

## 1. DESCRIPTION AND RESOURCES

### 1.1 Location

Mallapunyah Springs Pastoral Lease lies at the marginal scarp of the Barkly Tablelands and the Gulf Fall between 16°57' and 17°30'S latitude and 135°12' and 136°04'E longitude (Fig. 1). The lease is an irregular inverted 'T' in shape with a total area of 4 177 km<sup>2</sup> and the homestead is located about 112 km south of Borroloola on the Tablelands Highway. The road is bitumen with a 7 km formed gravel road to the Homestead. The Tablelands Highway and the old Borroloola Stock Route (now part of the lease) traverse the Station north-south. The Station is about 400 km from Katherine, 560 km from Tennant Creek and 800 km from Mt. Isa, all of which have been marketing points for cattle from the station.

### 1.2 Station History and Development.

Detailed descriptions and references relating to Land Tenure and Station Development are presented in Appendix 6.2.

- 1.2.1 Mallapunyah Springs Station started when G.J.Darcy was granted PL 453 in August 1947. The land that eventually made up the Station was earlier part of McArthur River and Walhallow Stations, whose origins date back to 1878 and Rolyat Station which originated in the 1930's. The Darcys first came to the area in the mid-1920's when they settled at Kilgour Gorge. Darcy was a carrier with a waggon and team of 24 horses, carrying loads from Borroloola. At Kilgour the Darcys operated a copper mine, built a house, goat and horse yards and a garden. In 1928 the family moved to Mallapunyah Springs. Elizabeth Darcy built the house of sandstone blocks (Fig. 11) while George continued as a carrier. She also started the fruit and vegetable garden at the springs (Fig. 10), the surplus produce from which was sold in Borroloola and to passing drovers. They started with cattle when they were given a permit to brand cleanskins in the area. Tragedy struck the family on the last day of October 1944 when Mrs Darcy and son Mick went looking for a donkey. They never returned and no trace has ever been found.
- 1.2.2 Darcy was granted a further lease, PL 490, in February 1951. His holdings now totalled 2 396 km<sup>2</sup>. Darcy applied for a new 50 year lease over his old leases in August 1958 and following reclassification of land in the area he was granted a new lease in October 1960. The new lease, PL 615 of 4 077 km<sup>2</sup>, included part of McArthur River and part of a Grazing Licence once held by Creswell Downs. In April 1964 consent was given to transfer the lease from Darcy to his 6 sons, one of whom sold out in 1971. The Borroloola Stock