

**BILLILUNA**

Founded by Robert Falconer who took up one million acres in about 1920, according to Bolton (1953: 195), or 1922 according to Terry (1927: 207). By 1928 Billiluna had 5000 head of cattle.

By 1956 the station was owned by a Mrs Lorna Wilson (née Doman), managing director of T.A. Doman Ltd (*Hoofs & Horns*, April 1956: 13-14; *NT News*, 14-6-1962). Edna Quilty (1999: 121) says it was Margaret Doman, rather than Lorna Wilson, who owned Billiluna and who put down a series of bores across the Tanami to get her cattle out to southern markets. Marie Mahood says the name was Lorna rather than Margaret. According to Mark Nevill in a talk he gave to the Kimberley Society (Edinger & Marsh, 2004), Margaret Doman became the owner of Billiluna in 1958 – this needs sorting out. The first cattle were mustered near Lake Gregory, driven along this route and handed over at the Granites to Bill Waudby and Milton Willick, both members of the party that surveyed the new route (*NT News*, 14-6-1962). The Billiluna brand for many years up to 1950s was UD7 (*Hoofs & Horns*, April 1956: 13).

In about 1997 or 1998 Billiluna was purchased on behalf of the traditional owners for \$600,000 and a guaranteed 12,000 cattle (Edwards, 2003: 60-61).

**Robert Falconer.** Pioneer owner and possibly manager for a short time. According to an obituary Falconer was born in New Zealand and trained as a mining engineer. He spent a short time on Queensland mining fields before moving to Western Australia where he gained a reputation as a first rate mining engineer. Around the turn of the century he bought the moribund Lady Shelton gold mine and was able to overcome various problems and make it a success. In about 1912 he gave mining away and turned to farming. Around 1920 he obtained the first leases on what became Billiluna station.

Because of the cold dry season (winter) temperatures on Billiluna, cattle ticks couldn't survive so there was no tick fever there. As a result Billiluna cattle developed no immunity, and if they were taken through the tick areas to the Wyndham meatworks many died. From 1925 Falconer began petitioning the WA government to reopen the Canning stock route so that he could take his cattle that way and avoid the tick country. Eventually this was done and he took his first herd south to Wiluna in 1931 (Bolton, 1953: 239, 258). Later, in conjunction with his sons, Falconer took up another virgin area about 230 kilometres east of Wiluna and established Carnegie station. He stocked this station with Billiluna cattle. Eventually he sold all his pastoral and farming properties and retired. He died at Claremont, Western Australia, on August 3<sup>rd</sup> 1953. He left four sons and a widow (*The Pastoral Review*, 16-9-1953: 967; *Hoofs & Horns*, April 1956: 5).

**Joseph Condren.** Manager in 1922. Together with station worker Timothy O'Sullivan, he was murdered by Aboriginal named Banjo in September 1922. Banjo took several firearms and a large quantity of ammunition, and cleared into the bush (*The Advertiser* [Adelaide], 21-9-1922). He was eventually tracked down and shot dead (Bohemia and McGregor, 1995: 73-100; see also Flinders, 2016: 80). Cec Watts (pers. comm.) was told by Clarrie Wilkinson that Condren had managed Sturt Creek before he, Wilkinson, took over there in 1917 (see also Green, 1995: 78-80). Pat Underwood (pers. comm.), former owner of Inverway station, heard that a brother or brothers of O'Sullivan came across from