

James Cassady Archive

James C. Cassady was a pioneer and pastoralist in northern Queensland, particularly in the Herbert River Region. He was born in Ahoghill in County Antrim, Ireland in 1837 and emigrated to Australia with his parents, Charles and Rose Cassady, in 1849 to escape the potato famine. After working for others in the Wide-Bay Burnett district, James and his brother Charles headed north to take up their own lands in the early 1860s where James settled on a property on the Leichhardt River near Burketown. In 1864 James married Maria Cecilia Kelly and their son Francis was born in 1865 in Bowen.

In 1866 tragedy unfolded when the small family travelled to Burketown on a schooner which was also carrying a mystery illness known as Gulf Fever. Most of the schooner's passengers and crew, along with the population of Burketown, were struck down by the mysterious fever and between 60 and 100 people are believed to have died.

The Cassady family survived and made their way to their Leichhardt River property. In 1867 Maria became ill and left the Gulf and travelled to Sydney where she gave birth to her daughter Magdalene. Sadly it is believed that the Gulf Fever had lingering effects and Maria, her new born daughter and Maria's sister Nora, died within 3 weeks of each other.

James Cassady never remarried. He left the Gulf country and relocated to the Herbert River district around 1873, where in 1882 he took up Mungalla Station and made it famous for its beef cattle and thoroughbred horses. James Cassady died at Mungalla Station in 1902.

Francis Cassady inherited Mungalla Station and went on to become Ingham Shire Chairman. He died in 1936 and was buried next to his father at the old homestead site.

Mungalla Station was leased for several years before being purchased by Mr. M. Atkinson in 1944. It remained a holding of the Atkinson family until 1999 when it was sold to the Nywaigi Aboriginal Land Corporation.

Archive Location: 404L

Detailed Listing

JC/1 Original notebook

JC/2 Transcript by Katrina Valese (with notes by Denise McGarry added in 1996).

JC/3 Transcript by Kath Gillespie, 1989.

JC/4 Transcript by Denise McGarry, 1997.

JC/5 Family history information for descendants of Henry and Mary Cassady supplied by Denise McGarry in 1996.

JC/6 Letterbook from Mungulla Station featuring copies of outgoing correspondence from Francis Cassady covering the period 1907 – 1923.

JC/7 1916 diary kept by Francis Cassady

JC/8 1919 diary kept by Francis Cassady

JC/9 1921 diary kept by Francis Cassady

JC/10 1926 diary kept by Francis Cassady

JC/11 1927 diary kept by Francis Cassady

JC/12 1931 diary kept by Francis Cassady

JC/13 1934 diary kept by Francis Cassady

JC/14 1935 diary kept by Francis Cassady

Photograph series

JC/P/1 Group of people. The woman on the left identified as Maria Cassady (nee Cameron), the man in the middle front is identified as Francis Cassady, the child on the right seated on the woman's lap is identified as Rua Cassady. Image on a blank postcard, no date.

JC/P/2 Interior of Mungulla Station homestead, featuring a piano. Image on a blank postcard, no date.

JC/P/3 Studio portrait of Francis Cassady by Federal Studio, Townsville. No date.

JC/P/4 Studio portrait of Francis Cassady. Studio unknown, date unknown. In a paper cover.

JC/P/5 Panoramic photograph of the grounds of Mungulla Station. Francis Cassady is standing to the right of the image center, unidentified people believed to be family members are scattered around the image. No date.

JC/P/6 Panoramic photograph of the grounds of Mungulla Station. Francis Cassady is standing to the right of the image center, unidentified people believed to be family members are scattered around the image. No date.