

ROSEWOOD



Rosewood homestead 1934 (NTPLIC collection).

Rosewood station was established in 1885 (Durack, 1974: 273). The original partners on Rosewood were MP Durack, Tom Hayes, Tom Kilfoyle and ‘Galway’ Jerry Durack (Durack, 1974: 273). The station was named ‘Rosewood camp’ and then plain ‘Rosewood’ after a town near Gerry Durack’s Queensland home. According to Charlie Gaunt (*Northern Standard*, 22-1-1932: 5) the original camp was ‘on a creek about twelve miles this side of where Rosewood Station stands at present’. It was stocked with 2000 head (Bolton, 1953: 31) and while bringing these cattle to Rosewood, Tom Kilfoyle had a fight with Aborigines on Victoria River Downs which supposedly led to the naming of Battle Creek (Linklater, Mitchell Library mss 3639 (F) CY 2744); see also Apsley, 1926: 102).

In April 1886 Kilfoyle was looking for a homestead site (Kilfoyle, diary 3, April 29th 1886). He may have built a temporary homestead soon afterwards, or else decided to move later because in January 1887 he mentioned that he had, ‘reached to where I am going to form the Steation [sic]’. Work on the new homestead appears to have been delayed until October 1887 (Kilfoyle, diary 4 Jan 1887 to March 1888). The first homestead appears to have been on the Behn River because the *Northern Territory Times* reported that, ‘Messrs. Kilfoyle and Hay have long since shifted their station on to Hicks Creek, some ten or twelve miles from the Behu [Behn] River’ (*Northern Territory Times*, 22-1-1887).

According to Flinders (2016: 80) the partnership between Hayes, Kilfoyle and Durack was dissolved in the 1890s with Jerry Durack taking his share of the cattle to a block on the Dunham River country where he was later murdered by an Aboriginal employee (Flinders, 2016: 67). The dissolution of the partnership is confirmed in the *Northern Territory Times* of May 31st 1895. In the late 1880s cattle from Lissadell and Rosewood became the first to be taken to Derby for shipment (Flinders, 2016: 72).

Rosewood was the scene for two murders of whites by Aborigines. The first was ‘Big Johnny’ Durack, speared and killed near Mount Duncan in 1886 (see entry below). The