Remembering Territory families

A wild man of Tennant – Jack Noble

The funny part about that story, was old Jack – the income tax people were looking for him. They came up here to Tennant Creek, but he beat them by a day, and he was supposedly gone out bush – supposed to be prospecting. But that’s where he went till they came back. And there's so many, many stories like that of old Jack, and the old timers...

[Northern Territory Archives Service NTRS 226, TS 787, NTRS 1815, DAT 22, Alf Chittock and Peter Gunner]

Peter Gunner added:

He was working for old Con Perry, and Con said to me, he said: ‘Don't give Jack any grog.’ And he was away somewhere, Con, I think he’d gone to Adelaide or somewhere. I went out to the station and picked Jack up and brought him in for a meal, on a Sunday it was, Sunday lunch. Ellen and I gave him a few beers. We thought, oh, it couldn't hurt him, and we gave him a few beers. And when we left – I had one of those old Army weapon carriers, and when I came out he was sitting on the bonnet, facing the wrong way on the vehicle, and the beer had obviously done more to him that it had to me. Away we went out to the Seven Mile.

The next morning old Con came back, and Jack had shot that race horse of his. Remember the race horse, the stallion? Jack had shot it while he was drunk, and there was hell to pay. So he wasn’t always – when he was in his cups – always intelligent.

A very pretty horseman, Jack. A lot of people think of him as a miner, but he was a good stockman: excellent stockman, very pretty on a horse. Here – he would have been around 65, 70, I suppose – he was still mustering with us, still looked very good on a horse, old Jack

[Northern Territory Archives Service NTRS 226, TS 787 and NTRS 1815, DAT 22, Alf Chittock and Peter Gunner]