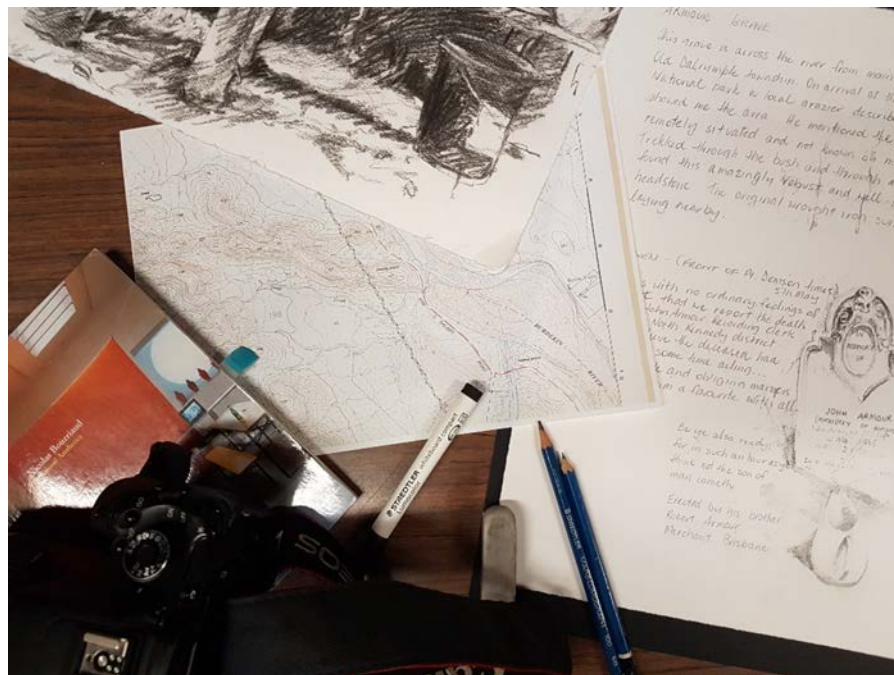
Figure 3.2—Hook S 2014, Parts and paths to creativity. Photograph: Hook.

I looked for understanding and the formation of new concepts by collating relationships between visual and textual material. Conceptually, inspiration or light came from 'between the artefacts [and] that makes the radiance' (Gibson 2010, p. 589). Bourriaud (2002) notes that making form (i.e., art) is a chance encounter between parallel, but disparate elements, the process of which leads to new concepts. Carter's (2007) concept of *double movement* follows a similar mode, as the elements of interest are deconstructed or reviewed and brought together into new families of ideas. He describes these as 'techniques of invention'—the process of taking something with a certain meaning and reading it differently to produce new significance (Carter 2007, p. 15). The negotiation of creative research is to allow the 'unpredictable and differential situation to influence what is found' (Carter 2007, p. 16). This knowing of the world through multisensory, emotionally open and near-random selection is a 'sign of sophistication' (Carter 2007, p. 16). It is important for

the production of knowledge to continuously invent, create, and make, all the while alert for any new provocation to reach anew into the cyclic research process.

3.3 Journeys and Pathways

Following the paths of the three explorers involved an extensive amount of travel, both by car and on foot. Ingold (2011), using making (carpentry, in this case) as an analogy for a journey, outlines three phases of motion. This model applies also to my journey to the remote Cape York. The analogy is relevant to artmaking more broadly—a journey in itself.

Each of my journeys entailed a process. For example, the journey to Cape York comprised:

1. preparation, including planning in advance for a six-week period and packing maps, art materials and supplies for survival and protection

2. undertaking the journey and, when complete, unpacking

3. reflection, research and readiness for the next journey.

In all cases, the vehicle was the tool of mobility, conjoined with body of the artist who enables the journey (Ingold 2010). In preparation, maps were pored over, explorer texts surveyed, art equipment readied and the four-wheel drive packed. Before beginning, I completed a course in four-wheel driving and first aid. To choose sites for interpretation, I overlaid maps from the explorers over modern road maps. Detailed survey maps assisted in tracking the route taken by Kennedy and ascertaining the accessibility of sites. Points of connection with the explorers were noted and near vicinities indicated on the map.

These journeys required research into the connections between colonial explorers and First Nations peoples. Once I had surveyed theories of place, studied

52

the phenomenological factors relevant to finding my artistic connections to place and generated a flexible methodology, this data concerning colonial explorers and First Nations peoples was essential to developing a path forward. Chapter 4 discusses selected parts of explorer trails and includes examples from my journeys.

Chapter 4: Colonial Explorers and First Nations Peoples

4.1 Connections

There were several early colonial and exploratory expeditions in North and Far North Queensland. My research focused on three explorers: The Prussia-born Ludwig Leichhardt, Edmund Beasley Kennedy of England and George Elphinstone Dalrymple of Scotland. In 1848, Kennedy set out on his land exploration. He started at Rockingham Bay, north of Cardwell, and travelled towards the *Ariel*, a restocking ship, docked at Albany Island across a small strait from the tip of Cape York (Beale 1970). I identified connections based on the converging paths of these explorers, which guided the direction of my journeys.

Due to the immensity of the colonial expeditions, I chose specific sections of their routes (see Map 4.1). In 1845, Leichhardt camped on the Burdekin River. Figures 4.1 and 4.2 show a monument for him that stands nearby. From there, Leichhardt followed the Burdekin River north to what became known as the Valley of Lagoons (Leichhardt 1847).
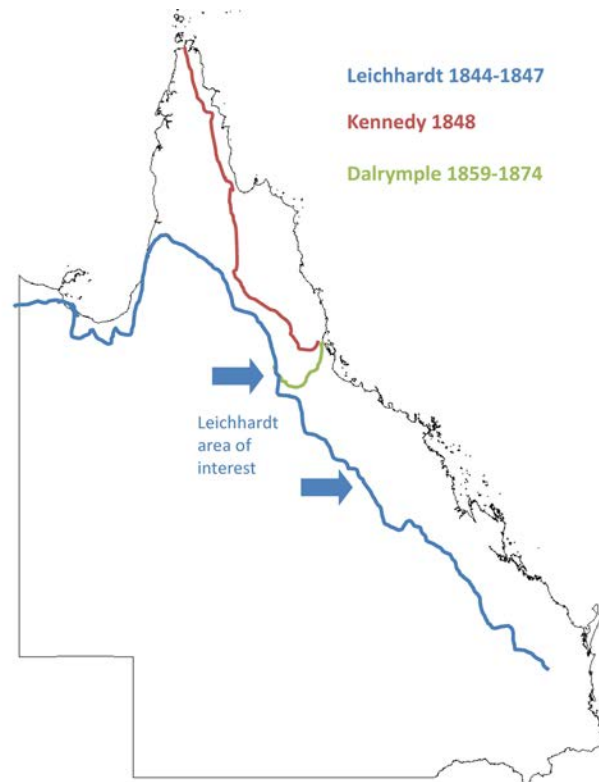
Map 4.1—Map of Leichhardt, Kennedy and Dalrymple's journeys.

Figure 4.1—Monuments to Leichhardt, Dalrymple National Park, Burdekin River, 2014. Photograph: Hook.
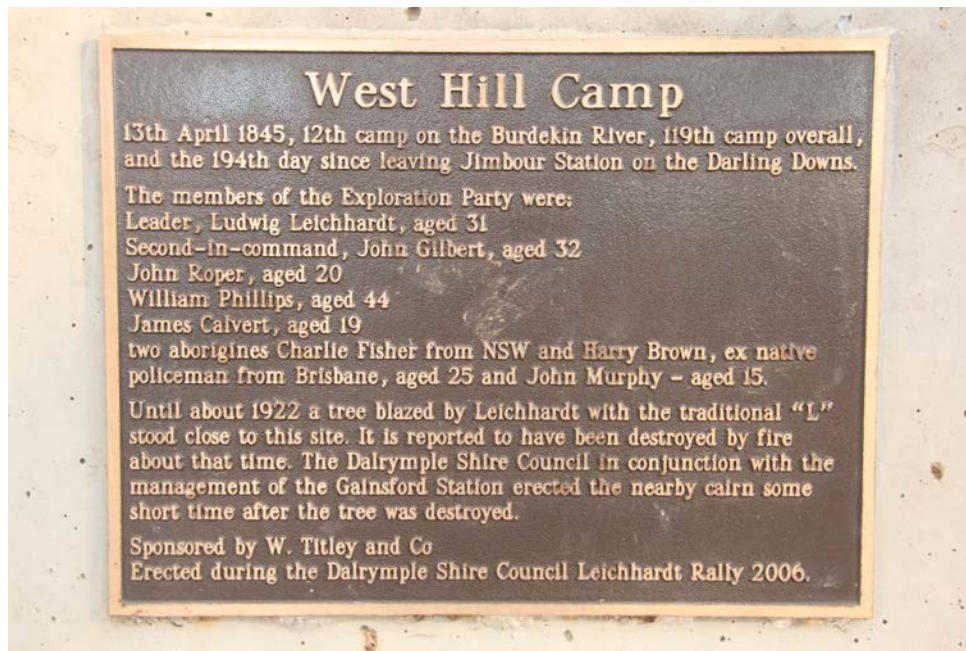
Figure 4.2—Detail of Leichhardt Monument, Burdekin River, 2014. Photograph: Hook.

Prior to February 1859, Dalrymple had read Leichhardt's report of the richness of the grazing land at the Valley of Lagoons (Farnfield 1968). The explorer and entrepreneur gained a licence in 1863 to manage the vast grazing property at Valley of Lagoons the following year (Farnfield 1968). This land belonged to the Gugu Badhun people. From 1864, he assisted the development of Rockingham Bay—later to become Cardwell—and pushed a dray and bullock road over the Seaview Range to the Valley of Lagoons property (Farnfield 1968). Dalrymple, by acting on Leichhardt's report, linked himself to Leichhardt's explorations. Before departing Australia due to ill health, Dalrymple's last venture was in 1874, when he travelled by sea to Somerset at the top of Cape York (Farnfield 1968). Dalrymple's interest in both sides of the Seaview Range link the three explorers.

4.2 Leichhardt

Leichhardt's 1844 journey opened the way for colonial setters and explorers in North Queensland. Leichhardt was a naturalist with interests in geography, geology, botany and zoology (Erdos 1963). The objective of his expedition was to

establish a communication and trade route at the Gulf of Carpentaria for the northwest coasts, to facilitate engagement with South-East Asia and the world (Erdos 1963). In September 1844, Leichhardt led an expedition from Darling Downs through the Burdekin and deep into Cape York, following the Mitchell River, and then west to Port Essington (see Map 4.2). This journey is indicated on the map on the legend as 1844-45. Leichhardt's next two journeys are not part of this research.
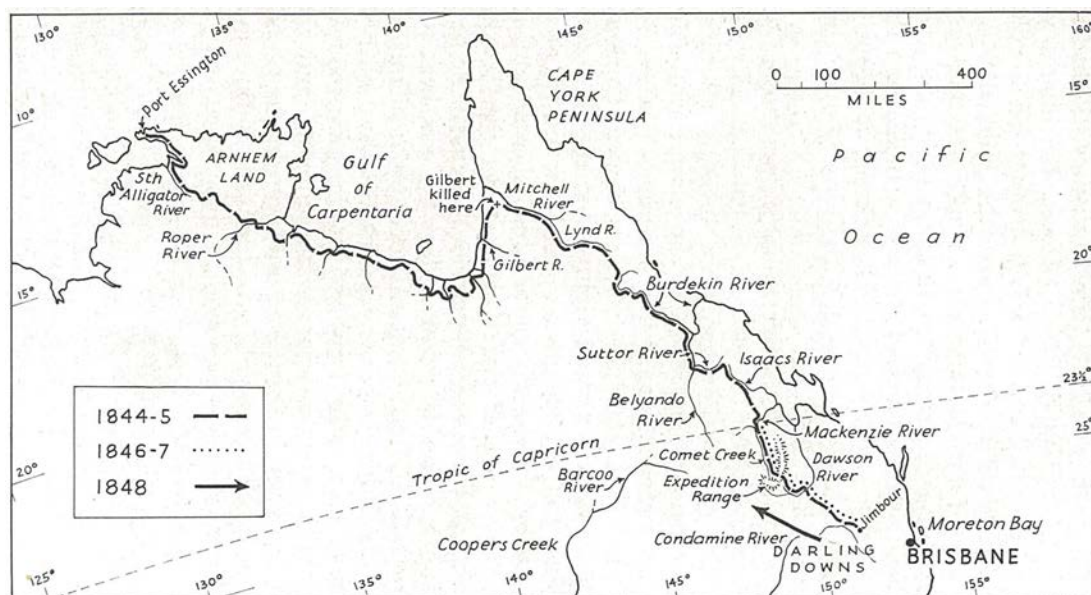
Map 4.2—Erdos R 1963, *A map of Leichhardt's journeys*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne.

It was not my intention to follow Leichhardt's entire journey. My focus was two sites along the Burdekin River: the area that is now Dalrymple National Park and the Valley of Lagoons (see Map 4.1). Leichhardt (1964) and his team reached the Burdekin River on 3 April 1844 and travelled north. On 10 April, they camped near Sellheim and found bountiful figs to supplement their diet along the way (Simpson 1997). By 12 April, Leichhardt had probably passed into the area that is now the Dalrymple National Park. He described the form of the river and the basaltic ridge he followed four miles to the north then returned and camped at the edge of another basalt barrier (Leichhardt 1964). Leichhardt noted evidence of many Aboriginal footpaths and fireplaces. He also described the river making a wide sweep where a

sizeable creek entered the Burdekin from the north-west—probably Keelbottom Creek (Leichhardt 1964). A few hundred metres to south of Keelbottom Creek, the crossing is shallow, stony and firm, providing ease of entry and exit across the river.

In a similar locale, Gilbert and Roper, two members of the expedition, climbed up to view their position and Leichhardt (1964) commented that the smoke from several fires was apparent in the large valley. Although he was aware of the existence of Aboriginal people, Leichhardt primarily documented geology, plant and animal life. His journal indicated that there was little hostility from the surrounding Aboriginal people while they travelled along the Burdekin and he commented that the expedition team neglected the night watch rotation. Leichhardt noted numerous Aboriginal people camping and cooking and viewed their well-travelled paths; however, they were frightened of his expedition's approach. The journal described the expedition's camp-making and travel through difficult terrain until 4 May 1845, when he reached the tableland and discovered large lagoons and lakes in a picturesque landscape of lush grass.

Figure 4.3 depicts me drawing at the Valley of Lagoons and Figure 4.4 shows the basaltic terrain and permanent water of Reedybrook.

Figure 4.3—The researcher drawing at the Valley of Lagoons, 2014. Photograph: Stuart Corbett.

58

Figure 4.4—The researcher at Reedybrook, 2014. Photograph: Corbett.

At this point, Leichhardt (1964) had reached the beginning of a valley and his expedition camped by a reedy brook that had all the conditions required for excellent grazing. Indeed, Leichhardt named it the Valley of Lagoons, as it was too beautiful to be named after a single person (Bailey 2011). From 4 May, Leichhardt (1964) had some contact with the local people. He appears to have felt safe, as he traded a bullock horn and received some yams in return. On 10 May, Charley, an Aboriginal expedition member, returned to retrieve a forgotten bell. The local people withdrew to the river after the item was collected; at that point, spears were thrown. Leichhardt's documentary focus was on flora, fauna and geology, although he noted the behaviours of the Gugu Badhun people.

4.2.1 The Gugu Badhun and Leichhardt

The Gugu Badhun are the sovereign people of the country Leichhardt travelled through, from the Clarke River up to the place he named Ant Hill Creek. Their country sits inland (see Map 4.3), reaching from the Seaview Range in the east—almost level with Cardwell—and roughly following the Gregory Development Road to the south (Cadet-James et al. 2017). Map 4.4 shows that several other Aboriginal groups border their land (Cadet-James et al. 2017). According to Dick

Hoolihan, a Gugu Badhun man, the Gugu Badhun's main interactions prior to contact were with the Warrungu to the north and the Gudjal to the south (Hoolihan 2006, cited by Cadet-James et al. 2017).
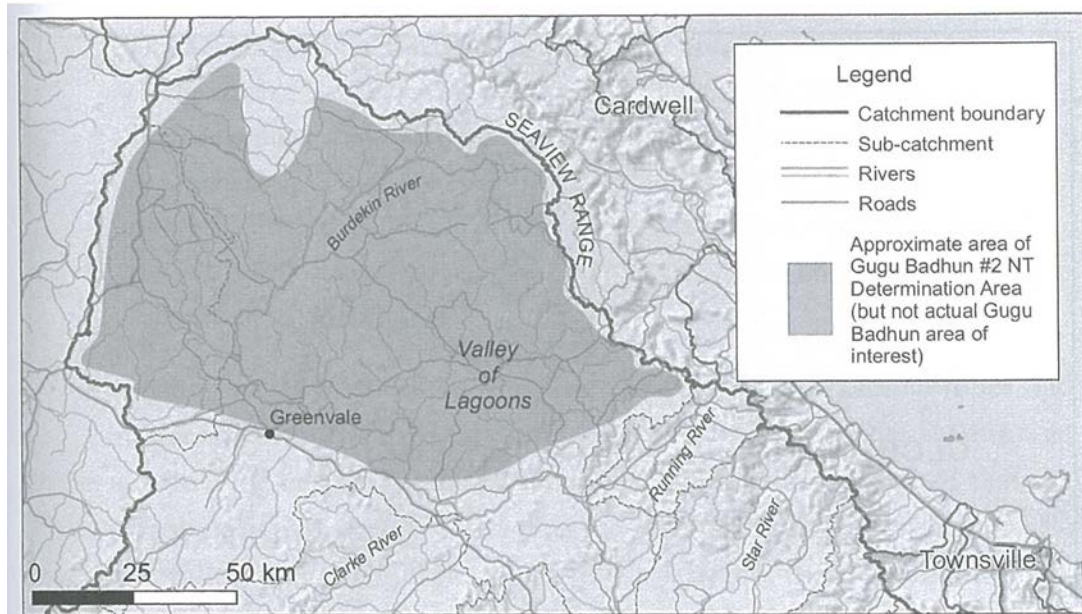
Map 4.3—Cadet-James et al. 2017, *Relief map showing northern boundaries of the Burdekin River catchment area (heavy line) and approximate Gugu Badhun country (shaded grey)*, AITSIS Research Publications, Canberra.
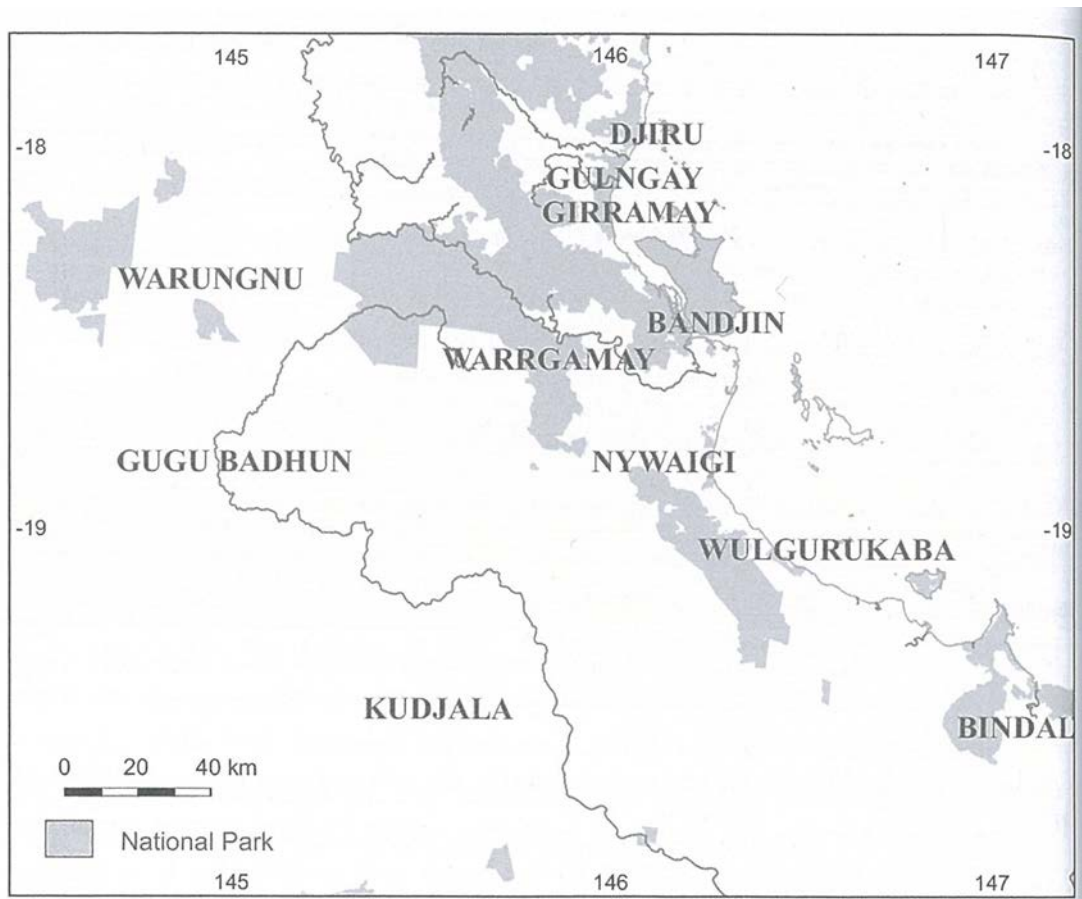
Map 4.4— Cadet-James et al. 2017, *Language groups adjacent to Gugu Badhun country*, AITSIS Research Publications, Canberra.

Hoolihan stated that there was little interaction with the Agwamin, Samin and Mbara to the west, beyond the Great Dividing Range, on fear of death and that the Gugu Badhun had an uneasy relationship with the groups to the east (Hoolihan 2006, cited by Cadet-James et al. 2017). Aboriginal movement and land use in the region was fluid, as different groups attended ceremonies and moved with the seasons (Cadet-James et al. 2017).

The abundance of water and food on Gugu Badhun land made it a prime visitation centre for surrounding tribes (Cadet-James et al. 2017). In 1845, writing about trade between neighbouring groups, Leichhardt wrote noted that there were extensive trade networks and friendships with a diverse range of items available for trade (Cadet-James et al. 2017). Information flowed between the Aboriginal communities, allowing them to confirm European movements from afar. Even before

Leichhardt entered their land, the Gugu Badhun knew of a European settlement near Brisbane (Cadet-James et al. 2017). Despite this, they may not have realised the power of guns. Members of Leichhardt's expeditionary team shot at birds and missed; the Gugu Badhun laughed, apparently misunderstanding the potential of gunshot (Cadet-James et al. 2017; Leichhardt 1964).

Leichhardt's glowing depiction of the Valley of Lagoons was the catalyst for squatters to pursue pastoral interests in the area (Cadet-James et al. 2017; Farnfield 1968). Leichhardt would have known that he and his expeditionary team were explicit agents in the development of British settlement and would have known what their findings would mean for the Gugu Badhun (Cadet-James et al. 2017).

Leichhardt's goal of reaching the Gulf of Carpentaria saw him and his team travelling north from Gugu Badhun country by 21 May 1845 (Cadet-James et al. 2017). There is evidence that, upon their departure, one Gugu Badhun man may have tried to warn them to observe protocol, particularly in the country of the Western tribes (Cadet-James et al. 2017). Additionally, Gilbert, a naturalist, wrote in his diary prior to the expedition's departure from the valley that he wished for colonisation to occur without harm to the rightful owners of the land (Cadet-James et al. 2017). After their departure, the Gugu Badhun people were left alone until the arrival of Dalrymple in 1859 (Cadet-James et al. 2017).

4.3 Kennedy

Kennedy's death somewhere in the vicinity of the Escape River on Cape York made it difficult to find exact points of reference for campsites and paths he travelled. Jackey Jackey was Kennedy's tracker and constant guide (Beale 1970). His deposition, contained in botanist William Carron's (1849) report, and Carron's own recollection of the expedition provide the basis for Beale's extensive research.

Jackey Jackey and Carron were two of only three survivors rescued from Weymouth Bay. In my quest to discover Kennedy's campsites and crossings, I aimed for positions that were in the approximate vicinity and that encapsulated the type of country Kennedy encountered. With this, I drew parallels to reimagine how it may have been in 1848.

Kennedy's assignment was to find a route for trade and communication at the Gulf of Carpentaria. He and his expeditionary team were to travel by ship, the *Tam O'Shanter*, to Rockingham Bay (Beale 1970). From Rockingham Bay they were to forge a way north to Princess Charlotte Bay and further north to the tip of Cape York (Beale 1970). After restocking at Albany Island, the expedition was to follow the east shore and west coast of Cape York, travelling down to the lower regions of the Gulf of Carpentaria, across to the Belyando River and then back to Sydney (Beale 1970). It was an ambitious proposal for the young explorer as he entered Rockingham Bay.

Rockingham Bay was proposed as Kennedy's entry point into the interior (Beale 1970). Kennedy searched numerous inlets and the coastline, finding the land impenetrable. Further, it was difficult to unload the stocks and stores from the ship due to shallow water along the coast. Not only did Kennedy face mangroves, swamps and thick forest, he needed to establish a base camp and a way into the interior (Beale 1970). Based on Kennedy's journal, Hubinger (2010) confirms that Kennedy found his way inland on an existing Aboriginal track. The track is noted in dashes on Map 4.5. Starting at the Bruce Highway, Clift Road loosely follows the track. A short walk along the track takes the walker past Kennedy's fifth camp, followed by a walk to the beach. Hubinger (2010) explains that this track was a passage used by the Girramay, the local Aboriginal group, to travel from the mountains along Meunga Creek and down to the coast to fish. The green triangles on Map 4.5 indicate

Kennedy's fifth, sixth and seventh campsites.
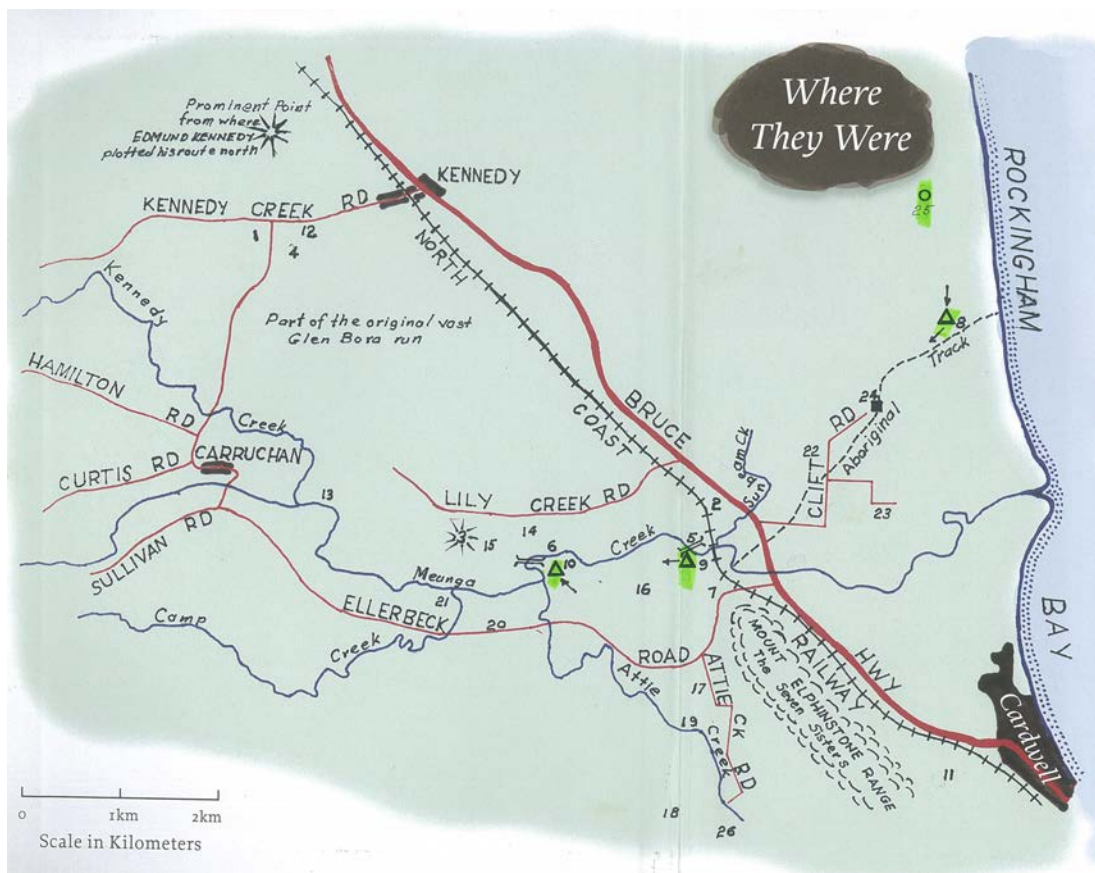
Map 4.5—Hubinger, S 2010, *Where They Were*, 3E Innovative for the Cardwell and District Historical Society, Cardwell, QLD.

Rockingham Bay is characterised by lush, tropical density. Figure 4.5 shows Rockingham Bay, north of Cardwell, from the south. Figure 4.6 is the approximate entry of both the Girramay and Kennedy to the track leading to Meunga Creek. Figure 4.7 reveals the swampy nature of the landscape. This contemporary view of the tropical landscape demonstrates some of the challenges the Kennedy expedition faced.

Figure 4.5—Rockingham Bay to the north from the entry to Clift Road, 2012. Photograph: Hook.

Figure 4.6—Approximate Girramay and Kennedy entry, 2012. Photograph: Hook.

Figure 4.7—Clift Road, 2012. Photograph: Hook.
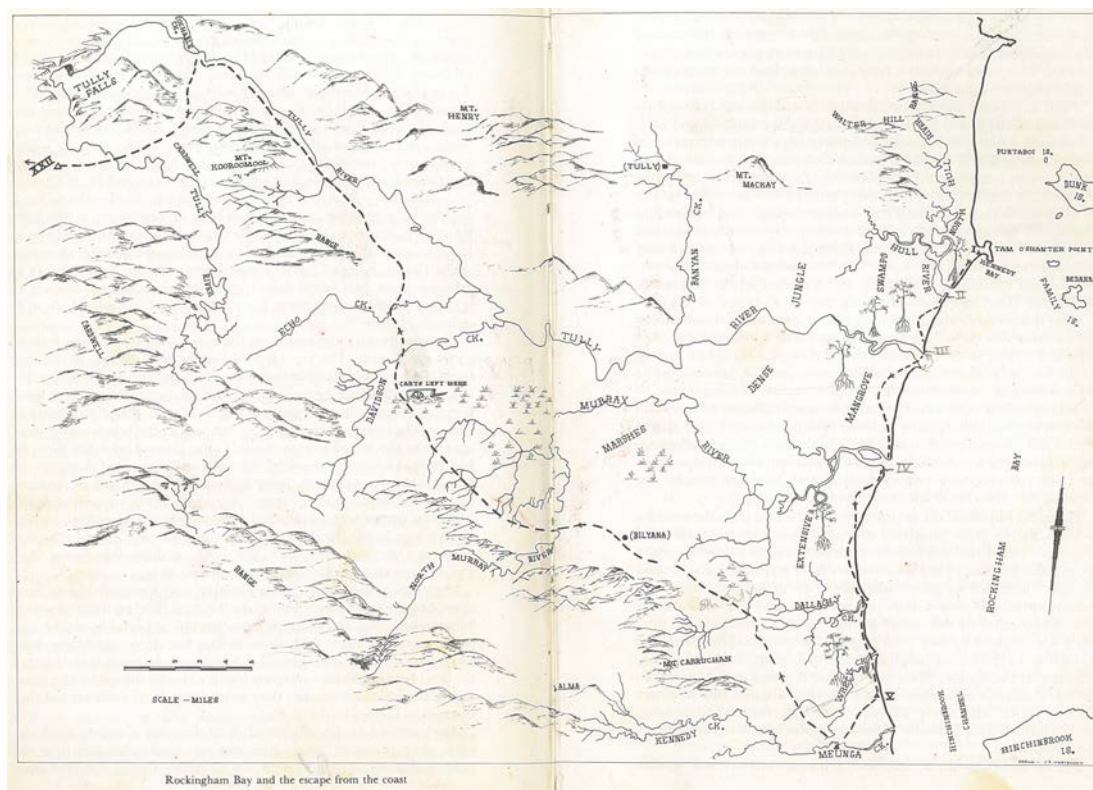
Map 4.6—Beale, E 1970, *Rockingham Bay and the escape from the coast*, SA Rigby, Adelaide.

Beale (1970) argues that in 1848, while in this vicinity, Jackey saved

Kennedy's life, warning him as a spear was thrown at him. In response, the explorer

ordered his men to shoot. Four Girramay were hit, with at least one dead and the others dragged away (Beale 1970). Bottoms (2013) was told about this event by Ernie Grant, a senior elder from the Tully region and a descendant of the Jirrbal and Girramay groups. Grant dated this event to 4 July 1848. According to Beale (1970), Kennedy was concerned about the confrontation, as he thought he had handled the situation with patience and was concerned for the safety of his men. By contrast, Bottoms (2013) states that a week later, on 11 July, a further 15 Aboriginal people were shot near the Murray River. Kennedy may have understated this behaviour, but it is apparent that he ordered the killings. Map 4.6 indicates the Murray River and Kennedy's path through the country. My research intersected with him again where he passed by on 21 September 1848, after he had crossed the Palmer River (see Map 4.7).
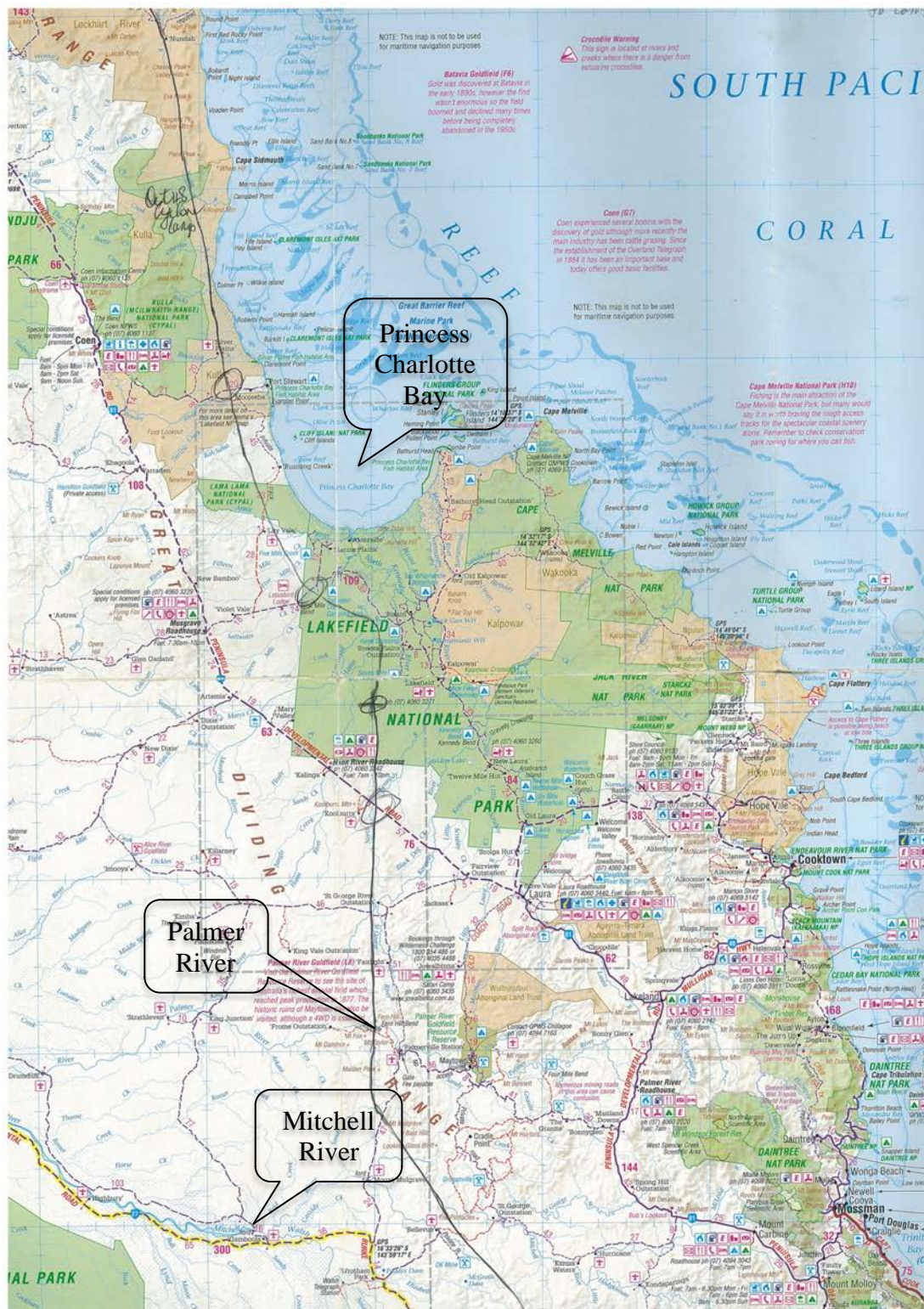
Map 4.7—Hema Maps Pty Ltd 2010, *Regional Map, Cape York*, 11th edition, Hema Maps, Brisbane.

Instead of following the Mitchell River in the direction of Leichhardt's previous journey, to the Gulf of Carpentaria, Kennedy veered north-east (Beale 1970). He had crossed the Great Dividing Range, descended on to the plain and followed the rivers as they flowed north to Princess Charlotte Bay (Beale 1970). As

shown on Map 4.7, Kennedy would have travelled approximately 25 km west of Lakefield in a northerly direction. Princess Charlotte Bay did not meet his expectations, with swamps mangroves, tidal flats, mud banks, and worse still, poor grass that could not sustain the stock (Beale 1970). The country south of Princess Charlotte Bay was flat and arid, marked by distinctive termite mounds (Figure 4.8).

Figure 4.8—Magnetic north termite mounds in the vicinity of Princess Charlotte Bay, 2013. Photograph: Hook.

Kennedy retreated to travel to the northwest around Princess Charlotte Bay (Beale 1970). The explorers were hungry and dispirited, and found Aboriginal contact unfathomable: one day, the travellers would be ignored, the next there would be some interaction—albeit not of a positive sort—and on yet another occasion, the local people would bring water for the explorers and their animals (Beale 1970).

Kennedy and his men travelled through difficult terrain to the west of Lockhart River and up into the Iron Range west of Cape Weymouth. At a height of 1500 ft, it would have taken 12 days to travel 15 mi to the north (Beale 1970). The

explorers were exhausted and short on supplies. Finding reasonable water, Kennedy made the decision to establish camp LXXX, as shown on Map 4.8 (Beale 1970).

Kennedy left Carron in charge of the remaining men so that he and four others—Costigan, Luff, Dunn and Jackey—could travel faster to the ship *Ariel* at Albany Island and return to save the men remaining at the base camp (Beale 1970).
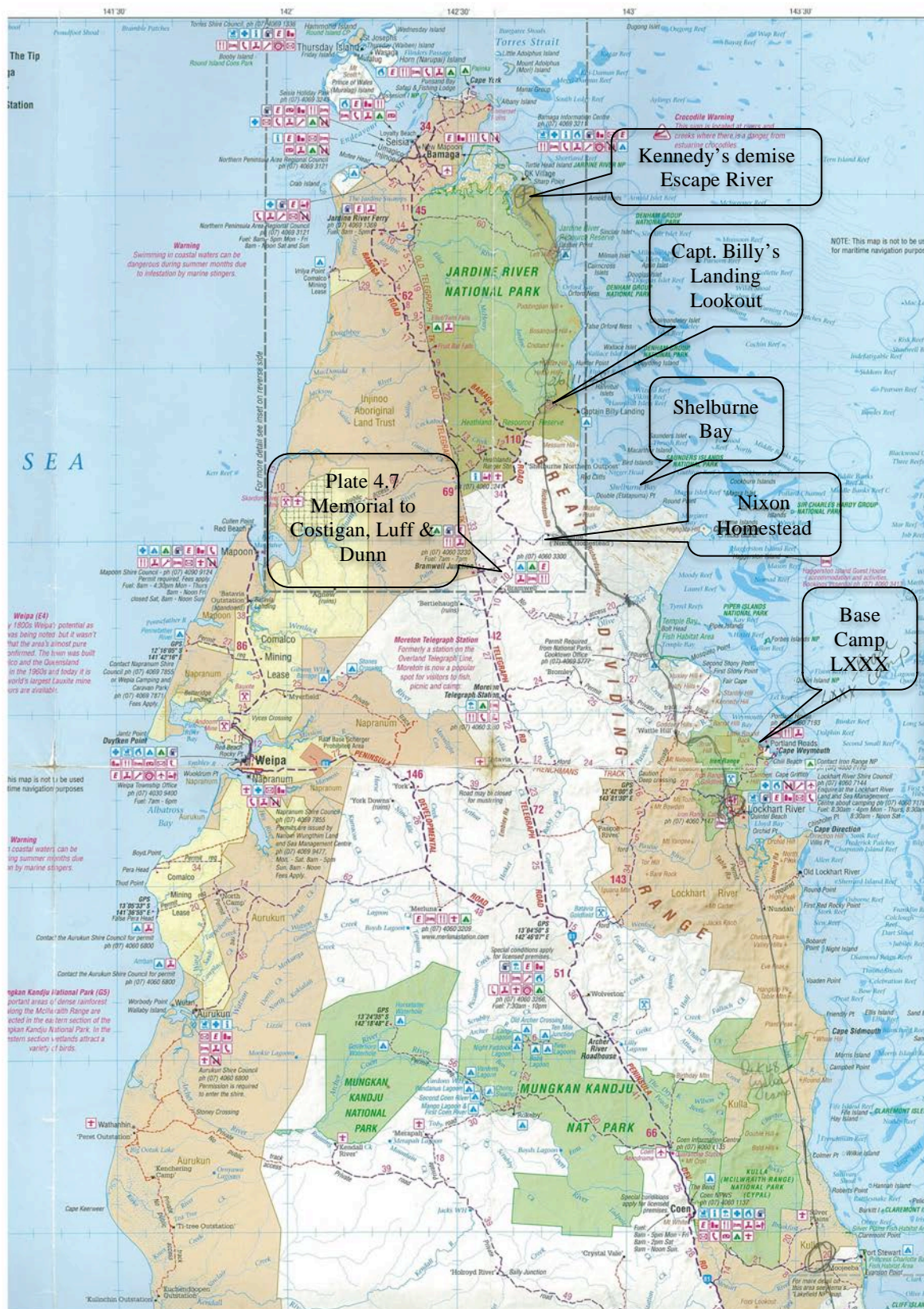
Map 4.8— Hema Maps Pty Ltd 2010, *Regional Map, Cape York*, 11th edition, Hema Maps, Brisbane.

I was there at the wrong time to meet the owner of Shelburne Station, Dallas

Nixon, as he was ill in hospital. The Nixon homestead (Figure 4.10) is situated near a

permanent source of water and, not too far in the past, was a working station. David Whitehead, an old friend of Nixon, was my guide and travel companion in the area. Based on maps and research, he reasoned that Kennedy may have camped on a nearby creek bank in 1848.

Figure 4.10—Ruins of the Nixon homestead, 2013. Photograph: Hook.

Kennedy arrived in late November, when the tropical weather would have been humid and unbearable. He and his men made good progress past Temple Bay and Shelburne Bay, but two members of his forward team were ill (Beale 1970). Costigan had accidently shot himself, prompting a return to the previous camp (Beale 1970). Dunn remained to nurse Costigan and Luff (Beale 1970). It was a race against time for Kennedy and Jackey reach Cape York and bring assistance for the expedition members at the two separate camps.

The Nixon family who lived and worked at Shelbourne Bay erected the plaque dedicated to Costigan, Luff and Dunn shown in Figure 4.9. It sits on a broad monument just off the main road to the north-west of the Nixon homestead. The land around it is flat and arid.
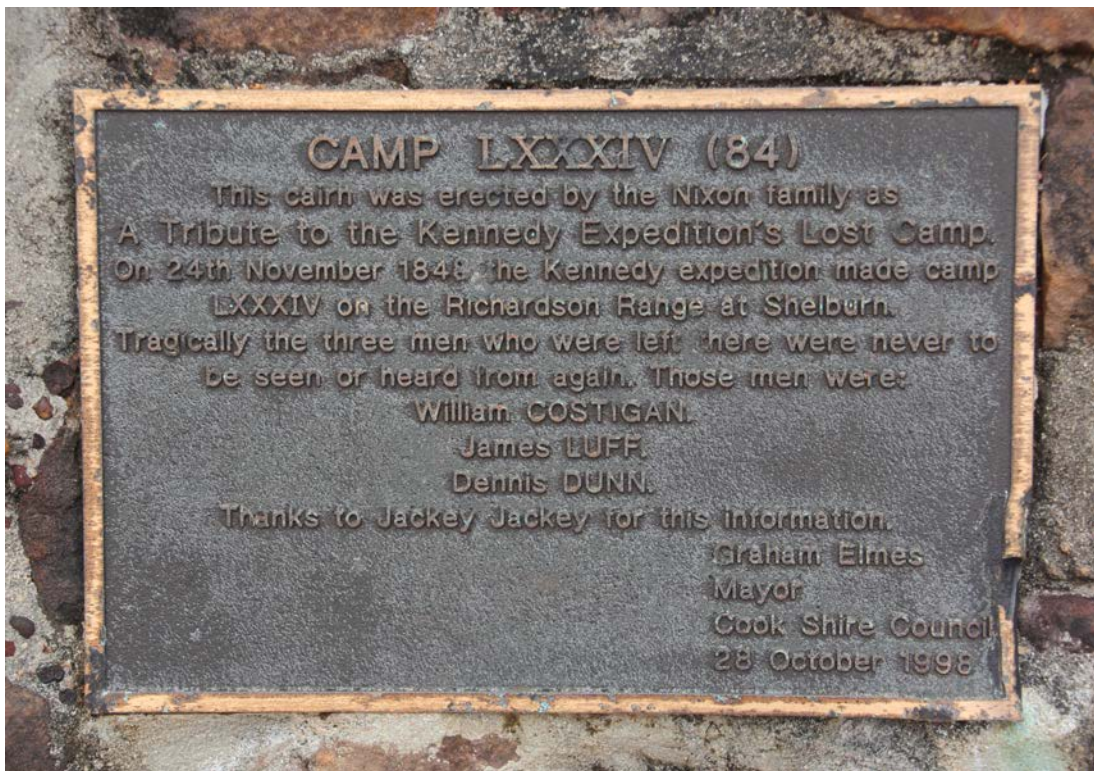
Figure 4.9—Plaque erected by the Nixon family to commemorate Costigan, Luff and Dunn, 2013. Photograph: Hook.

This land is unforgiving for travel, particularly on horseback or foot. Kennedy and Jackey continued north, making slow progress towards the Escape River (Beale 1970). Overcast weather inhibited Kennedy's plan to navigate by the stars, but they had reached the wide tidal mouth of the Escape River and could see faintly in the distance what should be Albany Island (Beale 1970). They retreated to circumvent the river and were attacked by the Jadhaigana group—Kennedy was fatally wounded. According to Beale (1970), the reason for the attack was unknown and that, beyond the Escape River country to the north, the Djadaraga people were friendly. Jackey skirted the Escape River to the southwest and north into Djadaraga country, not knowing the gentle nature of the people, and was rescued by the crew of the *Ariel* on the shore opposite Albany Island (Beale 1970). Unfortunately, Luff, Dunn and Costigan perished and only Carron and Goddard were rescued from their

base camp at Weymouth Bay (Beale 1970). The sites I selected are discussed with the relevant artworks in Chapter 5.

4.4 Dalrymple

Dalrymple was active in developing and expanding North Queensland between 1859 and 1874 (Farnfield 1968). His career in Australia included exploration, politics and pastoralism; of these, he was particularly interested in agriculture (Farnfield 1968). According to Farnfield (1968), Dalrymple was motivated by self-advancement, and his upbringing in Scotland had taught him to be aware of progress. Dalrymple was instrumental in the initial founding of Port Denison, now Bowen, which established his reputation. He had capitalist notions about pastoralism (Farnfield 1968). Dalrymple was influential in developing the town of Port Hinchinbrook, later called Cardwell; however, he was interested in property in the Valley of Lagoons.

Before he gained the lease of the Valley of Lagoons, Dalrymple required aid to explore into the Burdekin. With eyes on the prize, he published a report seeking financial support from the government to discover new pastoral land beyond the settled districts (Dalrymple 1859). This was part of the push for pastoral discovery past Port Curtis—now Gladstone—and Broad Sound—the Marlborough region (Farnfield 1968). Dalrymple had read Leichhardt's journal, and embellished the other explorer's account of the land (Farnfield 1968). Leichhardt's exploration had produced general knowledge, but Dalrymple (1859) argued that it required further examination; thus, he reiterated Leichhardt's advice to return to Mount McConnell and explore the Burdekin River for estuarine navigation and a seaport, and to establish a goods depot. According to Dalrymple (1859, p. 6), Leichhardt had advised exploration of the 'Lower Sutton River, Lower Cape and Burdekin valley as

far as Valley of Lagoons'. Gesturing to Leichhardt's recommendation to complete the exploration and open the land for agriculture and grazing, Dalrymple implored subscribers—future graziers, who would form a committee—that without £1000, the expedition would not take place. Leichhardt was a powerful name for him to evoke, as the earlier explorer had become a public hero (Farnfield 1968). The Valley of Lagoons provides a strong link between the two of them.

Dalrymple's proposal was successful, and even though the Burdekin region had not yet been opened for occupation, he provided reports and rough maps for potential pastoral properties (Farnfield 1968). He probably had an agenda for the Burdekin (Farnfield 1968). Farnfield (1968) argues that Dalrymple's expedition from Marlborough to the Valley of Lagoons was difficult as some of the country was rugged and challenging. Further, the expedition was pursued by large numbers of hostile Aboriginal people who attacked Dalrymple's camp. Dalrymple did reach the Valley of Lagoons; however, he ran low on ammunition and supplies and was forced to return (Farnfield 1968). According to Cadet-James et al. (2017), Dalrymple's expedition likely clashed more fiercely with local peoples than had previous explorers. This might have been a result of the Gugu Badhun becoming more wary of European intervention or the explorers might have gained confidence in their right to claim ownership (Cadet-James et al. 2017).

Dalrymple had political aspirations. After Queensland separated from New South Wales in December 1859—the same year as his expedition to the Burdekin—Dalrymple held the position of commissioner for crown lands in the Kennedy region. In this role he learned about squatting (Farnfield 1968). In 1863, Dalrymple formed Scott Bros Dalrymple & Co with Arthur Scott and Walter Scott—and with Robert Herbert, the premier of Queensland, as their sleeping partner—to obtain a licence for

the Valley of Lagoons (Farnfield 1968). Dalrymple eventually developed the Valley of Lagoons from a small holding to 1270 square miles on lease from the government. What Dalrymple needed for the project was communication and direct transport between the Valley of Lagoons and Rockingham Bay (Farnfield 1968). Governor George Bowen and Commodore William Burnett inspected Rockingham Bay to determine whether it was suitable for a port; however, they were uncertain and decided that the government would assist settlement and subsequent installation of a port if a road could be pushed through from the interior to Rockingham Bay (Farnfield 1968). The Scott brothers and Dalrymple attempted unsuccessfully to gain access from the Valley of Lagoons side of Seaview Range to the coast.

Arriving at Port Hinchinbrook by sea in 1864, Dalrymple enlisted James Morrill as interpreter—a non-Indigenous man who had previously lived with First Nations people in the Bowen area (Farnfield 1968). In a letter to Bowen, Dalrymple (1865) told the governor about how Morrill had conveyed the rules of British occupation to the Girramay. Ironically, the rules Morrill gave were 'thou shalt not steal' and 'thou shalt do no murder' (albeit in the Indigenous language of the Bowen area). Whether the Girramay understood Morrill's conveyance of the rules, Dalrymple (1865, p. 202) wrote that the 'wild blacks … [have] always required heretofore to be taught [these rules] by the rifle and revolver'. Despite stating that he wished for an amicable agreement, Dalrymple (1865) knew full well that bloodshed was inevitable. Dalrymple eventually forged his way through to the Valley of Lagoons (Farnfield 1968). With the success of the road from Rockingham Bay to the Valley of Lagoons, he wrote to the government again, indicating that he had connected the 'tracks of Kennedy with those of Leichhardt and Gregory' and wished to report a 'brilliant future' for Cardwell (Dalrymple 1865, p. 212). Despite his desire

for an amicable agreement with Aboriginal peoples, the Gugu Badhun experienced a contrary outcome.

4.4.1 The Gugu Badhun and Dalrymple

According to Cadet-James et al. (2017), the divergent ideologies of the European invaders and the Gugu Badhun caused conflict. The Europeans looked for wealth and profit through introduced animals, while the economy of the Gugu Badhun was one of subsistence and self-sustenance, with any surplus traded with neighbours. It was inevitable that the two cultures were bound for bloody conflict, particularly when it came to sharing the same land (Cadet-James et al. 2017). Initially, it was a legal criterion of pastoral leases that Aboriginal access to traditional grounds be preserved for sustenance, but this requirement was not followed in the north (Cadet-James et al. 2017). Wielding authority in these matters, the Native Mounted Police employed the strategy of 'keeping them out' (Cadet-James et al. 2017, p. 23). This unwritten rule of keeping them out related to Gugu Badhun prime land that was seized for grazing and demanded that the original owners be forcibly coerced or threatened to leave. Aboriginal people were eventually let in, but remained subordinate to European squatters on their own Gugu Badhun country (Cadet-James et al. 2017). Essential sources of food for the Gugu Badhun were damaged by the arrival of grazing stock, which led them to turn to the stock for sustenance. This eventuated in violent clashes with settlers (Cadet-James et al. 2017). Other First Nations peoples may have had similar experiences, but lack local histories as thoroughly preserved as the Gugu Badhun.

These altercations between the Gugu Badhun and European settlers, often via actions of the Native Mounted Police, were killing fields. The actions taken by the Native Mounted Police were described as dispersals or shooting to kill (Cadet-James

et al. 2017). Richards (2008) reports that the colonial government turned a blind eye to the mass killing of Aboriginal peoples, ignoring the murders. The then Colonial Secretary (later first premier of Queensland) Robert Herbert condoned the killing of First Nations people (Richards 2008). It was only in the late 1860s, after much bloody conflict, that neighbouring pastoralists considered Aboriginal peoples subdued and began the 'letting in' (Cadet-James et al. 2017). This was not the case with the Gugu Badhun as conflict with them continued through the 1870s and the Glen Dhu police camp still existed as late as 1884 (Cadet-James et al. 2017). Eventually, the Gugu Badhun did submit to being 'let in' as their food supply, economy and political power had been weakened (Cadet-James et al. 2017). This did not reduce their resilience.

Aboriginal people living on pastoral properties blended their traditional skills in sustenance while also trying to adapt the European system into their own culture (Cadet-James et al. 2017). Over time, Aboriginal people became essential to the running of stations, particularly when non-Indigenous workers left for the goldfields (Cadet-James et al. 2017). Today, the Gugu Badhun seek to reconnect with country and family and find deeper connection with their ancestors and history (Cadet-James et al. 2017). The Gugu Badhun are proactive about returning to this knowledge, holding an annual cultural camp in their country and digitising their language to continue to strengthen a 'modern identity of Gugu Badhun rooted in country and tradition' (Cadet-James et al. 2017, p. 121). In 2019, a lecture and talk was held by Yvonne Cadet-James, a Gugu-Badhun elder and her co-authors, Robert James, Sue McGinty and Russell McGregor to discuss the text *Gugu Badhun: People of the Valley of Lagoons* 2017. All authors discussed their involvement and expertise in the journey of collating the stories and experiences of the Gugu Badhun. Cadet-James

spoke of the success in engaging Gugu Badhun youth in culture and the restoration of language. The audience was mostly comprised of Gugu Badhun from children to elders. This was a strong and positive message.

4.5 My Journeys

My first journey began at Rockingham Bay in 2012 and took me to Meunga Creek, through to the township of Kennedy and through to Bilyana, past where the explorer Kennedy and his expeditionary team travelled. My second journey also took place in 2012 and took me from Townsville to Cape York where I came to understand the immensity of the North and Far North Queensland tropics (see Map 4.9). My third journey, in 2013, took me along Cape York again for a more thorough investigation. One of my goals on this expedition was to enter the Escape River area. My fourth journey, in 2014, began at Dalrymple National Park on the Burdekin River and took me more or less along the river until I reached Reedybrook Station and the Valley of Lagoons. Prior to each journey, I conducted additional research and investigated maps and explorer journals to help me find significant sites. During each journey, I visually annotated, wrote field notes and took photographs to bring back to the studio.
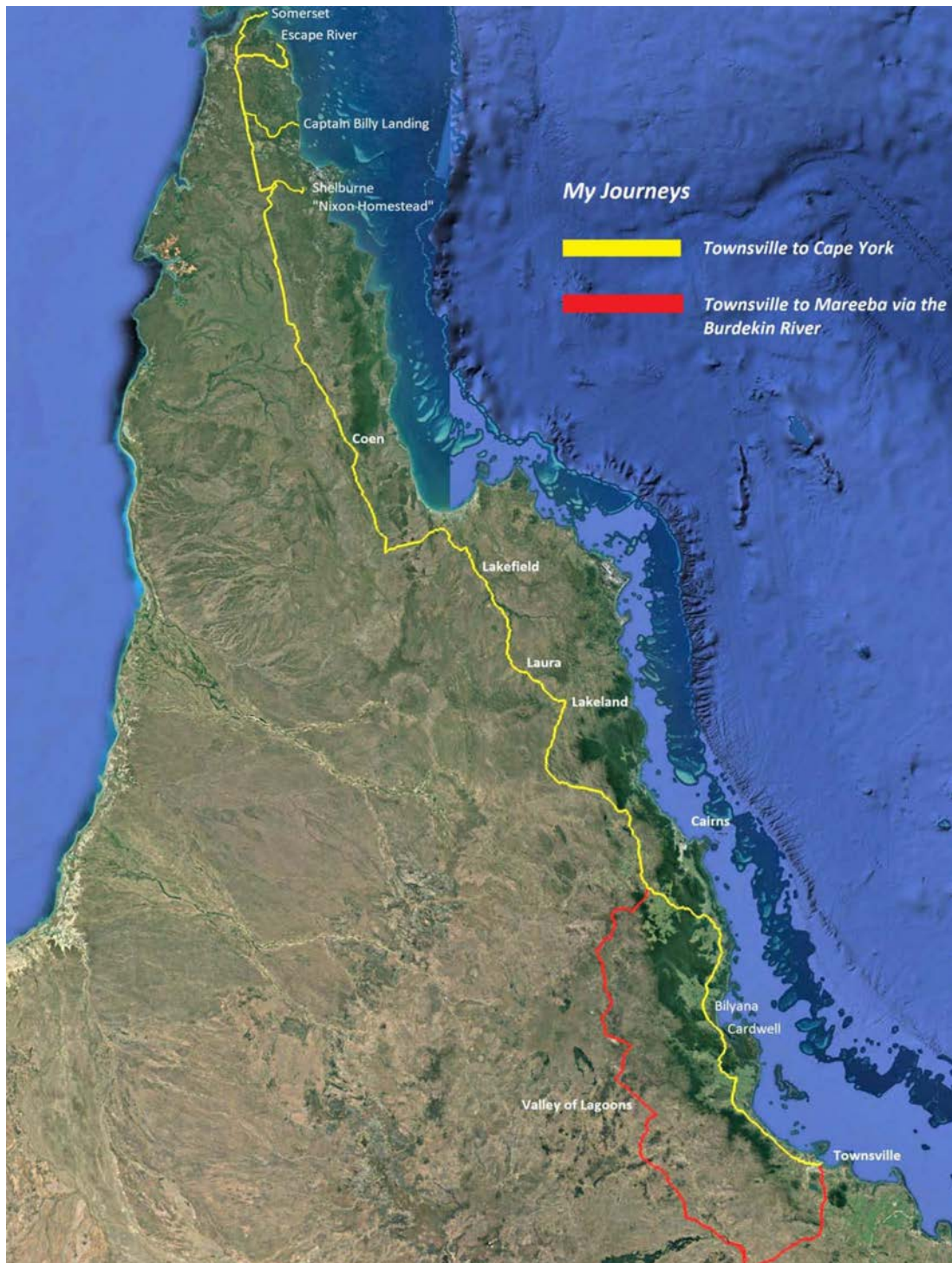
Map 4.9—Google Earth Pro 7.3.2.5776, 5.3.2019, *My Journeys, North and Far North Queensland*, from Latitude 11° 3' 16.9704" S to 19° 44' 33.5616" S and Longitude 143° 48' 6.1092" E to 143° 48' 6.1092" E, annotated 2D Map, viewed 25th January 2020 https://earth.google.com/web.

It is useful and necessary to examine the parallels between the exploration processes used by the early explorers and those used in my field trips to Cape York. The perceived hardship faced by the explorers contrasted with my reasonable comfort. For them, every section of land reached and every camp struck would have

been laden with stress. Table 4.1 compares the risks, preparation, timelines and outcomes for exploration and travel in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Table 4.1—Comparison of Expeditions Undertaken by Kennedy and Hook.

	Edmund Beasley Kennedy, Nineteenth-Century Explorer	Sandi Hook, Twenty-First-Century Artist-Explorer
Risk	Very high	Low, as determined by JCU risk assessment
Provisioning	Four months of food, including stock	Six weeks of preserved food
Water	Access to water not guaranteed, necessitating following rivers	Water carried in vehicle and refilled from the river
Means of travel	Horses and carts, necessitating access to pastures and water for feeding animals	Four-wheel drive vehicle, adequate fuel and knowledge of road conditions
Navigation	Manual navigation using sextants, compasses and marine mapping information	General motorist maps readily available, with compass and survey maps providing intricate detail
Duration	June–December 1848 (seven months)	June–July 2012 (four weeks)
Purpose of expedition	Furthering knowledge of land for commercial value, settlement and agriculture	Furthering creative interpretations and new knowledge in response to place to reach audiences in regions and major centres
Purpose of observation	Observation for survival (fear of attack)	Observation for creativity (no fear of attack)
Context	British exploration in a colonial perspective	Australian interpretation in a global context

David Whitehouse, a retired North-West Mobile Force officer and trainer, had previously participated in surveillance and reconnaissance operations in the remote areas of Northern Australia. He had travelled extensively in Cape York and had a deep knowledge and understanding of the region. Whitehead was my guide and map interpreter. Together, we used topographical maps and Beale and Carron's documentation to determine where Kennedy might have travelled.

We looked for accessible sites as close as possible to where Kennedy would have travelled. For example, of the four sites selected as trials for the Kennedy expedition, one was particularly close to Kennedy's probable route through the Iron Range National Park. Map 4.10 is the topographical map of Cape Weymouth incorporating Portland Roads. On approach to the settlement of Portland Roads from the south, the road Kennedy may have used heads to the north and veers through the lower contours of the land. Portland Road veers to the north-east towards the Portland Roads settlement.

From the north of Portland Roads, the beach near the mouth of the Pascoe River was 20 km distant and almost visible. This is near where Carron and Goddard were rescued at Weymouth Bay. An arduous four-wheel drive track took us north-west towards the Pascoe River; however, it was an offshoot from the main road. We checked the first part of the track on foot and found that it was impassable. The arduous track toward Pascoe River on Map 4.10 was Kennedy's most likely path. Whitehead used his military expertise to indicate the explorer's possible route. We walked back to Portland Road and drove south-west on Kennedy Road.
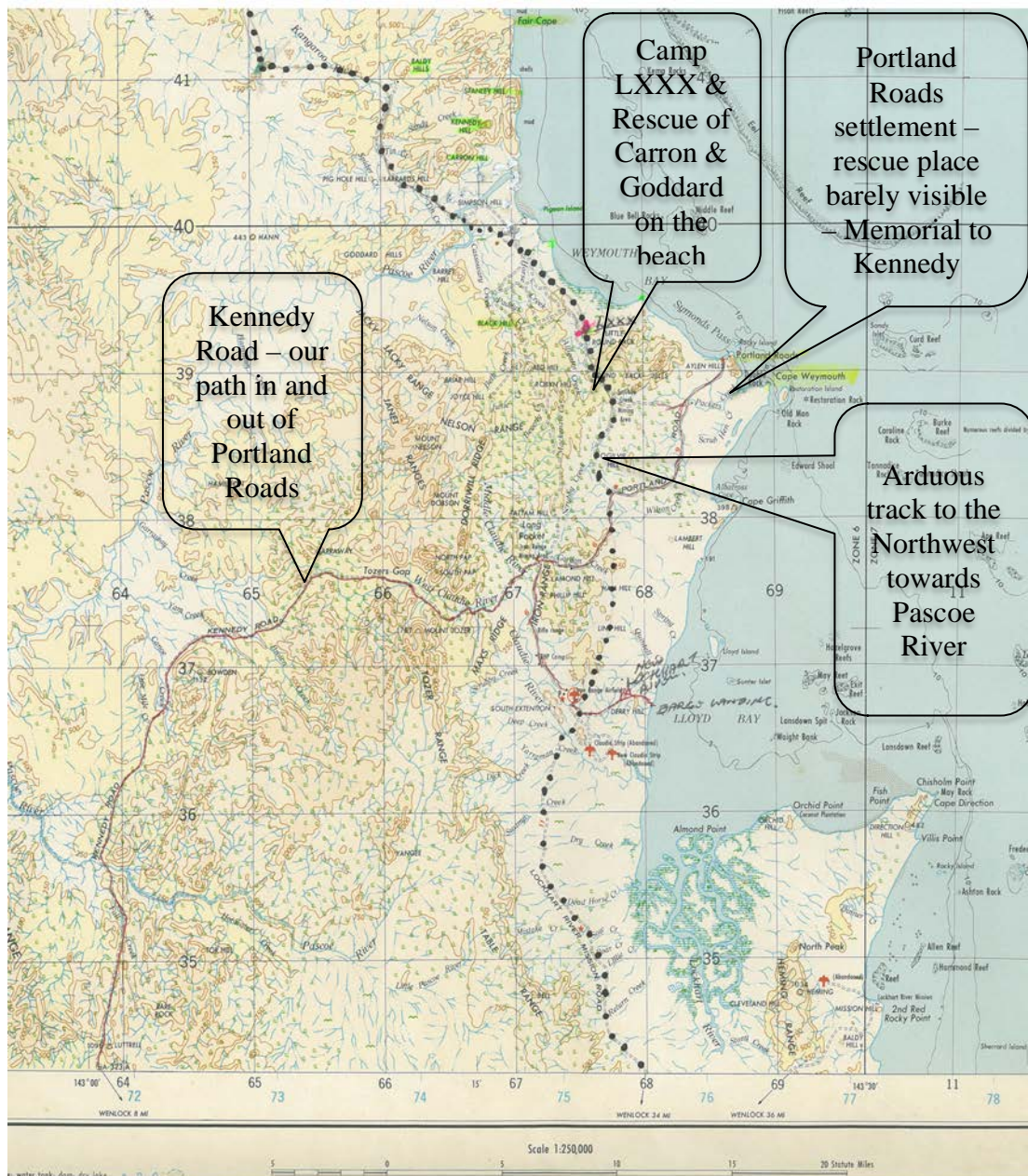
Map 4.10— Royal Australia Survey Corps 1961, *Cape Weymouth, Queensland*, Edition 1 – AAS, Series R502, Royal Australian Survey Corps.

A monument to Kennedy and his men was erected 100 years after he visited the area (Figure 4.11). It is located in the middle of the Portland Roads settlement—a memorial to public memory. At the time, the settlement consisted of a few houses and a café. Portland Roads was also the site of the jetty for provisioning the armed forces at the Cape during the Second World War. The remains of the jetty were still visible. This place was layered with meaning and I responded with several drawings

of the site. Figure 4.12 shows a quick sketch with notes from my visual diary, giving details of the Portland Roads old jetty facing explorer terrain.
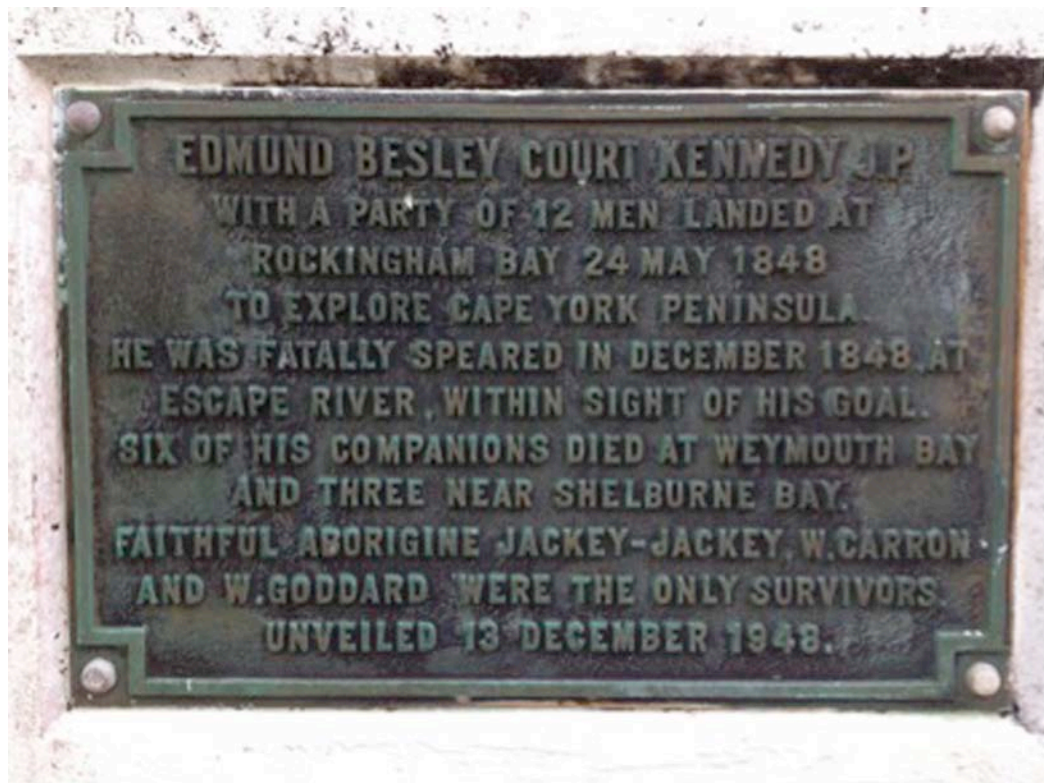
Figure 4.11—Kennedy memorial plaque on Portland Road, 2013. Photograph: Hook.
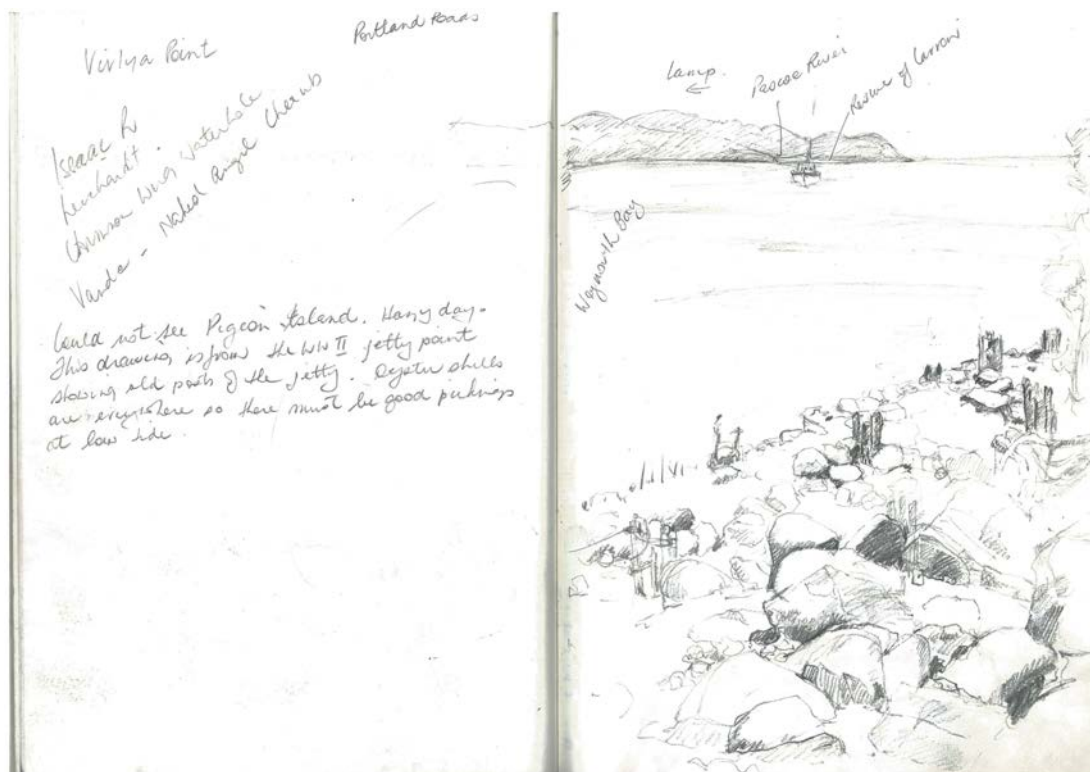
Figure 4.12—Sketch of the Portland Road jetty from the researcher's visual diary, 2013. Photograph: Hook.

On the overland road from the south to Portland Roads I drew land similar to that which Kennedy's expedition would have passed before they split into two groups. Kennedy may have even passed by the very position of this drawing (Figure 4.13).

Figure 4.13—Sketch of the Iron Range National Park from the researcher's visual diary, 2013. Photograph: Hook.

Exhaustion would have been a factor, as the expedition team would have struggled through the impenetrable rainforest to reach this location. Shortly afterward, Kennedy would have made camp at the north side of the Pascoe River and split the team out of necessity. At the site, I attempted to reimagine how this could be and responded to the place to develop new visual marks and create an artwork.

Imagining the distance and isolation of the explorers, I found a contrast and similarity between their vulnerability and my own, however, I had reasonable ability to access assistance if required, where their access to assistance was non-existent. With this vulnerability in mind and responding to place, I decided which relevant abstract visual qualities I would include in future artworks. Each line of a tree was

jagged in its attempt to search for nourishment and survive in this environment. The drawing from Iron Range National Park (Figure 4.13) indicated the intensity of the force of the wind in the trees. The lines suggest the persistence and ruggedness of the terrain and attempt to arouse emotions of hardship. A common experience at this site—for early explorers and for me as a twenty-first-century artist—was that it was not easy travelling. Returning to the site when the weather was less harsh, I saw a different aspect, in which the travellers walked through in a different light. The recorded tonal rhythm of the trees scattered in and around the rolling hills belied my previous visitation.

Figures 4.14–4.16 illustrate my first four-wheel driving experience in Cape York. Taking a course in four-wheel driving is one thing; however, it was only on the journey that I commenced the real learning of how to negotiate the terrain. I drove down an embankment, through a creek and up the other side. This was a general tourist drive; however, the experience was invaluable for the later, strenuous drives to and around the Escape River, among others. Cape York has some rugged two-track roads. What I learned was to check and negotiate each crossing and unusual landform prior to proceeding.

Figure 4.14—Descending the creek bank, 2012. Photograph: Sue Parsons.

Figure 4.15—Almost down to the creek, 2012. Photograph: Parsons.

Figure 4.16—Ascending on the far bank, 2012. Photograph: Parsons.

In the heathlands south of the Jardine and Escape Rivers, Kennedy faced hardship travelling as he travelled through heath—a thick and entangling tall grass. Beale (1970, p. 208) refers to this land as a 'wet desert … streamlets form gutters so wide and so deep that horses can suddenly drop into them'. The desert takes its name from the poisonous grasses, inedible for horses. In November when the climate is hot and humid and often monsoonal, Kennedy and Jackey faced hardship as they travelled through the heath. Even though I was there in October, I could only work in the early mornings or afternoons and definitely needed shade.

Many sites captured my interest; however, the visit to the Escape River was especially dynamic. After crossing the Jardine River (Figure 4.17) from south to north, my companion and I turned to the right on Ussher Point Road, towards the east coast.

Figure 4.17—Jardine River Crossing, 2013. Photograph: Hook.

This road was rugged: sometimes a track for two wheels with deep ravines between the tracks. Further down the track, the road climbed over a mountain of large boulders that had naturally formed into uneven steps. The vehicles were driven slowly and carefully up and over and then down the other side. Overhanging trees slowed the pace and often fallen trees needed to be removed from the road. The trek along Ussher Point Road was approximately 60 km long and took almost an entire day. We struck camp at Ussher Point for an early start north towards the Escape River. This was another slow road, as large sections offered a tight fit for the vehicles. On the drive to the north, we passed the road heading towards the Escape River on our left. Travelling down that overgrown road was the goal for the next day.

The road north was easier than that of Ussher Point Road, which we had traversed the previous day; however, saplings and fallen trees presented obstacles. After a further six hours of driving towards where Kennedy would have passed, our convoy of two entered Sadd Point camp near the sea. Sadd Point is south of where Kennedy and Jackey would have perceived Turtle Island. I made a sketch of the

campsite at Sadd Point—seemingly a convivial scene (Figure 4.18). This campsite also represented another layer of participation: that of recreational camping and fishing. The baubles hanging from the trees were sea-buoys. This scene was quite incongruent with the harshness of the road so far. This rough sketch was one of several I made in my visual diary.
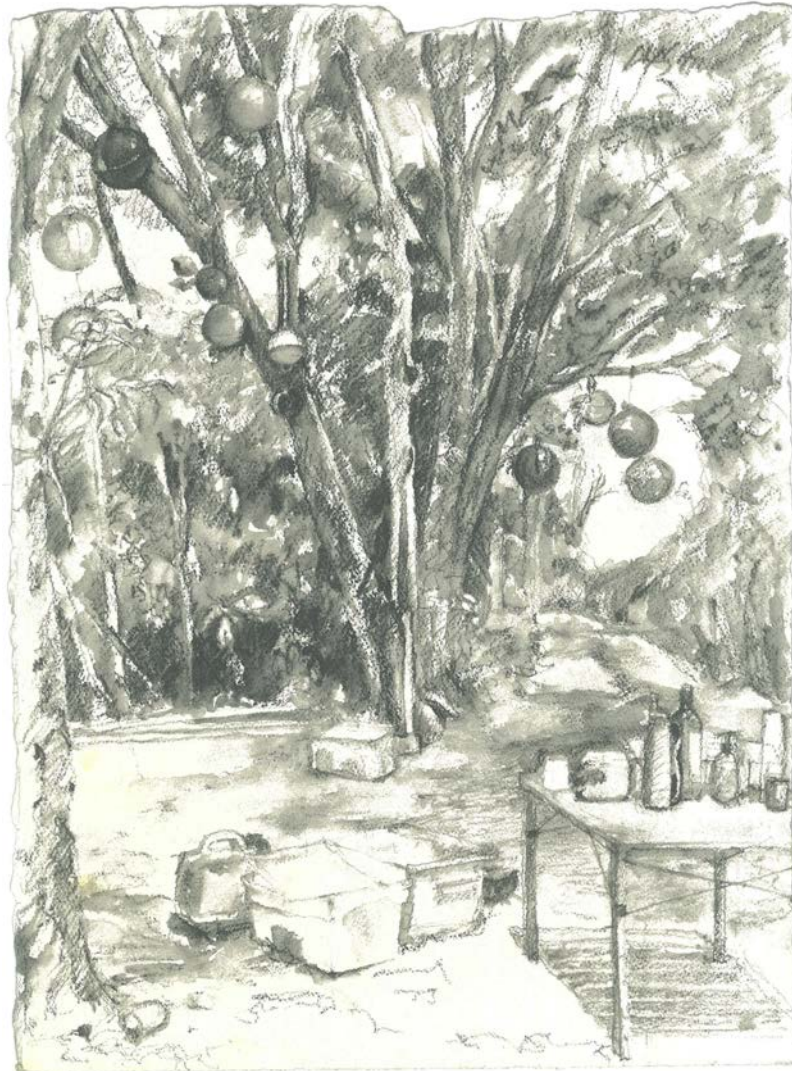
Figure 4.18—Hook S 2013, *Sadd Point camp*, *diary entry*, watercolour pencil.

The next day, after decamping, Whitehead and I headed south to the turn off to the Escape River. On the road to the Escape River, my left mirror was ripped off and the drive shaft became solidly entangled by a tree root, which I had to remove with a saw. This took some time in the heat. I also managed to crunch the left running board into a gnarled smile on an unnoticed rock. The vehicle had taken some damage

but remained drivable. This country was extremely hard to push through in a vehicle and would have been equally difficult with a horse or on foot. I travelled as a passenger to retrieve the lost mirror, filming the rough trek. The video became part of a documentary in the exhibition (see Appendix A). Whitehead estimated that our 2013 investigation down this track brought us within two kilometres of the Escape River.

On heading back over the Ussher Point Road, Whitehead decided to stop and investigate on foot at a place where Kennedy might have initially ventured on his northward trek towards the Escape River. We attempted to walk towards and investigate the Escape River from the south. The thick bush was difficult. After a long and exhausting day of four-wheel driving, entangling branches, the running board being wedged on a rock and enduring the harsh climate (even then, two months earlier than the explorer), I imagined that Kennedy might have been despondent. The walk through the tropical bush where he may have passed was quite eerie and certainly uncomfortable. I reimagined how this must have felt in his mind with the imminent threat of the local Jadhaigana, the need to rescue his men and supplies running low. Further, Kennedy did not survive: in mid-to-late December 1848, he was fatally speared (Beale 1970). This was emotional territory. Another layer permeating the scene was that of the Jadhaigana. In this place, there were no winners.

We visited many sites, giving us plenty of adventurous tales of our travels, and we always knew that the events happened on Aboriginal land. While I could not know how the colonial explorers actually thought or perceived the land, nor could I relate a First Nations person's view, I could at least record my interpretation and reimagination of contemporary place.

These onsite examples demonstrate the method by which multisensory and emotional translations from reimagined historical events facilitated my work. Having

performed this research, I returned to the studio to develop my visual and textual data.

This is discussed further in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5: Exploring, Making, Creating and Showing

5.1 Concept—the Journey of an Artwork

This chapter reviews and discusses two exhibitions that emerged from my journeys in exploration and place in North and Far North Queensland. The first exhibition, *Energies and Crossings*, was the result of my first two treks following Kennedy's exploration into the Cardwell region and the Cape York Peninsula. The major exhibition, *Imagining Place*, was developed based on materials from both of the previous journeys and two additional treks in which I returned to Cape York and followed Dalrymple and Leichhardt's tracks through central North Queensland. Concept development was important for both exhibitions, particularly in terms of the flexible, iterative and cyclic web of research-led practice and practice-led research (Smith & Dean 2009). This methodology permitted the creation of ideas, extrapolating useful information from my academic research, culminating in creative outcomes using sketches, photographs, maps, ideas of place and the experiences of the explorers. This discussion is conveyed in two parts, each focusing on one exhibition.

5.2 *Energies and Crossings: Connecting to Place* (2013)

The concept and title for *Energies and Crossings* formed around movement along bodies of water like creeks and rivers. These sites offered campsites to explorers, Aboriginal peoples and myself as an artist-explorer. Water gives energy and life, connecting all parties to the finding of place. This 2013 exhibition was the culmination of two journeys; one from Rockingham Bay and Cardwell to Bilyana and the other to Cape York. It was an exhilarating experience to find patterns in all

dimensions of journeying, artmaking and exhibiting. In my Bachelor of Visual Arts (Hons) thesis, I discovered patterns and connections in the double portraiture of artists who focus on the work of the artists before them and contemporise the subjects of the artworks. During this process, I reflected on one couple who were emigrating and journeying to Australia (Hook 2010). The idea of connection and journeying remained and developed into a new body of work as part of an investigatory stage towards the second exhibition.

Energies and Crossings was housed in the main space at Umbrella Contemporary Arts in Townville. It featured *Incremental Journal Notes*, *2013* (Figure 5.1), a large artwork depicting Kennedy's path as he entered the interior of North Queensland at Rockingham Bay in 1848.

Figure 5.1—Hook S 2013, *Incremental Journal Notes 2013*, graphite and acrylic on Canon desin, 150 cm x 800 cm. Photograph: Umbrella Contemporary Studio.

This series of four drawings on a single surface is a response to Kennedy's initial entry from the beach at Rockingham Bay, from just before his fifth camp to near his tenth. Each drawing was constructed on paper as if in visual diary form, but on a larger scale and in increments. It depicts a pathway from the beach that follows an ancient Aboriginal path. Today, this track turns on to Clift Road after a short walk and culminates on the Bruce Highway a few kilometres north of Cardwell. Kennedy accessed this path during the winter months when the path was drier, travelling inward from there. The present railway and highway follow similar Aboriginal tracks for some distance to the north. The four sites represented from right to left are Kennedy's entry from the beach at Rockingham Bay, a swamp as he travelled inland,

Double Barrel Creek on the old Bruce Highway and Deep Creek at Bilyana, near Kennedy's tenth camp.

My process of journaling in my visual diary usually involves working onsite. In this case, crocodiles were prevalent at each of the four sites I chose to image Kennedy's path. I shot many photographs to piece together later as references for smaller elements and larger frames. I also stayed for some time to understand the places, remember and imagine. My method is to become sentient; listen to the wind in the grass, trees and birds; observe; and draw. The more time taken to observe and draw the deeper my understanding, recognition and memory of and emotions towards new meanings. It is about seeing and feeling.

Figure 5.2 shows a detail of the fourth increment of the larger work from Figure 5.1. This was from a promotion for the exhibition in the local newspaper, the *Townsville Bulletin*. The close-up shot indicates the scale of *Incremental Journal Notes, 2013*.
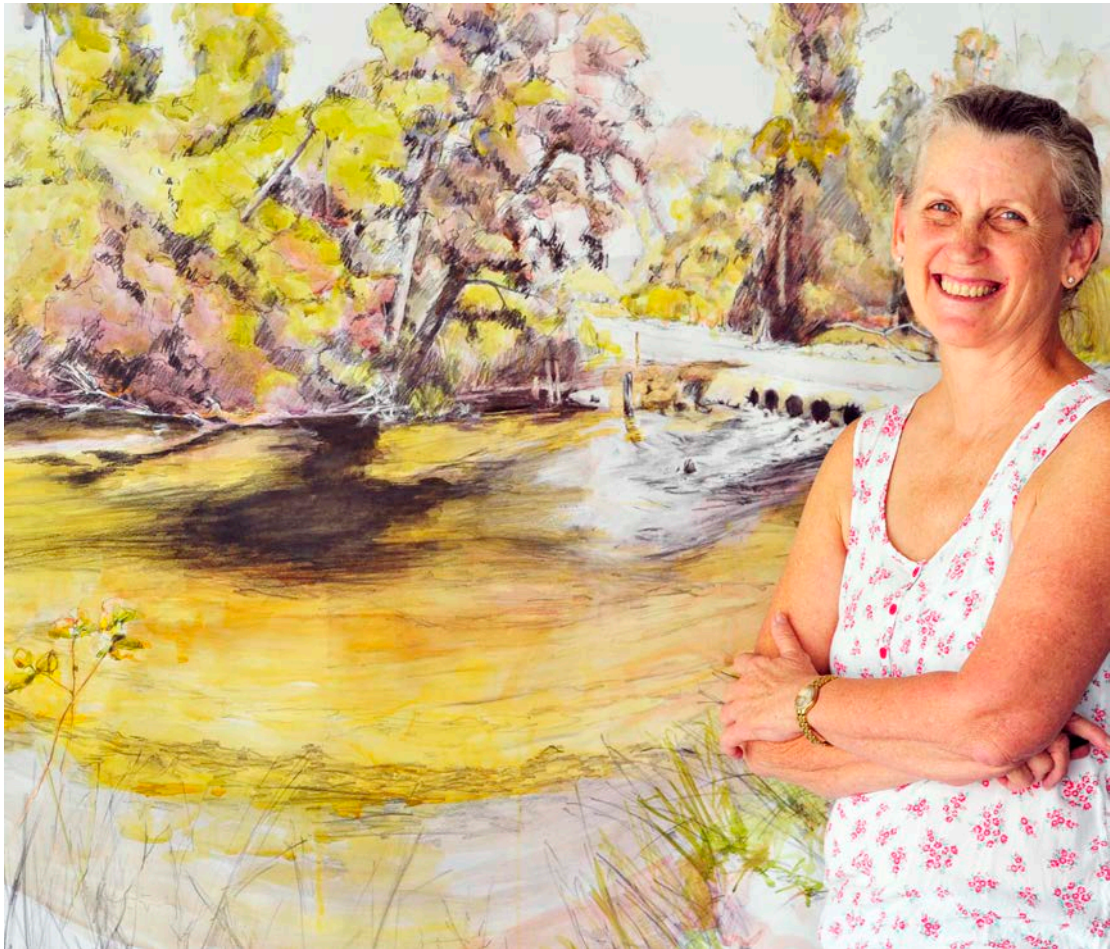
Figure 5.2—The artist and detail view of *Incremental Journal Notes, 2013*. Photograph: Townsville Bulletin.

In the studio, the completion of each 2 m section of drawing required a team of four people. Help was required to move the drawing 2 m at a time by rolling and unrolling the ends in the mode of a scroll. The roll of paper was attached to a vertical wall with the two scroll ends wound and protected at either side of the continued drawing. The concept for *Incremental Journal Notes* was based on the way an artist might work in visual diaries with annotated notes supplementing the drawings. The work was purchased by Perc Tucker Regional Gallery in Townsville for their North Queensland Collection.

My art practice has a strong drawing background that I interpret through printmaking and painting. In the early stages of the study, I approached lithography as a medium. As I learned this skill, the work *Déjà Vu Explorer Trail* (Figure 5.3) acted

as a reference to journeying and echoed my Honours exhibition: *Déjà vu, Doubles and Desire* (2010). This work was not of North and Far North Queensland, but represents my first lithograph. In this work I reimagined my motorhome erased from an early site and travelling on. The concept for the work derived from my earlier study of contemporary views of Victorian colonial explorers (e.g., Burke, Wills and Mitchell). This travel influenced the North and Far North Queensland explorer project.

Figure 5.3—Hook S 2013, *Déjà vu Explorer Trail*, lithograph on Magnani litho paper, 24 cm x 33 cm. Photograph: Hook.

Deep Creek Crossing, Bilyana (Figure 5.4) is another early lithograph. This site was close to Kennedy's tenth camp. The creek crossing was alive with the energy and sound of water rushing though and eddying around the bridge.

Figure 5.4—Hook S 2013, *Deep Creek Crossing, Bilyana*, lithograph on Magnani pescia paper, 30 cm x 42 cm. Photograph: Hook.

Printmaking is a reversal or mirror image of what is drawn on the stone or plate. When deciding on the composition elements for an artwork, reverse images need to be taken into account. For a right-handed artist the mark will usually begin at the upper right and complete in the lower left; the length of the mark differs. When the work is printed, it appears left-handed or back-to-front. Figures 5.3 and 5.4 both display this left-handed mark. Mirror reversal of the image means looking at the composition back-to-front so that the lithograph is balanced, which helps the viewer read the artwork. Lithography is a lengthy process in which the drawing is executed straight onto the stone, processed and then printed. Each stone may take a week or more to prepare and then a day to print. As drawing is the medium I am most passionate about in my artmaking, lithography was an enormous attraction.

Figure 5.5 shows three images in a series. *Uncontained 'Place', Day* is a charcoal drawing from a campsite on the Wenlock River, Cape York. This was one of the first site drawings I completed. The word 'uncontained' derived from the wide

expanse of place and its inability to be contained within a single artwork. My play with the concepts of containment and noncontainment provided the shape of the vessel. The idea that emerged was that the container had several layers of meaning. Practically, the container carried water—necessary for all journey participants—but the container was also the colonial explorer.

Figure 5.5—Left: Hook S 2013, *Uncontained 'Place', Day*, charcoal on Magnani litho paper, 67 cm x 49 cm; centre: Hook S 2012, *Uncontained 'Place', Night*, monotype, 60 cm x 43 cm; right: Hook S 2012, *Uncontained 'Place', Layered*, monotype woven, 60 cm x 43 cm. Photograph: Hook.

Uncontained 'Place', Day was the first of a small series that developed at this campfire. As I drew, the logs burned and the cooking continued. Change transformed the drawing into a moving document, as the marks were made and erased as the subject moved with shadows and activity. This reference was detailed for further work in the studio. At this stage of the artmaking process, I was experimenting to find pathways for further journeys and artwork. The second image, *Uncontained 'Place', Night* is a monotype, hand-drawn with printing ink onto a strong plastic surface or plate—the paper positioned on top and printed through an etching press. The third image, *Uncontained 'Place', Layered* is a monotype of the same subject, again drawn by hand, but this time also using the ghost—a second print on the same plate without re-inking—sliced and woven together as a layering of tone. My interest here was in the playing with tone and accidental happenings on the paper.

Figure 5.6 shows a triptych, *Kennedy Crossing? Stewart River I, II and III*. My initial visual diary drawings were drawn on location at a site where Kennedy might have crossed the river, hence the question mark in the title. For the purpose of our travelling and camping beside the river we used a borrow pit, which is an area of cleared ground, the soil 'borrowed' to maintain the dirt roads to Port Stewart at the end of the road. Whitehead set up a shade so that I could work out of the sun. The water was black from tannin in the tree roots and made stunning reflections in the water. In my sentient state, I imagined that Kennedy and his men could just walk over the back of the hill and put the animals to drink. These charcoal drawings were later reconstructed and resolved at the studio. The triptych deliberately presents a wide view. The diagonal structure of the distant hills and trees together with the bank in the middle distance and foreground lead the viewer's eye deep into the final right hand drawing.

Figure 5.6—Hook S 2013, *Kennedy Crossing? Stewart River I, II, III*, charcoal on Magnani litho paper, 76 cm x 56 cm each. Photograph: Hook.

Savannah, Cape York I and II (Figure 5.7) was drawn in charcoal as a diptych and represents the final artwork shown in *Energies and Crossings*. For this drawing, I stopped on a junction of the road in the middle of savannah land and drew two sections slightly off the road. A rusty immobile car rested just beyond the frame of

my drawing along with burnt-out stumps, hard, dry ground and trees at all angles. The trees were so bent and knarled that the drawing *Savannah I* has an animal shaped tree that adds interest to the diagonal composition. While drawing, I found myself lost in time, absorbed for stretches of three to four hours. In the journey of making, layering charcoal over charcoal, markmaking, erasing and further markmaking, I remembered how arid this land was and that Kennedy and his men would have passed similar scenes.

Figure 5.7—Hook S 2013, *Savannah, Cape York I and II*, charcoal on Magnani litho paper, 100 cm x 71 cm each. Photograph: Hook.

This initial exhibition was the dawn of my journey to discover and explore the terrain, my technical ability and concepts. On reflection, I understood that this body of work was a beginning—an interim exhibition and a step towards a more centred body of work in the second exhibition, *Imagining Place*.

5.3 *Imagining Place: Cultural Memories of North Queensland* (2015)

Elements of *Energies and Crossings* were important to the concept development of the next exhibition, *Imagining Place*. In *Uncontained 'Place', Day*, the concept of the campfire image and the vessel over the fire began to build. I played with the idea of a vessel or container: the empty vessel as a white jar symbolised European settlers claiming ownership as if the land was empty, devoid of life—a *terra nullius*, there for the taking. The metaphor of containment and incursion represented by the container became a foundational theme.

I purchased seven jugs in second-hand shops, painted them white and packed them securely into the vehicle. At sites of significant intersections between the explorers and the artist, a vessel was smashed. This symbolised colonial incursion: the colonial container of imperialism, a shattered wreck. Each broken container was drawn, photographed and/or recorded, rewrapped carefully to avoid further breakage on the rough, corrugated roads of Cape York and brought back to the studio. Each container was mended with black silicone glue, representing the collision of Indigenous and colonial cultures. A container may be remade in a semblance of its original shape—some form of reconciliation—but the fault lines are conspicuously evident. The mending of the vessels represented the uniting of cultures as a symbol of Indigenous and non-Indigenous sharing.

The works represented in the exhibition were formed using a range of different mediums and techniques. Apart from the installation and hand-drawn animations, the exhibition included lithographs, linoleum silk cut prints, charcoal and graphite drawings and digital art. There were crossovers between digital techniques and lithography in the printing process.

Explorer vessels on the journey, broken vessel (Figure 5.8) paraded the pots as explorers forming a line as they journeyed at the riverside. The site was an ankle-deep crossing at the Burdekin River used by the Dalrymple community to receive goods from the south. The broken vessel represents a possible Leichhardt crossing of the Burdekin River at the present Dalrymple National Park. This photograph was displayed in the same area in the exhibition as the documentary that depicted my travels in Cape York and the Burdekin River. The containers represented the dichotomy between solidity and fragility in a foreign environment.

Figure 5.8—Hook S 2014, *Explorer vessels on the journey, broken vessel*, Dalrymple National Park, Photograph: Hook.

Figure 5.9 provides a working view of the central installation for the exhibition, *Fragments of 'Place'*. Set upon a plinth, the revised, repaired vessels represented the imperfect fragmentations and effects caused by colonisation on North and Far North Queensland place. Behind the plinth were seven drawn animations of the breaking of the first container from the left. The container had been shot with a

rifle, exploded and the pieces fallen out of place. The shooting of the container represented the shooting of First Nations peoples by colonial explorers.

Figure 5.9—Hook S 2014, *Shattering the Colonial Myth I to VII* and *Fragments of 'Place'*, working view, installation of found pottery and silicone, dimensions variable. Photograph: Sarah Welch.

For this work, there was no slow motion camera; the video mostly showed a blur. In this series, the drawings were reimagined and recreated into a vital moment of contact and the shattering of the container. Figures 5.10–5.16 provide a detailed view of the drawings.
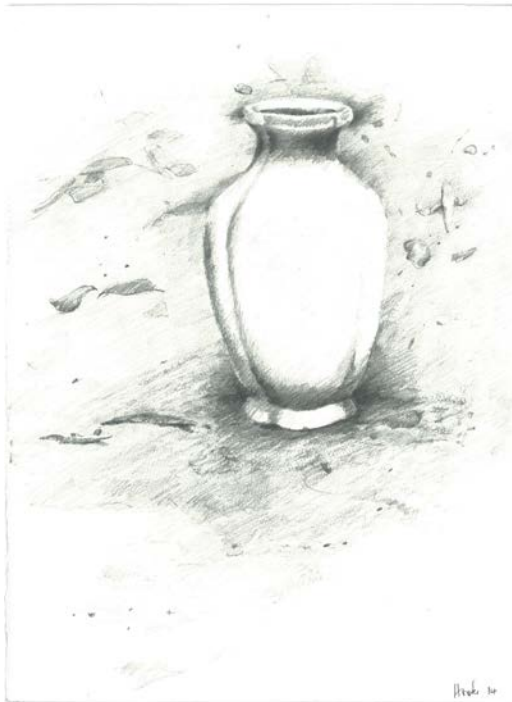
Figure 5.10—Hook S 2014, *Shattering the Colonial Myth I*, graphite on Magnani litho paper, 38 cm x 28 cm. Photograph: Hook.
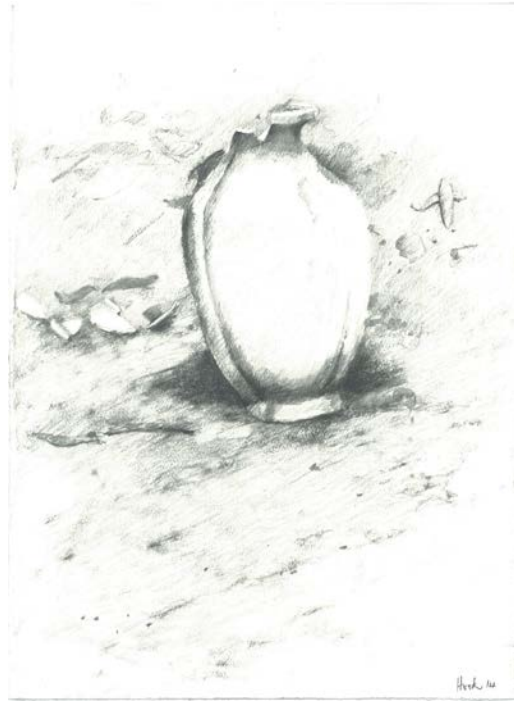
Figure 5.11—Hook S 2014, *Shattering the Colonial Myth II*, graphite on Magnani litho paper, 38 cm x 28 cm. Photograph: Hook.

Figure 5.12—Hook S 2014, *Shattering the Colonial Myth III*, graphite on Magnani litho paper, 38 cm x 28 cm. Photograph: Hook.

Figure 5.13—Hook S 2014, *Shattering the Colonial Myth IV*, graphite on Magnani litho paper, 38 cm x 28 cm. Photograph: Hook.

105

Figure 5.14—Hook S 2014, *Shattering the Colonial Myth V*, graphite on Magnani litho paper, 38 cm x 28 cm. Photograph: Hook.

Figure 5.15—Hook S 2014, *Shattering the Colonial Myth VI*, graphite on Magnani litho paper, 38 cm x 28 cm. Photograph: Hook.

Figure 5.16—Hook S 2014, *Shattering the Colonial Myth VII*, graphite on Magnani litho paper, 38 cm x 28 cm. Photograph: Hook.

The seven animations were framed and exhibited behind the installation *Fragments of 'Place'* (Figure 5.17).

Figure 5.17—Top: Hook S 2014, *Shattering the Colonial Myth I to VII*, hook graphite on Magnani litho paper, 38 cm x 28 cm each; bottom: Hook S 2014, *Fragments of 'Place'*, installation of found pottery and silicone, dimensions variable. Photograph: Welsh.

Chinese porcelain was traded throughout Europe and inspired Western artisans to combine Chinese motifs with their own European landscapes (Leath 1999). This style was known as 'chinoiserie' (Leath 1999). Decorated porcelain is an appropriation by the British. In my work, I utilise my vessels as colonial intruders and appropriators, imaging them in the decorative style of the harsh landscape of Cape York. The landscape inserted into the vessels is the antithesis of the delicate European chinoiserie.

These vessels then took on another aspect in alignment with a Chinese influence, the conceptual artist, Ai Weiwei. Tung (2017) examines Ai Weiwei's performative works *'Dropping a Han Dynasty Urn'* and the *'Blue and White'* of porcelain vessels series. According to Tung (2017), Ai's philosophy is that altering

one aspect of an artwork can change its meaning. After dropping the urn, Ai was asked if he considered this performance a 'powerful counter-gesture to systems of power and authority' (Weiwei 2003, cited in Tung 2017, p. 61). He responded that the urn had no power as it a passive object; the object was 'powerful only because someone thinks it's powerful and invests value in it'. Ai's performance work echoed the destruction of antiquities during the Cultural Revolution (Tung 2017). Conceptually, my vessels carry the metaphor of British colonial imperialism seizing the land. The breaking of the containers represents an attempt to critique colonial power and appropriates the landscape decoration to assume the ruggedness of North and Far North Queensland.

With each container broken, I returned to previous landscape drawings from *Energies and Crossings*. Installation of the landscapes into the vessels involved a process of layering. The drawings were photographed as well as the unbroken and broken containers. The landscape image was layered under the vessel image, with the container silhouette as a mask layer in Adobe Photoshop (see Figures 5.18 and 5.19). The landscape drawing was intricately brought forward through the form of the containers.

Figure 5.18—In-process view of artwork, *'Place' Container, Stewart River, Cape York*; Photoshop mask. Photograph: Hook.

Figure 5.19—Subsequent in-process view of artwork, *'Place' Container, Stewart River, Cape York I*, & *Sharing 'Place', Stewart River, Cape York I*; lithographic transfer. Photograph: Hook.

Exposing the landscape layer in the broken vessels was an intricate process. The resultant digital composite was laser-printed and the exterior around the photocopied container was handcut. An image transfer was executed onto the lithographic stone. The remaining image on the stone was manually overdrawn with lithographic pencils and appropriate oily materials and the completed image processed and printed.

109

The unbroken vessels were printed red as if to say 'warning, there are troubles ahead in the landscape'—a prelude to a troubled colonial time (Figure 5.20). The second print of the similar, but broken vessel was printed in black (Figure 5.21). The glue lines in the second vessel were deliberately not evident. The lithographic prints, *Stewart River I and II, Cape York* enclose the left-side drawing in the vessels from the earlier work of *Kennedy Crossing? Stewart River I* (Figure 5.6) from the first exhibition, *Energies and Crossings*.

Figure 5.20—Hook S 2014, *'Place' Container, Stewart River, Cape York I*, lithograph on BKF rives, 57 cm x 38 cm. Photograph: Welsh.

Figure 5.21—Hook S 2014, *Sharing 'Place', Stewart River, Cape York I*, lithograph on BKF rives, 57 cm x 38 cm. Photograph: Welsh.

When exhibited, the red container was situated to the left of the black vessel, indicating a cautionary moment prior to the breakage: a subtle, yet powerful image (Figure 5.22).

Figure 5.22—Exhibition view. From left to right: Hook S 2014, *'Place' Container, Stewart River, Cape York I*; *Sharing 'Place', Stewart River, Cape York I*; *'Place' Container, Stewart River, Cape York II*; *Sharing 'Place', Stewart River, Cape York II*. Photograph: Welsh.

Figures 5.23–5.27 show the images in the vessel series.

Figure 5.23—Hook S 2014, *'Place' Container, Stewart River, Cape York,* lithograph on BKF rives, 57 cm x 38 cm. Photograph: Welsh.

Figure 5.24—Hook S 2014, *Sharing 'Place', Stewart River, Cape York*, lithograph on BKF rives, 57 cm x 38 cm. Photograph: Welsh.

113

Figure 5.25—Hook S 2014, *'Place' Container, Wenlock River, Cape York II*, lithograph on BKF rives, 57 cm x 38 cm. Photograph: Welsh.

Figure 5.26—Hook S 2014, *Sharing 'Place', Wenlock River, Cape York II*, lithograph on BKF rives, 57 cm x 38 cm. Photograph: Welsh.

Figure 5.27—Hook S 2014, *'Place' Container, Savannah,Cape York*, lithograph on BKF rives, 57 cm x 38 cm. Photograph: Welsh.

Shall We Turn Left or Right, Mr. Kennedy? (Figure 5.28) was complicated in the making. The drawing and construction felt as risky as Kennedy's decision to turn left or right as he approached the Escape River from the south. I reimagined the land from the Escape River with a dual pathway that the explorer as a vessel may take. The artwork alludes to the choices that could be made in exploration, for if Kennedy had turned left prior to the Escape River, there may have been a different outcome for the man and possibly for North and Far North Queensland. It was a serendipitous moment, one that was difficult to capture in the making of the artwork. In this drawing, the vessel as the explorer is still intact.
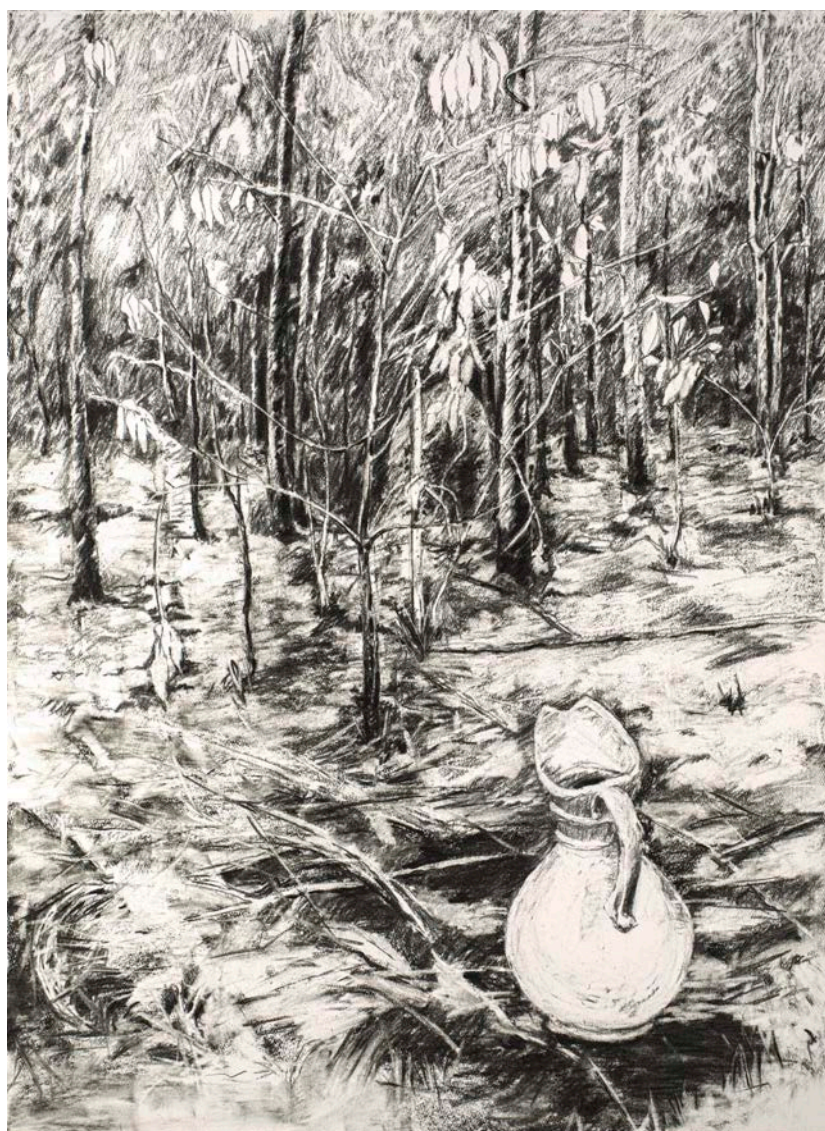
Figure 5.28—Hook S 2014, *Shall We Turn Left or Right, Mr. Kennedy?*, charcoal on Magnani litho paper, 57 cm x 38 cm. Photograph: Welsh.

Rescue Place, Jackey Jackey's Escape, Albany Island, Cape York (Figure 5.29) began as an image in my visual diary, drawn at a place Jackey may have escaped across the strait by boat to Albany Island. When I finished drawing, it covered three pages of my visual diary. The drawing commenced on one page and was followed by another two drawings with annotations, rubbings and scratching the visual diary in the burnt charcoal bushes. I imagined Jackey calling 'coo-ee' across to the *Ariel* to be rescued. There was no ship while I drew; however, I surmised that this distance across the water might carry a voice and the water where the ship is drawn looked darker in tone, enough for a ship to anchor. The place I sat to draw had been recently been burned out and new shoots were beginning to appear, which gave the sensation of loneliness and risk alongside the emergence of new life and hope.

Figure 5.29—Hook S 2014, *Rescue Place, Jackey Jackey's Escape, Albany Island, Cape York*, print release and graphite on Magnani litho paper, 24 cm x 100 cm. Photograph: Welsh.

These drawings were photocopied in preparation for a print release. This allowed the already drawn images to be released onto a large sheet of Magnani litho paper, processed and printed. This image was then redrawn over the print release. My intention was to have one broad sweep of the visual information from the diary instead of separate pages. The visual diary note form is one that flows through the exhibition, my field drawings and notes.

Dry Walk, Capt. Billy's Landing, Cape York (Figure 5.30) is a linoleum print with three separate linoleum blocks. This work originated from the drawing (Figure 5.31) completed at a lookout on the journey to Captain Billy's Landing, a process that took two mornings due to extreme October heat. From my position atop a four-wheel

drive, I could see the sea shimmering in the distance, some islands and a broad stretch of thickly scrubbed country. I began with one sheet of thick Magnani litho paper of 28 cm x 38cm and drew from the left. I asked my companion to pass another, and by the time I went to ask for the next he had given me my entire folio of paper. I continued to work on these drawings in the studio, deciding to exhibit them as in instructional image to accompany the linoleum print.

Figure 5.30—Hook S 2014, *Dry Walk, Capt. Billy's Landing, Cape York*, linoleum print on BKF rives, 29.5 cm x 148.5 cm. Photograph: Welsh.

Figure 5.31—Hook S 2013, *Notes for Capt. Billy's Landing, Cape York*, graphite on Magnani litho paper, 28 cm x 152 cm. Photograph: Hook.

The detail in Figure 5.32 is the first of four pages drawn onsite. From the busy markmaking drawing of *Notes for Capt. Billy's Landing, Cape York* came a serene, minimal linear horizon for the linoleum print (Figure 5.30). Figure 5.33 provides a detail view of *Dry Walk, Capt. Billy's Landing, Cape York*.

Figure 5.32—Hook S 2013, detail, *Notes for Capt. Billy's Landing*. Photograph: Hook.
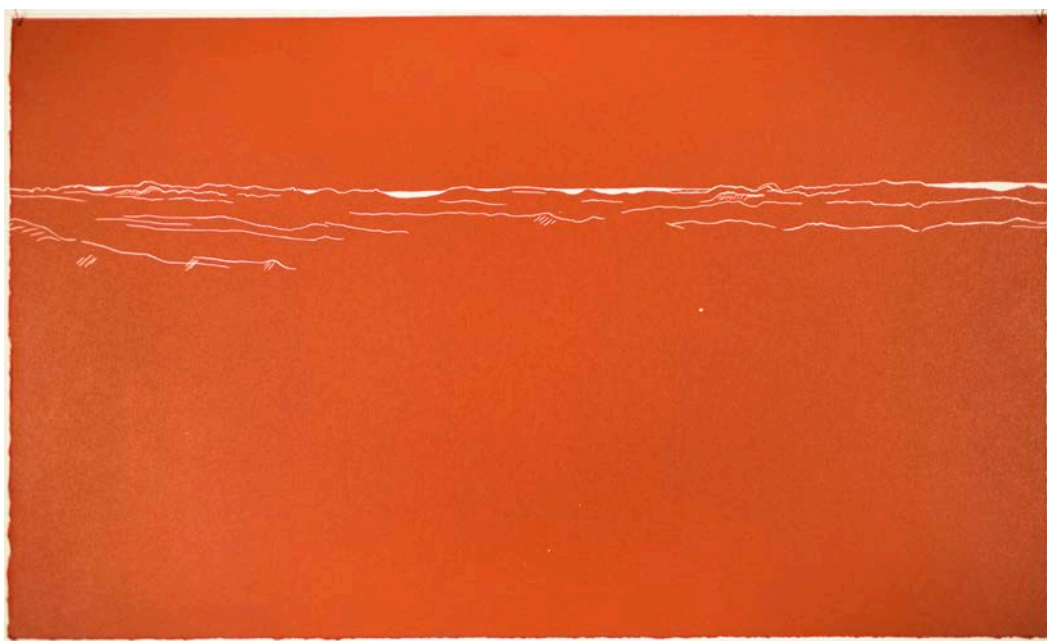
Figure 5.33—Hook S 2014, detail, *Dry Walk, Capt. Billy's Landing, Cape York*. Photograph: Hook.

Restrained markmaking in the linoleum print added to the feeling of distance walked or ridden by the explorer. This was the area where horses would drop into sharp-sided watercourses and there was limited grass for feed. The breadth of the land in the drawing indicated a long, dry walk. The choice of colour added an elevated sensation of hardship. Colour printing on linoleum, particularly with a three-piece print, necessitates fine attention to detail. The ink on the slab that will be rolled must

118

remain at the same consistency while the ink is rolled onto the roller. Each layer rolled onto the linoleum tile must have an identical amount of ink. If not identical, different strengths of colour appear when printed. This concentration in application—noting how many rolls to evenly cover the tile—was then repeated several times in groups of three. This work interests members of the public when exhibited and I am often asked about its background.

The artwork *Dalrymple's Dream, Valley of Lagoons* (Figure 5.34) is the second linoleum triptych in the exhibition, drawn onsite while I faced the old and new dwellings on the far side of Dalrymple's Lagoon. The working images are shown in Figure 5.35 in the visual diary manner.

Figure 5.34—Hook S 2014, *Dalrymple's Dream, Valley of Lagoons*, linoleum print on BKF rives, 29.5 cm x 148.5 cm. Photograph: Welsh.

Figure 5.35—Hook S 2014 *Notes for Dalrymple's Dream, Valley of Lagoons*, graphite on Magnani litho paper, 28 cm x 152 cm. Photograph: Hook.

My viewing position was opposite the Valley of Lagoons' dwellings, which created a sense of distance and the vastness of Dalrymple's dream. Figure 5.36 shows the detail of the second drawing from the left. *Dalrymple's Dream, Valley of Lagoons* was shown alongside *Dry Walk, Capt. Billy's Landing, Cape York* as the two works share similar use of refrained application of line. In art terms this is known as an economy of line. Compositionally, the colour field without line is as important as the

119

use of line. The detail is necessary to be able to understand the larger whole work in Figure 5.35.

Figure 5.36—Hook S 2014, detail, *Notes for Dalrymple's Dream, Valley of Lagoons*. Photograph: Welsh.

Figure 5.37 shows a similar detail from *Dalrymple's Dream, Valley of Lagoons* for comparison.

Figure 5.37—Hook S 2014, detail, *Dalrymple's Dream, Valley of Lagoons*. Photograph: Welsh.

Figure 5.38 shows the exhibition view of *Dry Walk, Capt. Billy's Landing, Cape York* (left) and *Dalrymple's Dream, Valley of Lagoons* (right) with their

respective visual notes in the middle. While the connection between the two artworks is aesthetic, the colours respond and the linear quality implies similar distance and isolation. The hanging together of these artworks helps connect the two explorers.

Figure 5.38—Exhibition view, *Dry Walk, Billy's Landing, Cape York* and *Dalrymple's Dream, Valley of Lagoons*. Photograph: Welsh.

The next artwork, *Swing in Place, Reedybrook* (Figure 5.39) was close geographically to the Valley of Lagoons. The Valley of Lagoons has recently been split into smaller properties and though it remains, Reedybrook would probably have been part of the Valley of Lagoons at one time. Reedybrook Station is fed by springs and begins in the Mt Fox area. It is a popular camping spot and is cultural country for the Gugu Badhun. *Swing in Place, Reedybrook* encapsulates an intimate view of the stream. Completed on three travel sized Magnini litho sheets, this drawing, left me with lurking feelings of a negative past after sensing the area for some time. Since its completion and having attended the lecture for the release of the Cadet-James et al.'s monograph, it feels like there is a different message now: one of hope and positivity for a shared journey.

Figure 5.39—Hook S 2014, *Swing in Place, Reedybrook*, graphite on Magnani litho paper, 38 cm x 84 cm. Photograph: Hook.

Moving south from the Valley of Lagoons, the next artworks centre round the Burdekin River in Dalrymple National Park. Leichhardt camped in the vicinity of the present-day camping ground, which surrounds the remains of the old township of Dalrymple. In 1864, a trading post township was formed and named for Dalrymple (Hooper 2002). Subsequent floods forced the inhabitants to move and, with the arrival of gold in Charters Towers, all that remains of the old township are the basaltic walls. These walls bordered and raised the blocks and small paddocks of land higher in an effort to inhibit flooding (Figure 5.40).

Figure 5.40—Street corner, township of Dalrymple, 2014. Photograph: Hook.

The basalt walls of Dalrymple are included in *Crossroads, Old Dalrymple Township, Burdekin River* (Figure 5.41). The lonely grave of a thirty-year-old woman, Kate, is positioned well away from the township.
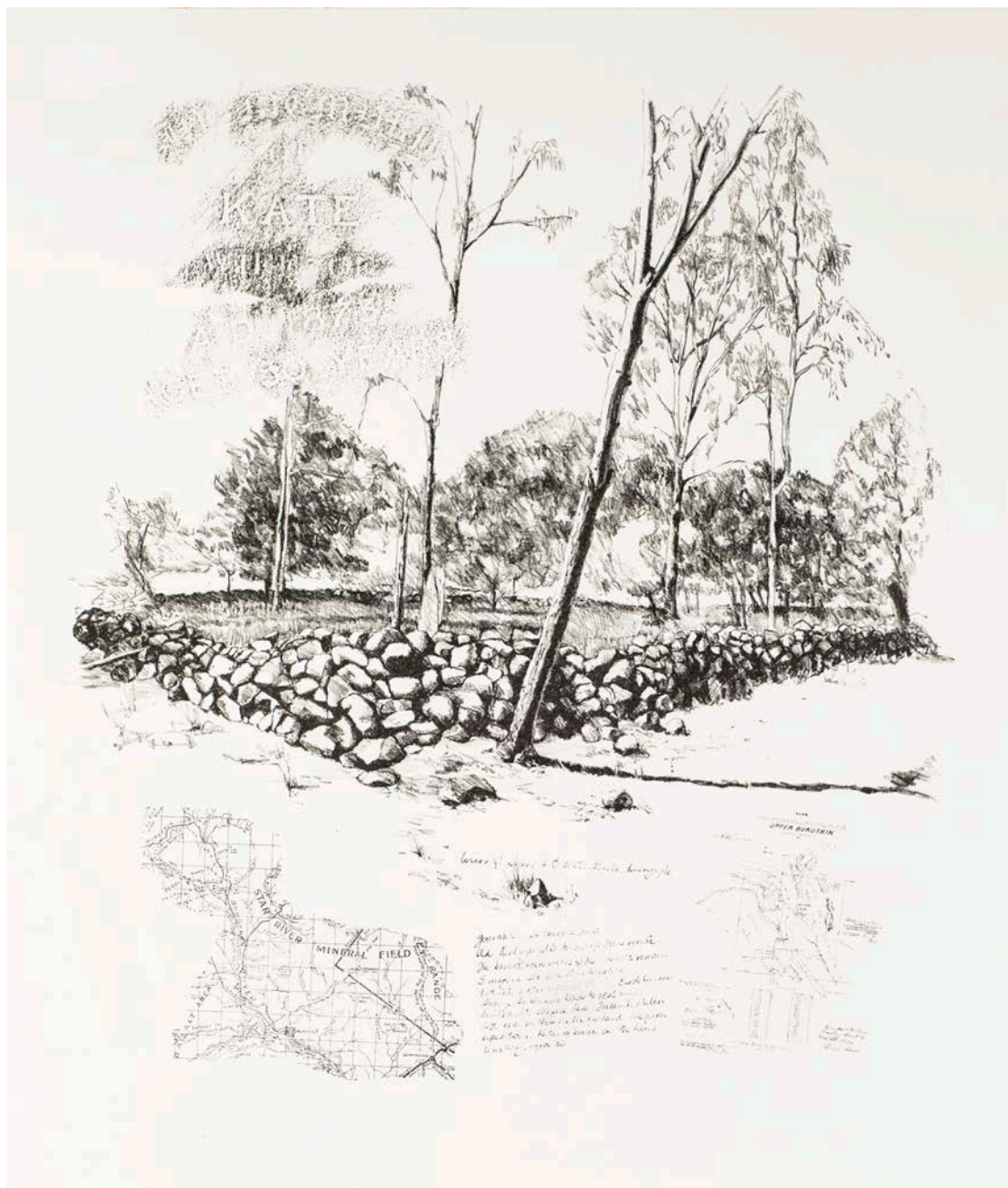
Figure 5.41—Hook S 2014, *Crossroads, Old Dalrymple Township, Burdekin River*, lithograph on Magnani litho paper, 56 cm x 47 cm. Photograph: Welsh.

Visitors to this area may reflect on how it must have been and how those involved must have memorised it. According to Hooper (2002), the establishment of Dalrymple was prior to Townsville's development. He states that the township was

the 'first inland town to be established in North Queensland' (Hooper 2002, p. 93). From across the river on the coast side the crossing connected with a road used to transport mail and goods to Dalrymple (Hooper 2002).

Crossroads, Old Dalrymple Township, Burdekin River represents a snapshot of history. Hooper (2002) relates the story of a very strong man named O'Flathery who frequented the local hotel at the staging post in Dalrymple. He was once locked up overnight for overimbibing, and as there was no cell he was manacled to a large log of 155 kg (Hooper 2002). The next day, O'Flathery picked up the log and went back to the hotel to resume drinking. He was threatened with charges of theft and returned the jail (log) forthwith (Hooper 2002). Men like O'Flathery—inebriated men working off their hangovers—built the basalt walls that remain today (Hooper 2002).

In the making of the image, the grave was frottaged (a technique using a tissue paper and soft graphite to rub the texture of the image) and applied to the lithography stone in a print release technique. The rubbing, maps and diary notes were added after the main drawing was completed on the stone. *Crossroads, Old Dalrymple Township, Burdekin Rive*r was an edition of six. It formed the first of three in this style. The other two are discussed later in this chapter.

Staying in the same region of the Burdekin River, the large artwork *Leichhardt's Crossing, Burdekin River* (Figure 5.42) represents where Leichhardt and his men may have crossed the Burdekin River. It depicts a shallow section of the river and an old road across the other side. South of the crossing were rocks beautifully shaped by erosion.

Figure 5.42—Hook S 2015, *Leichhardt's Crossing, Burdekin River*, charcoal on Magnani litho paper, 71 cm x 200 cm. Photograph: Hook.

Drawing on such a large scale can produce changes in style. For this work, I began on the leftmost sheet of paper, moved onto the next sheet and realised that my style had developed different nuances. I returned to the first drawing sheet and continued across the surface again and again. Concentrated effort in drawing leads to new discoveries in technique and ability.

Natural Water crossing, Dalrymple, Burdekin River (Figure 5.43), made up of the notes for *Leichhardt's Crossing, Burdekin River*, was displayed nearby in the exhibition space.

Figure 5.43—Hook S 2015, *Natural Water Crossing, Dalrymple, Burdekin River*, graphite on Magnani litho paper, 24.3 cm x 100 cm. Photograph: Hook.

It is helpful to discuss technique. As North and Far North Queensland is not always conducive to sitting for hours drawing in the sun, I took photographs with the camera on automatic. I am not at all interested in the perfect shot. What I discovered was that the tones differed from shot to shot, although taken beside each other from same viewpoint. In the studio, I joined these together with a removable adhesive, so that they were detachable, used what I needed, overlapped and developed the drawing

(see Figure 5.44). Due to the size of the completed charcoal, the photographs were used individually and in smaller groups. The camera angles and total image display are distorted. It was a reference, so when I completed the composition, the photographs were disregarded and I relied on my sentience and memory of place to develop the desired qualities in the drawing. In the context of my ongoing practice, this was a working drawing for future work even though its grand scale has a strong viewing presence. *Leichhardt's Crossing, Burdekin River* will have wonderful potential as a two-piece lithograph.
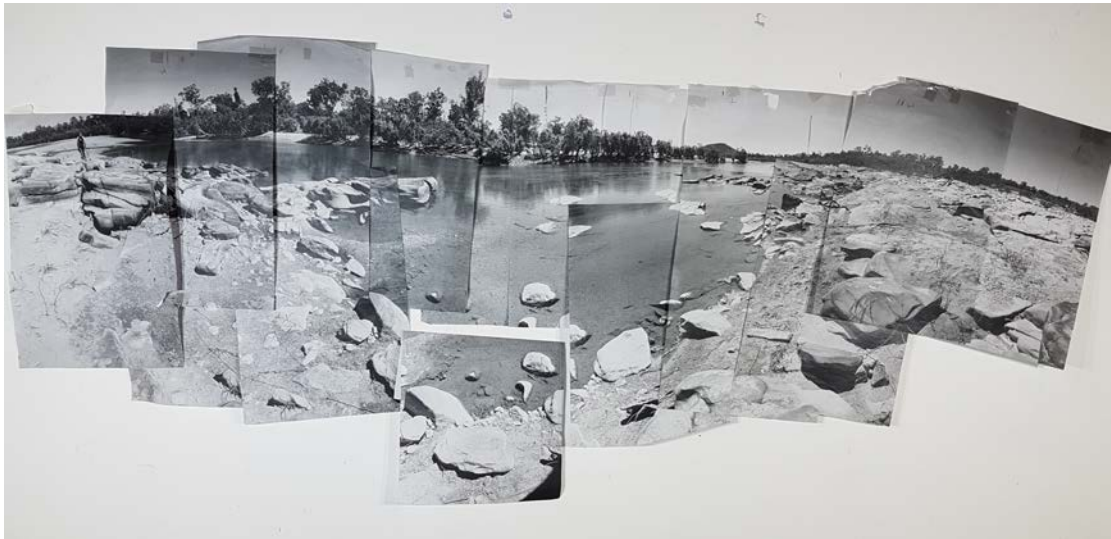
Figure 5.44—Working reference for *Leichhardt's Crossing, Burden River*. Photograph: Hook.

While searching the area, I was guided by a grazier to a lonely gravesite on the far side of the river from the Dalrymple Township. *John Amour's Grave* (Figure 5.45) was drawn onsite and, although unrelated to explorer images, this solitary grave marked the presence of an adventurous soul remembered by his brother in the middle of the bush.

Figure 5.45—Hook S 2014, *John Amour's Grave*, visual diary. Photograph: Hook.

Moving from the Burdekin River, we turn north to the Nixon homestead at Shelburne Station in Cape York. This was the location of the next section of the exhibition. The drive into the area was extremely rough, although it would have been worse on horseback without a road to follow. This site was selected on the basis of its proximity to somewhere Kennedy would have made camp near permanent flowing water. This was one of the first sites I visited on my second journey to Cape York. All of the vessels, intact, were lined up on a wooden plinth, representing the explorers on a journey. I created a charcoal drawing that was transferred to the stone, along with

rubbings from the Kennedy memorial. The resulting artwork, *Explorer Vessels, Nixon Homestead* (Figure 5.46) consists of diary notes, an overlaid map, a drawing of the Nixon homestead, rubbings and the vessels drawn in a row. It was there that I broke the first container shown in the animation in Figure 5.17.
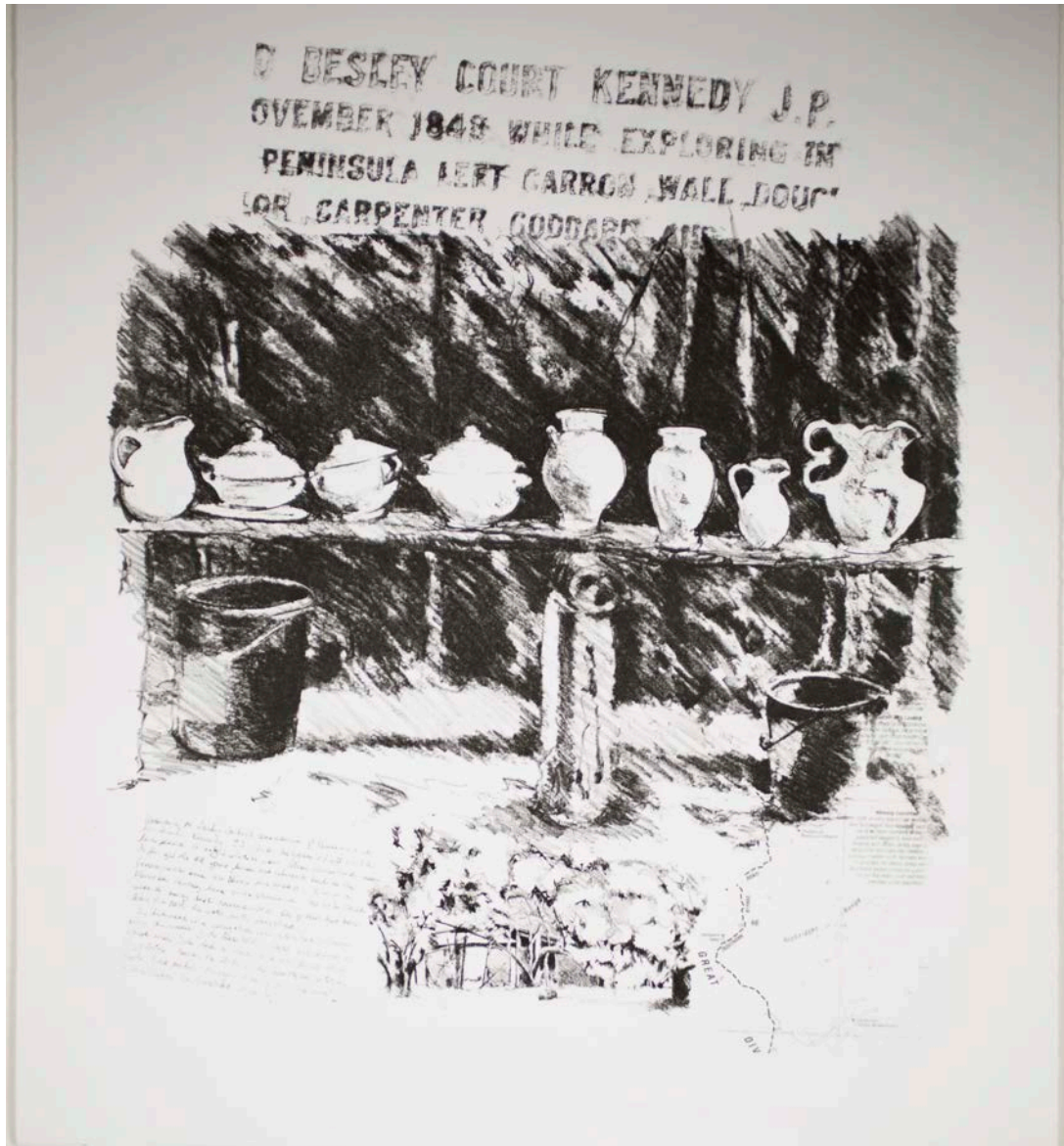
Figure 5.46—Hook S 2014, *Explorer Vessels, Nixon Homestead*, Magnani litho paper, 56 cm x 47 cm. Photograph: Hook.

Figure 5.47 shows the ruggedness of the Nixon homestead at Shelburne Bay, Cape York. Families were raised and lives were lived in this remote area. The trees were strong and luxurious but the ground was dry. An old disused windmill sat near the river, once intended to bring water back to the homestead. Our camp was near the

river. As we walked through the terrain, for the first time I had an idea of Kennedy's wonder as he approached this creek, grateful for its existence. In the accompanying video (see Appendix A), I am shown walking down the creek with my camera, stepping over stones and branches. Water is crucial for success when travelling in remote areas.

Figure 5.47—Hook S 2014, *Nixon Homestead, Shelburne Bay, Cape York*, graphite on Magnani litho paper, 38 cm x 28 cm. Photograph: Hook.

Explorers as Vessels (Figure 5.48) was a reference piece for the exhibition, situated in the room in which the video of my travels was shown. This photographic work reflects the lithograph *Explorer Vessels, Nixon Homestead*; however, the explorers as vessels reflected in the water are digitally transformed with a blood red to indicate the dangers of incursion. The running red of the creek is not an easy image. This unease of colour is echoed through the lithographic container images.

Figure 5.48—Hook S 2014, *Explorers as Vessels*, digital work, 54 cm x 140 cm. Photograph: Hook.

Each section of the exhibition focused on a different place, following the time frame of the trails we encountered. The next artwork, a lithograph called *Jardine of Plenty, Lockerbie, Cape York* (Figure 5.49) was inspired by a piece of land further to the north. On the way to Somerset, at the tip of Cape York, there was a canvas tourist shop in the bush called the Croc Tent. I enquired about the old homestead across the road and was led to an older site further back. This was the home of the Jardine family—a famous name in the exploration and settlement of the north of Cape York. *Jardine of Plenty, Lockerbie, Cape York* shows the remains of an old English-style garden. I found this after walking through a mango tree–lined avenue slightly uphill and stopping in front of what appeared to be rocks formed in broken rows. On closer inspection the stones formed an English-style garden in a pattern of two circles with quarters designated to allow a gardener to reach the separated plots. Centred in each large garden was a smaller round area and both large circular plots intersected with another garden.

Figure 5.49—Hook S 2014, *Jardine of Plenty, Lockerbie, Cape York*, lithograph on Magnani litho paper, 56 cm x 47 cm. Photograph: Hook.

The space was larger than a suburban house block. In the artwork there is a small diagram of the two rock gardens and beyond this, furthest from the entry, was the homestead. Behind the homestead was the kitchen, which was fed with a permanent spring. The spring still exists and services the family who run the Croc Tent. I found some pottery fragments promoting the gardens, although they were

broken and long forgotten. A memorial plaque acknowledges the family, as can be seen in Figure 5.49. The addition of the map locates the site. The drawing of the gardens was reconstructed to give an impression of how they were formed. They were overgrown and entangled. This site gave a sensation of the tenacity and resilience of the property owners, similar to the Nixon family from Shelburne Bay.

Imagining Place represented a personal, sentient exploration of a historical bond of colonial explorers and First Nations peoples where there has previously been some blindness. It is my hope that these works will promote a remembering and reimagination of our North and Far North Queensland past.

5.3.1 Installation of Artwork at Perc Tucker

The staff at Perc Tucker Regional Gallery were immensely talented and handled the larger part of the installation. The design for the exhibition was planned a fortnight in advance. My artworks were placed where they would be hung and adjustments made to ensure they positioned in a readable, connected manner. The vinyl frontispiece (Figure 5.50) followed the design of the broken vessels. The exhibition space had two large areas with a small room for the digital material constructed in the larger room. Looking into the first large room, the installation was on the left and the seven lithographic containers were opposite.

The next main space echoed the container connection through the artwork *Shall We Turn Left or Right, Mr. Kennedy?*. Directly to the right was the triptych, *Kennedy Crossing? Stewart River, I, II, III, Cape York.* This group of work was reconstituted from the previous exhibition to reflect its use in the container lithographs. On the next wall were the two linoleum prints, *Dry Walk, Capt. Billy's Landing, Cape York* and *Dalrymple's Dream, Valley of Lagoons* with *Notes for Capt. Billy's Landing,* (Kennedy and Jackey Jackey's path) and *Notes for Dalrymple's Dream, Valley of Lagoons* placed in between, one above the other.

The large charcoal drawing *Leichhardt's Crossing, Burdekin River* dominated the opposite wall. To the left was *Notes for Natural Water Crossing, Dalrymple, Burdekin River*, acting as a reference. *Swing in Place, Reedybrook* and *Nixon Homestead, Shelburne Bay, Cape York* sat in the alcove in front of the video space.

The Perc Tucker team produced the catalogue (see Appendix B) and invitations based on my work and writings. As seen in Figure 5.51, the invitation reflected the broken containers.

133

Following the Perc Tucker showing, the exhibition toured to TYTO Regional Art Gallery in Ingham.

5.3.2 Exhibition Opening and Reviews

Bronwyn McBurnie opened the exhibition on Friday 30 January 2015. McBurnie was chosen because she knew of my work and was a librarian for the Special and North Queensland collections at James Cook University. McBurnie's message was creative, reflecting on Xavier de Maistre, an eighteenth-century writer who explored and journeyed around an interior space. McBurnie used the analogy of de Maistre's 1798 *Journey Round my Room* to discuss the writer's mindset as he

perceived place through fresh eyes and rediscovered some of its qualities. McBurnie suggested that de Maistre and I travelled with similar mindsets: ones dedicated to finding newness in the journey and appreciating that which is closer at hand than exotic faraway places.

Imagining Place was by far the largest exhibition of my artistic career. Feedback from the exhibition proved positive. Sixty-two visitors remarked on the exhibition in the comments book, leaving comments like 'great to see North Queensland in a different outlook, great show'; 'evocative, stunning works capturing harshness and beauty' and 'very pleasing and impressive show and very pertinent to all Australians'. All but one comment was positive, and even that comment gave constructive criticism. It was a little ambiguous indicating, stating that '"Imagining Place" was certainly perspective-challenging and provoking in thought, but was uninteresting to a degree because the collection lacked diversity. Lovely work though'. Another comment took on an especially positive tone for me: 'Beautiful artwork. Love your connection to country: thank you'. This comment seemed to show an understanding of the concept of colonial usurpation. Another person told me that they had forgotten about the explorers in North and Far North Queensland and that they found the exhibit an educational experience. There were several positive comments about the quality of the drawings, which permeated through printmaking in both the lithographic and linoleum forms.

The experience of connecting the physical journeying and conceptual metaphor of colonial incursion to my artwork at Perc Tucker advanced my development as an artist and researcher. My review, conclusions and findings are discussed in Chapter 6.

Chapter 6: Review, Reflections and Conclusions

6.1 Review of the Project: Journeying and Exhibition

This chapter reviews my project—becoming the artist as explorer, reimagining and emplacing myself in the mindset of the colonial explorer, but with contemporary cognisance—and discusses its outcomes and responses to the questions and aims. This research investigated how reflection on the explorer past while being in place, can bring new ways of perceiving North and Far North Queensland. This focus can from the first research question: How do practice-led research, reesearch-led practice and immersion within significant North and Far North Queensland sites contribute to the presentation of a new understanding of the essences of these loci?

In response to this question, I armed myself with academic research regarding how it is to be in place and the colonial explorers' journeys, then selected and travelled these difficult and remote paths. This provided a rare experience for myself as the artist-explorer. To my knowledge, although North and Far North Queensland artists have painted and drawn the region, none have done so with a connected and concentrated focus on the colonial explorers and what it feels like to walk in their footsteps in the contemporary context. The creation of art is similar to a fingerprint; it is an individual experience. I became immersed in significant locations with an awareness formed by the absorbed memory of past occurrences, allowing me to become sentient, perceptive and emplaced. Long drawing durations, observation and becoming at one with place—all while reimagining what had happened at each site— became part of the total response.

The first research question intersected with the second: How does the creation of art reflect new cultural, physical, multisensory and emotional connections? My

exhibition, *Imagining Place*, presented a contemporary understanding of the connections between exploration and journeying with a deep sensitivity and respect to Indigenous peoples. The appearance of vessels as explorers and symbols of colonial incursion were jarring and foreign in the North and Far North Queensland landscape. I linked containers to place as they hold the message of how this land was appropriated as *terra nullius*. As a non-Indigenous woman, my artmaking insists on recognition and remembrance of colonial usurpation. The vessel pulls at the emotional connection to place. Broken and twisted in the aftermath, these receptacles assisted the formation of the metaphor of appropriation and incursion in my art. Extending the symbol of the vessel through practice-led research and research-led practice in new original artworks created fresh ways to understand these locations.

My artwork delivers an insightful message of disturbance and underlying historical wrong while advocating newness and cultural awareness of contemporary North and Far North Queensland. Observation, considering and remembering the past; listening to the movement of the environment, leaves and trees; and moving through places prompted this emotional and multisensorial response. Drawing in place for extended periods and continuing my practice in the studio over a period of time facilitated the concept that became the foundation of the metaphorical pathways I used to express my connection to place. *Imagining Place* conveyed the anxiety of colonial incursion through the vessel metaphor and the use of colour and line. Several artworks projected serenity, especially in the educative works describing travel—both colonial and my own. This balance of disturbance and calm was essential to the narrative of the exhibition. The strenuous physical nature of remote travel was evident in the video and photographs. During the course of artmaking in the studio leading up

to the exhibition, the connections and patterns echoed—sometimes reflexively and sometimes purposefully—the meaning of exploration and journeying.

6.2 Aims of the Research

My research was scaffolded and guided by several key aims. I sought to:

1. investigate the writings and journeys of select colonial explorers

2. identify key Australian artists who have visually depicted elements of the North Queensland region

3. become immersed within, document and visually interpret significant sites

4. create artworks in the studio setting to reflect acquired understandings and connections to the significance of site immersion.

I pursued the first aim by selecting and researching the journeys of three key explorers. I chose specific sections of their journeys so that my research and artmaking could be performed by physically reaching those sites and working within their limitations and the limitations of the research scope. Patterns of similar trails became evident early in the research. These patterns stimulated me and paralleled my artmaking, pulling concepts and places together. While the colonial explorers provided a pathway for expressing my interpretations of invasion and incursion, it was an interesting journey reviewing and imagining their plight. Sitting and reflecting at each explorer site with new knowledge derived from research into their stories and those of First Nations peoples cast a new light on my sense of place. Take the Valley of Lagoons as an example: I first visited the area and made visual and field notes in 2014; however, after hearing a lecture on Cadet-James et al.'s (2017) *Gugu Badhun: People of the Valley of Lagoons* and reading the text, my memories of that site altered

and I started to feel positivity and hope for the future. Chapter 4 discussed the colonial explorers and Aboriginal responses to them.

In pursuit of the second aim, I selected artists who were contemporary, insightful, strong in their fields and from North and Far North Queensland, North-West Queensland, South-East Queensland, South Australia and Scotland. I chose them for their concepts, experiences of rapture in drawing and shared passions for artmaking and journeying. I discussed these artists in the context of theories of place in Chapter 2. Another criterion for selection was the embrace of place. I chose Lawrence and McDonald for their perception and sensing, Scotcher for her use of movement, Lankester for her application of memory, Macnamara for her sense of belonging and Jones for his deep conceptual activism. I also included Amanda Thomson for her interdisciplinary artmaking. My research into place enabled me to rationalise and understand the phenomena of sentience: perceiving the environment through seeing, hearing, memorising, imagining and moving through an area.

Journeying and observation fulfilled the third aim. This endeavour became more complex as the paths of the colonial explorers converged with my own as artist-explorer. Chapter 3 explained my methodology and the techniques I used to capture my immersion and document meaningful sites. I discussed my reasons for visiting sites in Chapter 4 and outlined my maps and the direction in which I travelled. After returning from each journey, I used my site work and memories for studio immersion. Chapter 5 covered my documentation and visual interpretation of these sites, explaining the narrative through the exhibition.

My fourth aim was achieved in the studio. When I returned from journeying, I was able to lay my material out in the studio and connect sites and artwork to inspire and form mental images of creation. Material was all throughout my studio and

139

reflecting on these connections and their significance became a way of artmaking. This process was discussed in Chapter 5 and my methods outlined in Chapter 3.

6.3 Future Directions

My advice for other artists considering journeying is to plan alternative journeys at different intensities. One could journey in a suburb or around the house, for they are still excursions to somewhere. The physicality of remote travel is not for everyone. I found the journeying exciting but not always comfortable. Drawing *en plein air* could be hot, humid, windy and sometimes close to dangerous wildlife. My partner Stuart Corbett built my four-wheel drive vehicle accommodation, giving me access to power for recharging my computer, camera and lighting and the ability to cook in the evening. We mostly cooked over the campfire to save onboard resources. For any artist to go to Cape York, they would first need to take a four-wheel drive course, as the road is corrugated and rough. Driving to sites was slow and careful and one aspect of the drive that crystallised with me was the realisation that the driver is forever the learner, much like the artist in place. Similar to the explorers, there is the stocking of the vehicle with supplies and water, equipment for drawing and painting, technical equipment and maps. Planning is important, as the immense distances make it impossible to go back; fortunately, for these journeys, food could be purchased in remote places.

I worked according to a structured plan and followed a thematic concept to develop a comprehensive exhibition about the colonial explorers. This allowed me to scaffold a body of work for the exhibition and my future conceptual development. In my research, I conceptualised a central metaphor to voice my concerns about the unethical events of colonial incursion. This practice- and research-led method of investigation was a useful foundation for my research and subsequent artworks. My

research is significant for other artists who hope to find their inspiration through journeying because it showed that North and Far North Queensland is a rich source for building new contemporary practice, cultural capital and voices for the region.

There are plentiful opportunities for myself and other artists. For myself, there is a great deal more that can be developed from the artworks in *Imagining Place*. The vessel lithographs could be extended into a whole new body of enquiry. The large drawing of the Burdekin and its surrounds could be another. There are many directions to take this present work forward into the future.

North and Far North Queensland has stories yet to be told of mining figures like Ernest Henry. His journey was one of continued failure and dogged determination to succeed. As an English explorer and pastoralist, he was a restless soul with an extensive history in the Hughenden and Cloncurry districts. Henry even met Dalrymple and accompanied him from the Darling Downs to the Burdekin River—yet another connection. The settler history of the Jardine family in Far North Queensland is also colourful. Robert Logan Jack, a geologist and explorer with connections to Townsville, is another interesting figure. He was dedicated to his geological pursuits, which led him to discover the Great Artesian Basin—a lifesaving source of water (Jack 2008). This list of explorers offers rich opportunities for research and continuing to build awareness of North and Far North Queensland.

Another area of research that interests me is collaboration with experts—geographers, biologists, archaeologists, scientists and cultural experts—to interpret, analyse and develop visual material together with their research. In Chapter 2, I wrote about Thomson, whose interdisciplinary collaborations with geographers allows her to make new and meaningful artworks. There is much to be learned about North and Far North Queensland by researching and performing mindful art practice in place.

141

To take this idea further, selecting a site like Pallarenda in Townsville would be a wonderful future research project. I would call on several experts for an interdisciplinary investigation in which they could provide their knowledge and understanding of the area. I would also recommend other artists for participation in such a venture. As a North Queensland artist, it is important for me to practice locally and promote pathways for North and Far North Queensland artists.

Only one First Nations group in North and Far North Queensland has a detailed history of their land. An exhibition in collaboration with another First Nations group would be an exciting project. In *Finding Eliza, Power and Colonial Storytelling,* Larissa Behrendt (2016) writes the story of shipwrecked Eliza Frazer from the perspective of the Butchulla people. An interdisciplinary project involving writers, archaeologists and cultural historians would produce an exhibition with strong messages.

My practice has strengthened as a result of completing my exegesis and exhibition. The cyclic method of research, practice and development provided a framework with which I could establish concepts and find patterns in both my research and my practice. My thought processes were honed and I was able to build upon material. Then, in the making, my techniques developed exponentially, particularly in regards to drawing and printmaking. In retrospect, the exhibition was ambitious and several large bodies of work could develop from the different series and ways of artmaking contained within. In the three and a half months allotted to make the artwork for *Imagining Place*, including putting together the video, I discovered that I could work methodically and spontaneously. This was a major effort for such a small time frame. My sense is that there is extensive artistic work still to be pursued in terms of researching and collecting material. Working on such a large

geographical scale, conducting research and putting together the substantial exhibition have given me the confidence to work independently on future projects.

Upon reflection, it would be productive for this body of work—evoking the history of British colonial incursion—to be included in educational contexts. Three potential educational applications have emerged. The first would be the explicit teaching and learning of the complex narrative of invasion, delivered through an interdisciplinary phenomenological approach in which students make meaning by being in place and understanding sentience, perception and different points of view. The second would be the use of Smith and Dean's (2009) iterative cyclic web of practice-led research and research-led practice as a tool for teaching creativity and concept development. The third application would be the teaching of drawing to all students from an early age. Drawing assists all types and levels of creative thinking, not just those relevant to visual art. It is a 'tool for seeing and understanding the world better' (Davis 2018). Aristotle translated by Smith (2016) linked the thinking soul with the perception of images and stated that the 'soul [the mind] never thinks without an image'. Perception through drawing and seeing the world is a strong educational tool. These three applications would be useful educational tools for schools.

The process of research and journeying has instilled in me a deep connection with place, particularly in terms of finding creativity at sites around my home region. My investigations to find connections and understanding of the terrain and the associated meaning and history behind each site have led me to a position where, as the artist, I am also the research tool. Through the metaphor of the container and breaking barriers as I break the container that holds a traumatic, invasive past, it is my hope that North and Far North Queensland develops harmony. In this vast region, I cannot control what is uncontained. The message in my exhibition is one of

143

recognition of previous injustices and a future where we all can walk together in reconciliation. The exhibition itself becomes public memory.

I am privileged to have been able to make this invaluable journey knowing that what I have achieved has strengthened my research skills and my artmaking practice for future work.

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Appendices

Appendix A—Hook, S & Corbett, S 2015 *Sandi Hook Art Trips*, video,

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Appendix B—Hook, S & Nash, E (2015) *Imagining place: cultural memories of*

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