

The Uniqueness of the BlackWords Resource: Memoir of an Indexer

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Since its launch in 2007 BlackWords has enjoyed strong Indigenous leadership and a dedicated Indigenous team, allowing Indigenous storytellers, academics and researchers to determine its look, content, and scope. The BlackWords team of researchers and indexers is a community consisting of individuals from across institutions such as the University of Queensland, the University of Western Australia, Flinders University, the University of Sydney, the University of Wollongong and AIATSIS, each of whom has brought their own expertise and specialist interest to the database (BlackWords; Holt; Kilner 62).

In a sense, Indigenous control of BlackWords falls within the context of the traditional Aboriginal kinship system. BlackWords has had many mothers, fathers, aunties, uncles, sisters, brothers, cousins and non-Indigenous members, who have nurtured it from its early establishment. Within this relationship, they represent the national team consisting of national coordinators and research assistants. This extended family are those people who are members and/or descendants of diverse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island groups and communities as distant as Western Australia and the Torres Straits Islands. The non-Indigenous, or those with no blood relations, come in the form of the cross-cultural connection between BlackWords and AustLit. For example, Joan Keating, a Senior Researcher and Content Editor from AustLit, gave valuable help to the BlackWords team. From its establishment in 2006, she contributed her knowledge, guidance, training and skills, providing information on bibliographic protocols, and indexing procedures. Kerry Kilner, in her role as Director of AustLit, has also been instrumental in the establishment and continued development of BlackWords.

The BlackWords team both past and present range from celebrated authors, poets, playwrights, activists, and high academic achievers in fields ranging from literature, education, history, political science, philosophy, anthropology, archaeology, communications and cultural studies; it includes those who have dedicated their services to their Indigenous communities. For example, past team members Dr Jeanine Leane, Elizabeth Hodgson and Yvette Holt were all winners of the UQP David Unaipon award for an unpublished manuscript by an Indigenous author; and past National Coordinator Dr Anita Heiss, as a joint nominee with another member of the BlackWords team, Peter Minter, won the Deadly Sounds Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Music, Sport, Entertainment and Community Awards for outstanding achievements in Literature in 2008 as editors for the *Macquarie Pen Anthology of Aboriginal Literature* (BlackWords 2012). Dr Jackie Huggins, advisor and supporter of BlackWords in the formative years, became a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for her services to the Indigenous community in 2001. It is these people from diverse cultural backgrounds and their diverse areas of scholarship who are the members of this national extended Indigenous family, the brothers and sisters who have not only extended their arms to BlackWords but also their literary and intellectual capabilities, quality of scholarship and influential positions within the Indigenous literary world, national and international.

Personally, as a UQ-based researcher for AustLit's BlackWords, my primary purpose is to create biographical, bibliographical and informational database records. This includes indexing works of literature, criticism, and reviews into the database and gathering biographical information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander writers and storytellers. But for me, this unique database has offered more than a catalogue of records. It has also been a powerful research tool, a tool that has offered some incredible findings.

In this paper, first I will illustrate how my work as a researcher/indexer led me to discover my own Aboriginal heritage and more about my Grandmother's life story. Finding my heritage had been a struggle for me as my Grandmother had hidden details about her Aboriginal heritage for reasons that were never quite clear to me or my siblings. Second, I will explore the way the lives of two 'famous' Aboriginal men were represented in the newspapers of the time through print media. I have gathered a collection of articles about David Unaipon, mostly from the National Library of Australia's digitised Australian newspapers database. These subsequently, led to information about Douglas Grant, a World War I hero who was not as famous as Unaipon, but through my research you will see that they both were exposed in the media as intelligent Aboriginal people at a time when the printed media had the power to shape the notion that Aborigines had an inferior intelligence.

As I see it, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander writers write from their hearts. Of course it is the same cliché for every writer, but Indigenous writers tell hidden stories and write them as they have seen them, heard them, and experienced them. And, it is through literature and storytelling that their experiences are reproduced and communicated not only through time, but from different parts of Australia's vast continent. Through my experience as a researcher/indexer for the BlackWords database, I have found that the incomparable aspects of these types of works are that they all hold concepts of Australian Indigenous culture and cultural life, Aboriginal and European contact, Aboriginal dispossession and other forms of state control over Aboriginal people that spanned the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. They clearly illustrate the Indigenous perspective – a hidden history – that encompasses many rural and urban areas throughout Australia.

It is their stories, their culture and their history that has been hidden in Australian historical discourse. As Sally Babidge and local Charters Towers Aboriginal Gudjal elders Patricia Dallarchy and Valerie Alberts wrote in the foreword of their book, the title, *Written True, Not Gammon*, suggests that they are telling the hidden Aboriginal history. The colloquial 'not gammon' is the Aboriginal way of saying 'not 'telling a lie' (Babidge, Dallarchy and Alberts 2007). To the authors, this book is a recognition of the place and position of Indigenous families, and the roles they played in the creation of the Charters Towers town and rural area.

My Grandmother, Eva Lee (nee Carter) was born in 1913, the eldest of three girls to Eva Santo and William Carter, an Aboriginal man from the Mackay area. Through recent research I found that her two siblings had died when Grandma was very young—Violet Santo in 1916 and Jessie Carter in 1919. It was only Jessie's death that Grandma could remember. When I was growing up in Mount Isa my Grandmother used to tell stories of her life in Charters Towers; of how she had worked from the age of thirteen on cattle stations as a housekeeper, and eventually worked in town. However, she never spoke much about her family or her Aboriginal heritage, with the exception of her South Sea Islander connection. Her grandfather, Charlie Santo, was brought out to Australia from Espritu Santo, Vanuatu, and had worked as a cattle man on pastoral stations in the Charters Towers region. He married Maggie Thompson, a local Gudjal woman, and had several children (Babidge, Dallarchy and

Alberts 2007; Santo Family Tree). It was their daughter, Eva Santo, who was my grandmother's mother. She too worked on stations, possibly as a domestic servant. As a small child, Grandma remembered her mother going mustering, and it was a riding accident that caused Eva's death in 1923 when Grandma was only ten years old. Her father, William, who was unable to take care of a small child, left her in the care of an Uncle and Aunt who already had a large family.

When Grandma was thirteen she began working as a domestic servant in station homesteads. Scott and Evans argue that

domestic service was the worst employment option available to young women, but worse for Aboriginal or Melanesian women who were not as well regarded than their white counterparts: they were paid less, and worked harder, and were under stricter supervision. (140)

This statement echoes the words my Grandma would often say when describing her work on stations, that it was a 'dog's life' with back-breaking work and that she was treated no better than a slave, and poorly paid if paid at all. She believed that getting a decent education was impossible for people 'like her.' During the early part of the 20th century the Queensland Education system was no more than a precursor to a life of drudgery for Aborigines. Boys were directed to work on farms or pastoral stations, and girls to work as domestic servants. The availability of any rudimentary form of education to an Aboriginal child was well below 'that of their European counterparts' (Scott and Evans 140–42). This reality reflected the belief that Aborigines were intellectually inferior to Australians of European heritage. It was a system of education imbued with the racism of white bureaucracy and of the wider white community in Queensland, and was designed to create and maintain an underclass of obedient, underpaid labourers on reserves, missions and in private employment. For all Aboriginal people including 'half-caste' girls, education was based on the employment limitations to which females were restricted under the *Aboriginal Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act 1897* (Qld), primarily working as domestic servants, cooks and carers (Scott and Evans 140–42). My Grandmother would often say that she wished she had had a good education, but she was by no means intellectually inferior. Many times she told me that while she was working out on the stations, she would keep to her room at night. She never mixed with the ringers, which was her way of protecting herself. She would say that she 'didn't like them mucking around with her, or their drinking.' She spent her nights reading by candlelight, as a way of educating herself on topics such as law, mathematics, and English. She was always quite proud of how much she learnt from books.

Grandma's stories, some funny, some very painful, gave a small insight into what really happened to her as a young girl and woman, living in a time of extreme racism and under the State Government system that controlled all aspects of the lives of Indigenous people in Queensland (Museum of Australian Democracy 2011). Sometimes, when Grandma spoke of different events during her life, she would be clouded in such sadness and anger. Sometimes when telling her stories she would distort the realities of those times; whether this was due to faulty memory or whether she was purposely hiding certain truths is unclear – it is these stories of my Grandmother's past that will remain hidden.

I had always respected her decision, because she had had a hard life, and some things were better left alone, hidden. But finding my Aboriginality became important to me as I got older – who was I really? Yes, it is easy to say I have Aboriginal heritage, but I didn't know where

I belonged. I didn't even know where to start to find out. I only knew what my Grandmother told me, that her Grandfather's name was Charlie 'Cupid' Santo, and he had married an Aboriginal woman, Maggie Thomson, in Charters Towers, Queensland. And, I also had a copy of the Santo family tree, given to me by my brother.

Now I am proud to say that I am a descendant from the Gudjal people from the Charters Towers region. How do I know this? Because of *Written True, Not Gammon*, the story of my Grandmother's family. It was when I turned to page seventeen that a photograph of Charlie Santo as an old man beamed out at me. I felt overwhelmed, I could not believe it. I had finally found what I was looking for—a beginning. What this book gives me, is a broader view of what my Grandmother had gone through in her younger life. Although she is not recorded in the book, I often read it, and cannot describe the sense of pride I feel when I look upon the photographs of her relatives, young and old, past and present. The stories the men and women tell of how they worked on stations and of their treatment. They illustrate to me that they were survivors, heroes. This book is a treasure to me and a lifeline to my Grandmother's past. If I had not been working in BlackWords, I might never have given this work a second glance, or even known of it. Finding this book has given me hope that I will someday be able to piece together my Grandmother's story. This and my personal story of my experience with BlackWords is an example of how this searchable database is integral to Australian Indigenous culture. It provides a rich collection of literature with reference to different forms, genres, cultural contexts and discourses that is not recognised in mainstream literary research (Kilner 2009).

As an archaeology graduate I am constantly drawn to the historical content of Aboriginal literature, whether it is an autobiography, or a simple newspaper article. Recently, I ventured on a small research project on David Unaipon using the National Library of Australia's digitised newspapers project available through Trove. I discovered a large collection of columns and correspondence from South Australian newspapers and other national and rural newspapers dating from 1894 to 1953. The newspapers also revealed Douglas Grant's popularity in the print media from 1916 to the early 1940s. Although Grant's exposure to the public was not as extensive as Unaipon's, they were both objectified as outstanding examples of what education could do for the Aborigine at a time when racist attitudes were promoted in many newspapers and magazines.

There was barely a newspaper issue during that period that did not have an article about Unaipon's achievements as an inventor, scholar, orator, writer, philosopher, preacher and musician. He was a celebrity – the first famous Aboriginal person of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Noted as 'one of the best-known Aborigines of his era' (Davis, Muecke, Mudrooroo and Shoemaker 368). David Unaipon was born on 28 September 1872 at Point McLeay Mission in South Australia. Also known as Raukkan, the mission was established in 1857 by missionary and teacher George Taplin, who was employed by the Aboriginal Friends Association (Jenkin 1979). The Association had a long standing connection with the community at Point McLeay. They aimed to enhance the living conditions of the Aboriginal people living in the Lower Murray River region (Jenkin 1979; Unaipon, Muecke and Shoemaker). Muecke and Shoemaker claim that:

all of the Ngarrindjeri people had struggled over the years with the demands of two cultures that often pulled in different directions. . . . Unaipon was no different, and during his [time] with the Young family where he received a 'broad-based classical education that encompassed philosophy, music, religion

and scientific discovery [these] became major themes of Unaipon's later life.'
(Unaipon *et al* xv)

Unaipon's parents, James and Nymbulda Ngunaitponi (Unaipon), belonged to the Lower Murray tribes and lived a traditional life. James was known to have been one of the most prominent figures of the Ngarrindjeri people, noted as a spiritual leader, convenor of meetings and a philosopher to whom people looked for guidance. Proving to be a great supporter to Taplin, James was appointed the first native missionary, and the first convert to the Christian faith among the Ngarrindjeri people. Unaipon's greatest influences in his life was his father's Christian example, and as he himself was a product of missionary work, he expressed gratitude and an obligation to the advancements that he obtained from the Aborigines' Friends' Association that influenced and helped shape Unaipon's career and life (Jenkin; Unaipon).

From the age of seven, David was educated at Point McLeay Mission until 1887 when C.B. Young, who had been the secretary of the Aborigines' Friends' Association in 1857 and one of the oldest friends and supporters of the Ngarrindjeri people, visited the Mission and took Unaipon, then aged fifteen, to live and work with his family in Walkerville, Adelaide, and at their country residence at Kanmantoo (Unaipon). According to Young (Minute Book IV, 6 March 1906. cited in Jenkin 185) Unaipon was 'living proof of the excellent training of the children at the mission . . . bright, intelligent, well-instructed and well-mannered.' Jenkin (185) adds that, to his knowledge, this statement was possibly the first description of Unaipon as a man of many talents 'and destined to be widely acclaimed as a genius, and who became Australia's best-known Aborigine.' However, Unaipon did not permanently reside in Adelaide with the Young family, returning to the mission periodically.

As a speaker, Unaipon gave many public speeches and sermons to church gatherings, but it was his command of the English language, and his sound and logical reasoning that intrigued and captivated members of his audiences (Ramsland and Mooney; *Richmond Rover Herald and Northern Districts Advertiser*). One of the first reports of Unaipon in the Australian media was in 1894. At that time, he was secretary of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour at the Point McLeay Mission Station, an interdenominational Christian youth society introduced to Australia between 1883 and the early 1900s (*Kapunda Herald* 3; Spicer). In an appalling example of the racist sentiment common at the time, the reporter described Unaipon as:

a very creditable specimen . . . As a speaker he had a good command of language, and his pronunciation is not marred by those defects which are often found in races just lifted out of savagery. (*Kapunda Herald* 1894: 3)

In 1936 Margaret Matthews recalls Unaipon at a missionary exhibition; she described him as having a broad Scottish accent, and delighted in his 'happy smile' (*Advertiser* 1936: 12). These 'accolades' in the media of Unaipon's impeccable character and intelligence did not abate over time. He became well-known for many notable sermons to church gatherings and one reporter suggested that, even in the pulpit, Unaipon would attract

large congregations of mixed and European Australians who would listen with rapt attention to the Gospel preached from the heart of one who admitted that he 'was but one step removed from the dark heathenism of his race.'
(*Independent* 4)

In 1914, he was described as the ‘Super-Aborigine’; the reporter also noted that those who knew Unaipon said that he was a genius and had an extraordinary capacity to absorb knowledge (*Richmond River Herald and Northern Districts Advertiser*).

His ability as an inventor featured prominently in several newspapers articles after 1909. Many reporters described Unaipon in their leading statements as one of the most ‘interesting of natives and the cleverest,’ before discussing his scientific and technical achievements. In two newspaper articles in 1914, Unaipon described his education at the Point Macleay Mission Station. He told the reporter that ‘his teacher Mr Walter Hutley talked about the three problems that had puzzled science, the philosopher’s stone, the elixir of life, and perpetual motion. It was the latter that attracted Unaipon the most, and led him to embark upon his research in mechanics and philosophy’ (*Richmond River Herald and Northern Districts Advertiser* 7). As a self-taught inventor, Unaipon was fascinated by every kind of machine. He spent five years on his ‘special hobby’ attempting to solve the problem of perpetual motion and its application to machinery (*Chronicle; Daily News; Maitland Daily Mercury; Newcastle Morning Herald & Miners’ Advocate* 1914). His research resulted in what Unaipon described as ‘a new method of dealing with the law of gravitation, . . . by diverting the attraction to a horizontal instead of a perpendicular movement’ (*Chronicle* 42; *Daily News* 3; *Maitland Daily Mercury* 3; *Newcastle Morning Herald & Miners’ Advocate* 1914: 2). Unaipon submitted his first patent drawn by John Herbert Cooke in 1909, in which he declared the nature of his invention as an ‘improved mechanical motion device’ (Department of Patents). Methodically, he converted rotary motion into a reciprocating non-radical motion, and applied this to the Moffat Virtue handheld sheep shearing machine (Department of Patents; *Southern Argus*).

Further, newspaper articles that appeared from 1909 about Unaipon’s inventive achievements underline his personal character and his Aboriginality. According to Social Darwinist ‘scientists’ of the time, Aboriginal people were a race at the bottom of the human evolutionary scale. This theory, based on Darwinian theories of evolution, governed the attitudes of white settlers to full blood Australian Aborigines from the 1870s to well into the twentieth century. This notion that Aboriginal people were a primitive and inferior race hypothesised that Aborigines, as the least evolved race in the world, were destined to become extinct (Haebich; MacDonald). In Australia during the late 1800s the Aborigines were seen as a dying race, and, as such, they were to be protected in order ‘to make their last days as comfortable as possible’ (Francis 98). This was an observation that Unaipon objected to. He did not think that the Aboriginal race was dying out, and publicly asserted: ‘Half measures, he fears, will kill them; but if they are placed in a proper environment . . . believes that they will increase’ (*Advertiser* 1914: 17). Because Unaipon had adopted European methods and ways of life, he had relative freedom from the official constraints placed on Aborigines but he was not immune from discrimination. Evidence of discrimination in racial hierarchical terms can be seen in many of the newspaper articles in which Unaipon was featured. In one particular article, *An Aboriginal Intellectual*, the reporter begins describing Unaipon as having an ‘unmistakable resemblance to those reconstructions of the older human types which scientists have sometimes supplied with the help of a tooth and a mouldering jawbone’ (*Register* 1925: 9). However, the reporter does juxtapose this Darwinist attitude with the cultured European traits that Unaipon displayed in his adopted speech and mannerisms.

This poem, published in the *Register* newspaper in 1925, was written by one of the paper’s representatives who had engaged Unaipon in a debate about anthropology and physics. The

poem clearly reflects the attitude towards Unaipon's Aboriginality and towards all Aboriginal people at that time:

I met, while walking down the street,
An Aborigine.
My scientific training made
It amply plain to me
That here I saw a Stone Age man,
Altho' no axe of stone.
No flint knife, had be in his hand,
No fishspear tipped with bone.

Indeed, he seemed so harmless that
I thought, perhaps, I could
Contrive to make him understand.
I said, "You belly good
This white one feller's talkee make".
You savee longa me?
You sittum down here all one time
Or walkum wallaby?"

He stared at me quite open-mouthed.
This savage prehistoric,
As though I had expressed myself
In double Dutch or Dorie.
And so I tried with simpler words
To pierce his fossil brain.
"This fine one day!" I said. "You think
That we bin gettum rain?"

"Well, really, sir," he said, and smiled.
As one might smile, it may be,
To soothe a fretful lunatic
Or please a crying baby,
"You'll think me quite obtuse;
I didn't apprehend, at first—
Let that be my excuse."

"So far as your first query goes,
I generally find
That I can make my meaning clear
In English of a kind.
I'm not a local resident,
(To take your second question).
The weather, as you say's sublime,
And yet there's some suggestion..."

"Hold, hold, you palaeocrystic man!"
I said. "I've long been taught
To deem you truly barbarous,

In manner, speech, and thought.
 You'll please to undeceive me, sir.
 As gently as may be;
 So let us talk of your papa,
 Who lived up in a tree."

"Most willingly I'll join," said he.
 "And talk with you about
 The concepts of biology,
 A fruitful theme, no doubt:
 And, after we've disposed of that,
 With your consent, we could discuss
 For want of something more profound,
 The differential calculus."

(*Register*, 10 October 1925: 7)

As Beston (336) suggests, Unaipon's spirit was not crushed by the humiliations suffered by Aboriginal people. His determination to excel, and 'achieve something remarkable as an assertion of his personal worth and of the worth of his people,' demonstrates remarkable talent and intellect.

Unaipon achieved a continuing level of recognition in popular Australian consciousness, his story and achievements appeared in many urban and rural newspapers and he remained a prominent Aboriginal figure in the Australian media until the late 1950s (Ramsland and Mooney). During the period of Unaipon's popularity another Aboriginal man, exposed to the media from 1916, but whose fame was obscured during the 1930s and 1940s was the World War I hero, Douglas Grant.

A reporter who interviewed Unaipon during one of his visits to Adelaide in 1925 asked Unaipon whether he regarded civilisation as a privilege or a disaster. Unaipon's response was that he preferred his present state, and that 'his pleasure in knowledge and in using [his] mental powers were things that he prized exceedingly . . . to educate an aboriginal, he must be taken out of his old environment' (Unaipon, cited in the *Register* 1925: 9). Education was an important aspect in Unaipon's life and he had exceptional advantages, but he was not an isolated case.

Douglas Grant was also an erudite Aborigine who had the advantages of a good education. Known as a scholar, speaker, and humourist, A.I.F. Sergeant and prisoner of war (*Sunday Mail* 2), Grant first appeared in the Australian media in 1916 in an article called *An Aboriginal Soldier*, which was published in several national and rural newspapers. This article portrayed Grant as one of the most prominent Aboriginal soldiers to hold the rank of sergeant in the King's Forces (*West Australian*). Further, the majority of articles written about Grant, including an obituary, were representations of how an 'Aboriginal when taken early and trained' can become accomplished in white society. According to the reporter of the *West Australian* newspaper, Grant had many accomplishments:

[Grant] writes a splendid hand, draws well, recites Shakespeare with histrionic ability, plays the Scottish bagpipes, and can earn a very good living any time by following his profession—that of a draughtsman. This . . . demonstrates what

may be done with an [A]boriginal when taken early and trained. (*West Australian*)

Grant was also noted as having one remarkable characteristic, a broad Scottish accent into which he lapsed when excited (*Newcastle Morning Herald & Miners' Advocate* 1951). He acquired his accent from his Scottish adopted father, Robert Grant.

Douglas Grant was born into the Aboriginal language group that moved within the Russell River catchment and South Johnstone River regions on the South-eastern Atherton Tableland in Queensland (Atherton 1). According to a reporter who published under the initials P.S.A. in 1887 when Grant was an infant, his parents were killed in a tribal fight in Northern Queensland (*Sydney Mail*). However, Ramsland and Mooney suggest that it is more plausible that Grant's parents were killed in a punitive expedition by white settlers and native police launched from the colonial outpost of Cairns. Whatever occurred, it resulted in the child (aged two) being rescued by the taxidermist Robert Grant, and E.J. Cairn, both members of a collecting expedition from the Australian Museum. He was sent to Robert Grant's parents in Lithgow, New South Wales, where he was later formally adopted by Robert Grant and his wife. Christened Douglas Grant, he was raised with adoptive brother Henry and received a good education at Lithgow and Annandale public schools in New South Wales (Ramsland and Mooney; *Mail* 1944: 7). Grant claimed that he was happy and that the children of his generation were congenial: '[they] accepted him without qualms . . . never left him out of anything' (*Mail* 1944: 7).

After 10 years as a draughtsman at Mort's Dock & Engineering Co. in Sydney, Grant resigned in 1913 to work as a wool-classer at Belltrees station, near Scone, New South Wales. After the First World War broke out, Grant, along with several other Aborigines, volunteered for active service in January 1916, enlisting as a private in the 34th Battalion, Australian Imperial Force (AIF). However, due to the regulations preventing Aborigines from leaving the country without approval of the Federal Government, Grant was discharged. He enlisted as a private a second time and on 22 August 1916 embarked for France to join the 13th Battalion. On 11 April 1917 during the first battle of Bullecourt, Grant was wounded and captured by the Germans. He was held as a POW for almost two years in the Wittenburg camp and later at Wundorf camp near Berlin until the end of the war (Clark; Australian War Memorial website; *Western Champion*; *Townsville Daily Bulletin*). At the Wundorf camp, Grant was segregated with other prisoners of colour, who were mostly Indian troops (Reveille 10).

Although Grant himself did not pen a literary work, and what has been written about him is not of the same magnitude as David Unaipon, like Unaipon, Grant was also an advocate for education in Aboriginal communities. In 1933 he made a plea to members of the Balmain Methodist congregation to allow Aborigines 'to have their own territory and create their own colleges and schools' (*Townsville Daily Bulletin* 10). Grant's hope and aim was that Australian Aborigines would one day be given full citizenship rights and full education (*Mail* 1944: 7). This was followed by a contemptuous article questioning Grant's Aboriginal identity, because of his estrangement from his Aboriginal origins. The writer claimed that he must therefore be ignorant of the characteristics or the capacity of his own race (*Northern Miner*). However, it is difficult to comprehend whether Grant had really dismissed his Aboriginality. For example, during Grant's incarceration in the German prison camps he became an object of curiosity due to his Aboriginality. He was subjected to physical examinations by German doctors, scientists and anthropologists and was given relative

freedom within the compound. Recognising Grant as a well-educated leader with high organisational and administrative skills, the German prison authorities granted him a position with the British Help Committee, organising and supervising food parcels and medical supplies for the large number of Indian prisoners in the Halbmondlager prison camp. Grant's selfless act and the use of his Aboriginality and his intellectual ability was instrumental in saving many lives (Ramsland and Mooney 7).

After repatriation, Grant was an active member of the Lithgow community. His popularity saw him nominated as the secretary in the sub-branch of the Returned Soldiers' League for three years (*Cairns Post; Mail* 1944; Scarlett). Later he worked at the Water Board in Sydney until he was retrenched during the depression. In the early 1930s he worked as an assistant at the Australian Museum (*Sydney Morning Herald*). After the 1930s Grant dropped into obscurity and out of the mainstream popular media. Sadly, he never married, and spent most of his time constructing a War memorial, in the form of a large ornamental pond spanned by a replica of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. At the time of his death in 1951, he was living in the Salvation Army's veteran's home at La Perouse (Ramsland and Mooney; *Newcastle Morning Herald & Miners' Advocate* 1951: 3).

Incessantly exposed to the public, Grant and Unaipon both lived between two cultures. They adopted European lifestyles and had relative freedom from the official constraints placed on Aborigines but they were not immune to discrimination. My Grandmother may not have been as educated or as famous as Unaipon and Grant, and her hidden story is still to be discovered through further research. But like theirs, hers is a story worth telling. As an indexer with BlackWords my work involves a continual series of discoveries and revelations through identifying and describing diverse works of literature covering a range of forms published in books and contemporary and historical periodicals. The stories of my grandmother, David Unaipon, and Douglas Grant illustrate how one small research project, based on ensuring that BlackWords provides an appropriate description of the life of one Indigenous person, leads to another. Through that research we are exposing a wealth of Indigenous stories and storytellers. As researchers and indexers in both AustLit and BlackWords we are creating records for, and preserving knowledge about, the lives and stories of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. BlackWords is a tool that can be used to find and share those hidden stories.

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