

Half – castes

The white man called these children half-castes, children of Aboriginal mothers and white fathers. All over the country more and more half-caste children were being born, and the government was worried. Where did these children belong? To their black Aboriginal families? Or to the white man's world? The government decided that these children should go to school, where they would learn how to become domestic servants and farm workers. Two schools were started, one in the south-west, and one near Perth, called the Moore River Native Settlement. Aboriginal children all over Western Australia were taken away from their families and sent to these schools, to learn how to live like the white man.

The years passed, and the seasons came and went. Jigalong was a long way from anywhere, but government officers rode all over the country, looking for part-Aboriginal children. The arm of the law was long, and reached even to Jigalong. Notes were kept at the depots and the stations, reports and letters were written, orders were given...

To Mr A. O. Neville

Chief Protector of Aborigines, Perth

The half-caste girls at Jigalong have a hard time with the other Aboriginal children here, who say unkind things about them. The girls need a better chance in life than they can get out here in the bush.

Arthur T. Hungerford

Superintendent, Jigalong Depot

To Mr A. O. Neville

Chief Protector of Aborigines, Perth

There are three half-caste girls at Jigalong - Molly 14 years, Grade 10 years, and Daisy, about 8 years. I think you should do something about them as they are running wild at Jigalong Depot.

Mrs Chellow

Manager, Murra Munda Station

To Constable Riggs

Marble Bar Station

Find the three half-caste girls, Molly, Gracie, and Daisy, at Jigalong and bring them in. They will be sent to the Moore River Native Settlement. Send them down by ship to Fremantle, and an officer will meet them there.

Mr A. O. Neville

Chief Protector of Aborigines, Perth

Early one morning everybody was having a breakfast of damper and tea when the dogs began to bark. 'Shut up!' shouted Maude, throwing a stick at one of them

The dogs went quiet, but soon began to bark again. All eyes turned to look through the trees, and there, on a low hill behind them, stood a tall white man, looking down at them. He wore a uniform, with a wide brown hat.

'Who's that?' said Granny Frinda, the girls' grandmother.

'It's that policeman from Marble Bar,' said Maude, staring at him. 'Riggs... Constable Riggs.'

The policeman began to walk down the hill towards them. He was holding a piece of paper in his hand. Maude stood up, suddenly afraid. She knew what was going to happen. The last time she was at Jigalong Depot, Mr Hungerford the superintendent had warned her that the police were looking for the half-caste girls. 'I've come to take Molly, Grade, and Daisy, the half-caste girls,' Riggs called out. He held the piece of paper higher in his hand, to show them. 'They have to go to school, at the Moore River Native Settlement. The law says so.'

Doris Pilkington Garimar, *RabbitProof-Fence*, chap 5, 1996