



University of Canberra

This thesis is available in print format from the University of Canberra Library.

If you are the author of this thesis and wish to have the whole thesis loaded here, please contact the University of Canberra Library at *e-theses@canberra.edu.au* Your thesis will then be available on the www providing greater access.

MASTERS THESIS

University of Canberra

Student: Peter McMahon

Supervisor: Dr Jen Webb.

Title: Homefires and Embers

Thesis submitted for Master of Arts in Creative Communication, May 2000

SUMMARY

In December 1945, four months after the end of the Second World War, two soldiers meet on an aeroplane flying towards Port Hedland, located in north-west Western Australia, the Pilbara district.

Frank Grey found the war a horrific experience and is deeply traumatised. He is returning home, after an absence of five years, hoping to reunite with his wife, get his old job back, and continue on with his life as it was before the war.

Patrick Gray is an Aboriginal. He also found the war horrific. However, for him, serving in the A.I.F. was also a liberating experience. For the first time in his life he received equal pay and conditions of white men. He found equality. He is hoping that because he, and other Aborigines, served in the armed forces, the social conditions for Aborigines will have improved in the six years he's been away.

They are both disappointed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</i>	<i>p. v</i>
<i>PART ONE</i>	<i>p. 1</i>
<i>PART TWO</i>	<i>p. 49</i>
<i>PART THREE</i>	<i>p. 93</i>
<i>PART FOUR</i>	<i>p. 151</i>
<i>EXEGESIS</i>	<i>p. 208</i>
<i>BIBLIOGRAPHY</i>	<i>p. 228</i>

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to Dr. Jen Webb for her thoughtful and intelligent advice, and careful editing and proof reading. Her expertise improved this novel. I learnt a great deal.

Love and kisses and many thanks to Greta for always being there, and never telling me to get a 'real' job. You're a wonderful partner, and a fantastic mother. Thanks to Tara for being such a understanding and level-headed teenager, and her much appreciated help with the baby. And thanks to little Patrick for making me laugh everyday.

Also thanks to Joanne for her helpful advice, and to Mum for always liking what I write.

Thanks also to Dad for his generosity, and not having a heart attack each time I smashed his taxi.

* * *

Quote on page 99 taken from preface to *Aborigines Of North Western Australia*, by John Withnell.

Excerpt of poem on pages 53 and 88 taken from *Elegy Written In A Country Churchyard*, by Thomas Gray.

Verse on page 105 cited in *The Romance Of A Business*, by Thomas Wynford-Vaughan.

Bible quote on page 33: *Genesis*: chapter I, 1-2.

Bible quote on page 193: *The Book of Job*: chapter X, 15-17.

Homefires & Embers